

**THE BRITISH COLUMBIA LABOR MOVEMENT
AND
POLITICAL ACTION, 1879-1906**

by

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS**

in the Department

of

HISTORY

**We accept this thesis as conforming to the
standard required from candidates for the
degree of MASTER OF ARTS**

**Members of the Department of
HISTORY**

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

October, 1954

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in
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ABSTRACT

The period under study is the formative period of working-class political action in this province. The conditions and events of this time form the foundation upon which the Socialist Party of Canada, the Federated Labor Party, the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, and the Labor Progressive Party grew to be important factors in British Columbia affairs. Consideration of this period is therefore highly relevant to any evaluation or assessment of these organizations.

The wage-workers of British Columbia began to organize into unions in significant numbers in the 1880's. Being concerned with improving their lot as workers, some of the unionists turned toward the idea of taking class action on the political field in order to obtain favorable legislation.

In the economic sphere, the main complaint of the workers during this period was that the many Chinese in the province worked long hours for low wages, and thus tended to lower the living standards of those who had to compete with them. Another complaint with economic as well as political aspects was that much of the land and resources of British Columbia had been alienated to such corporations as the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway Company and the Canadian Pacific

Railway. In their political action the workers demanded a solution of these grievances, and in the case of the latter were strongly attracted to the doctrine of "single tax." They also expressed a wish for government-sponsored arbitration and conciliation procedures which would settle labor-management disputes in a peaceful manner.

The demands for political reform were occasioned by the use of government in the interests of the wealthy element of the community, and were very much influenced by American and socialist ideas. The basic principle involved was that of "direct democracy," including the initiative, referendum, and recall, and it persisted throughout the whole period in various forms.

The first election to be contested by labor candidates was the provincial election of 1886. Four candidates ran in Victoria and Nanaimo, and all were defeated. At this time the Knights of Labor was at the peak of its power. The organization soon declined, and its place was occupied in most cases by trade unions.

In 1890 the Nanaimo miners' union succeeded in electing two members to the British Columbia legislature. Although these members were unable to carry through any of their own measures, their presence led to the passage of a mechanics' lien law and an arbitration and conciliation act.

In 1894 the miners' candidates were defeated but the Nationalist Party of Vancouver, a labor organization, succeeded in getting Robert Macpherson elected. Although not always strictly a labor representative, Macpherson was generally a

protagonist of the cause of labor. In the 1896 federal election the Nationalists also initiated the successful candidature of Rev. George R. Maxwell, who remained in parliament until his death in 1902.

In 1898 Nanaimo labor recovered part of the lost ground by electing Ralph Smith to Victoria. Smith changed to the federal field in 1900, was elected, and remained in parliament until 1911. However, he was very closely linked to the Liberal Party, and in 1902 was repudiated by the Nanaimo miners.

The 1900 provincial election was the high point of labor political action in this period. Labor candidates with reform programs appeared in Vancouver and Nanaimo. The Western Federation of Miners in the southern Interior supported non-labor candidates pledged to defend the new eight-hour law for metal-miners. All the W.F.M.-backed candidates and one Nanaimo labor man were elected.

This election saw the first appearance of the term "Socialist" as the official designation of a candidate -- Will MacClain. The period 1900-1906 witnessed the decline of reformist "laborism" and the rise of socialism as a political force in the province, culminating in the capture of a Labor Party convention by members of the Socialist Party of Canada.

A study of this period has a special relevance to the present political situation in British Columbia. We are now in a time of re-alignment and re-orientation of political forces, the understanding of which demands an appraisal of past political changes. The events and situations recounted and analyzed here, since they are concerned with a period of political experimentation, may afford us useful light on present changes.

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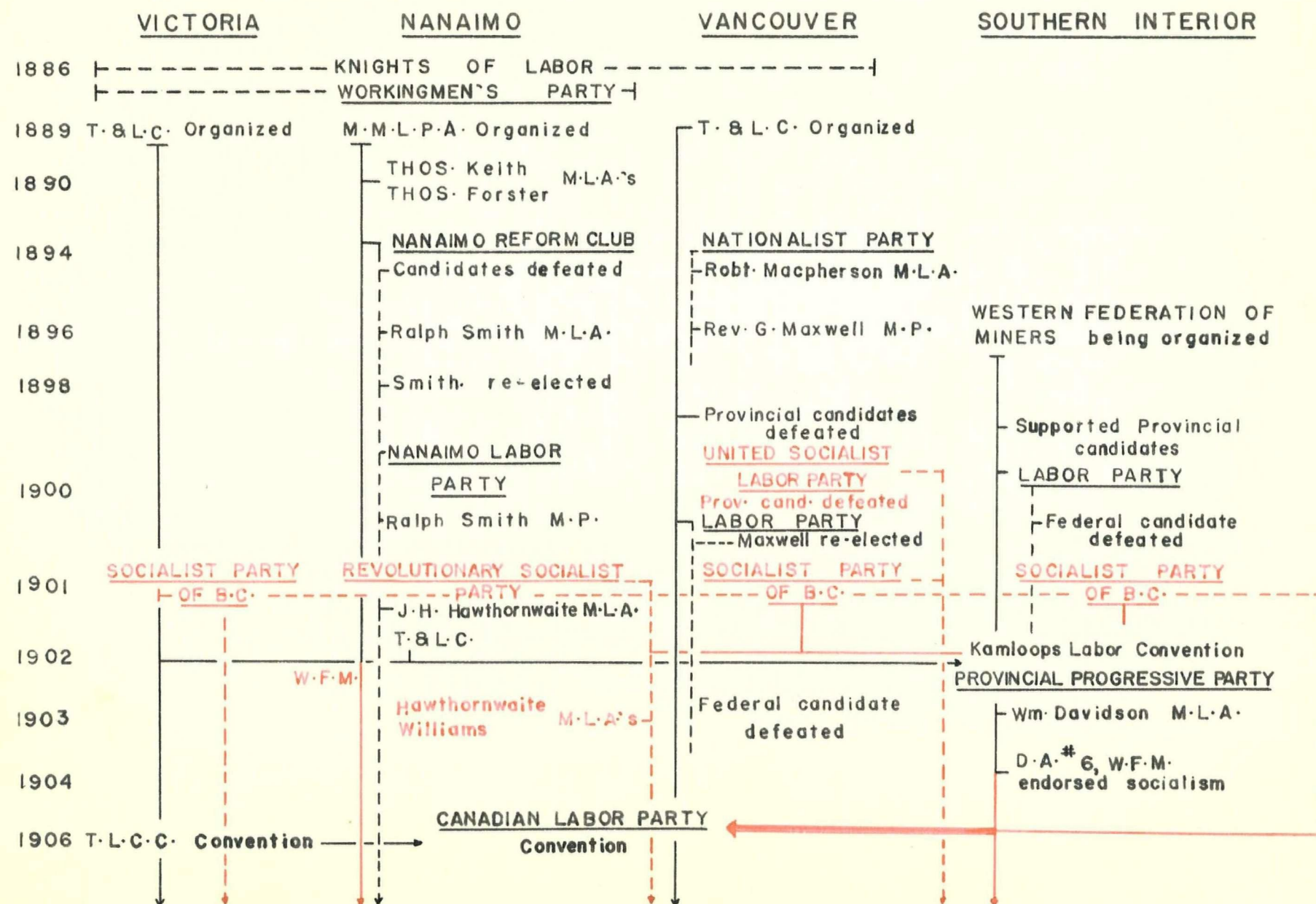
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(Photographs by courtesy of the Provincial Archives,
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A CHART OF LABOR POLITICAL ACTION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1879-1906



THE BRITISH COLUMBIA LABOR MOVEMENT

AND

POLITICAL ACTION, 1879-1906

INTRODUCTION

Since 1882 when the wage-workers of British Columbia were beginning to organize in significant numbers, no provincial election has passed without some manifestation of labor political action. Furthermore, since 1889 when the Vancouver Trades and Labor Council and the Vancouver Island Miners' and Mine Laborers' Protective Association were formed,¹ all federal elections have witnessed the organized intervention of British Columbia labor. There has constantly been an element in the local labor movement which has advocated a legislative solution to labor's problems and which has been active enough to take the political field. Consequently, candidates claiming to represent the special interests of the wage-workers have been a normal feature of our political life.

In the history of labor political action in British Columbia there are four major periods, distinguishable by the scope of the aims which predominated in each period. Be it noted that these periods are not hermetically sealed compartments; elements characteristic of one period are always to be found in

¹ William Bennett, Builders of British Columbia, Vancouver, 1937, p. 33.

other periods. The periodization merely indicates a convenient generalization of the most prominent features of the labor political movement in its development.

The first period, which runs from 1879 to 1906, is that of the development of political laborism. It takes in the first appearance of a consciousness of group or class interest in politics, and it is characterized by the growth of political parties of labor devoted to the obtaining of specific legislation. These parties did not aim at government power; their hope was to influence the major political groups to pass legislation favourable to labor.

The second period was inaugurated in 1900. For the first time in British Columbia the concept of socialism, of a complete overturn in society through control of the government by the workers, was heard from a campaign platform. By 1906 the socialists in the labor movement were strong enough to take over an official Labor Party convention, and for several years thereafter the political energies of British Columbia labor were mainly channelled into support of the Socialist Party.

The Socialist Party was split by the issue of war in 1914 and the succeeding years. It was further split over the Russian Revolution of 1917 and by the organization of the apolitical syndicalist One Big Union in 1919. Within this province there was a rebirth of laborism. Candidates pledged to defend and advance specific interests of the labor movement through pressure on government again became the main political spokesmen of labor. This period saw the election to the legislature of such men as Harry Neelands, Sam Guthrie, and Tom Uphill.

The depression of the 1930's brought into being a new force in Canada. A fusion of labor, farm and socialistic elements created the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, which aimed at governmental power in order to bring about immediate relief of existing conditions and, ultimately, alter the nature of society. The new party soon came to occupy the center of the labor political stage in British Columbia. Insofar as workers, qua workers, are politically active today, they generally direct their activities to the C.C.F.

Of these four periods, the first will be discussed in these pages. It has a unity based upon a "pressure group" attitude to politics and a concentration upon certain specific political and economic demands. It is also roughly coincident with that period of provincial political history before the introduction of regular party lines. As the era of non-party government was closed by the rise of provincial Conservative and Liberal parties in 1900-1903, so was the first era of political laborism closed by the rise of the Socialist Party in 1900-1906. In the light of these characteristics, it is amenable to study as a unit.

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CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND OF THE BRITISH COLUMBIA LABOR MOVEMENT

i. Nearly all unions may be classified into two types upon the basis of organizational structure. The older type, which was almost universal in the United States until the late 1930's and in Canada until the early 1940's, is the craft union -- the "trade" union proper. The newer type, which at last seems to be solidly established after more than half a century of struggle, is the industrial union -- the "labor" union, in a broad sense.

In craft unions the workers of any one trade are gathered into local unions, which are in turn affiliated with other "locals" of the same trade through national and international brotherhoods; the bond of unity is that of the craft. In this way there arose the great unions of the Carpenters, Cigar Makers, Machinists and others, which in 1886 allied themselves to form the American Federation of Labor.

The unifying factor here was that of training and tools; the members of these unions were skilled workers, usually owning their own tools. They tended to be exclusive in their attitude, standing apart from the less skilled workers; by virtue of their training and their organization they were able to demand higher wages than laborers or machine workers received, and they were reluctant to combine with lower-paid groups which might draw them into undesired and unprofitable conflicts. For many years the craftsmen were the "aristocrats of labor," and enjoyed rela-

tively aristocratic incomes.

Very soon, however, the craft organization began to show signs of inadequacy: the increasing use of machine processes in production threatened the existence of many crafts, and therefore of the unions of those crafts; moreover, as techniques and materials changed jurisdictional disputes became more frequent and more bitter.¹ In addition, a single trade which was united across the continent but only loosely connected with other trades in its own area found it difficult to deal with a business employing members of many unions.²

The craft unions attempted to deal with these weaknesses by establishing bodies such as "Building Trades Councils," "Metal Trades Councils," and the like, within which delegates of the unions operating in a given industry discussed common problems and planned common action. Such Councils, however, were not very effective in any serious dispute; they were merely delegate bodies, with no power to bind their constituent unions to definite policies or lines of action.

Even before the end of the last century there appeared in certain mass industries a different answer to the problem of labor organization in modern industry -- the industrial union. The structure and philosophy of the craft unions were based upon the small-scale production of the pre-industrial era, when the individual producer possessed the tools of his trade and usually

¹ For example, as metal replaces wood in home construction the metal-working unions claim jobs previously done by carpenters.

² An example of this last difficulty is the Vancouver Daily Province strike of 1946-48; some of the printing trades were "out," others were "in," and members of the Teamsters Union continued to perform their contracted duties for the newspaper.

had some control over his product; the new unions were organized according to the pattern of modern industry as a whole, in which masses of workers performed various duties with tools and materials supplied by one employer, thus co-operatively producing a single commodity owned by the employer. The basis of membership was not "what job you do," but "in what industry and which factory or operation you work." Thus the United Mine Workers of America was organized in the coalfields of the eastern United States in 1890, and the Western Federation of Miners in the metal mines of the Mountain States in 1892. The tendency of ownership and management was to spread over the minefields and concentrate power over all operations connected with the mines; the miners reacted with a parallel organization.

For many years the principle of industrial unionism did not make any solid gains outside the mining industries. There were ephemeral efforts to build industrial unions; notable examples were the American Railway Union (1894), led by Eugene V. Debs), the American Labor Union (ca. 1902, sponsored by the W.F.M.), the Industrial Workers of the World (1905), and in Canada the One Big Union (1919). All these efforts were nullified by the combined opposition of the employers and the conservative A.F. of L. When the depression of the 1930's came, only the U.M.W.A., some clothing unions, and a handful of "nucleus" organizations could be counted among the industrial unions of North America.

The industrial workers of America were ripe for organization; the A.F. of L. went in to organize them. It chartered federal unions to bring them within the fold, and planned to dis-

tribute the new members among the existing craft unions when jurisdictional problems had been solved. The craft union leaders were more interested in enlarging their own unions than in making new unions which would limit their own jurisdictions. In protest the few industrial unions within the A.F. of L. put on their own organizing campaign, and in 1936 were read out of the Federation.³

The new Congress of Industrial Organization, as it became known, was soon well-established in a number of basic industries -- automotive, rubber, steel, etc. Its membership momentarily over-topped that of the A.F. of L., and its more efficient organization gave its unions bargaining advantages over the more cumbersome craft locals. The Federation, however, was too well-entrenched in its old fields for the upstart to take over completely, and the labor picture stabilized at an approximate balance, with constant friction along the edges of jurisdiction.

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ii. The labor movement developed not only different organizational forms, but also various modes of action. H. A. Logan indicates three techniques whereby unions achieve their ends; shop rules, political action, and collective bargaining.⁴

Although these techniques have not at any time been mutually

³ Foster Rhea Dulles, Labor in America, New York, Crowell, 1949, p. 296. The main unions concerned in the formation of the Committee for Industrial Organization were the United Mine Workers, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, the International Ladies' Garment Workers, the United Textile Workers, the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, and the Oil Field, Gas Well and Refining Workers. Ibid., pp. 294-5.

⁴ Trade Unions in Canada, Toronto, Macmillan, 1948, p. 1.

exclusive in the North American labor movement as a whole, each has at some time been the predominant procedure.

The earliest of these techniques was the enforcement of shop rules by direct action, which did not necessitate any formal agreement between employer and employees. The union merely posted its rules as to wages and apprenticeship arrangements in the shop or other place of work. If the employer did not observe these rules the union would protest or, if necessary, call a strike. This method was abandoned by most unions in North America before the end of the last century, but was revived by the militantly syndicalist I.W.W. and (for a time) the W.F.M.,⁵ both of which regarded the employing class as an implacable enemy and compromise as the first step towards surrender.

As labor became more widely organized and as the restrictive effects of employer-inspired legislation became fully evident, the unions developed the second technique. They began to work for legislation favorable to the workers and their organizations. The more conservative unionists restricted themselves to the Samuel Gompers policy of "Reward our friends and punish our enemies" (i.e., support or oppose individual candidates of the regular parties as they support or oppose labor's immediate demands). The socialists proposed that the workers, through their own elected representatives, should take over control of society and abolish the employing class. Between these

⁵ In the first I.W.W. convention (1905), W.D. Haywood said of the Western Federation of Miners that "We have not got an agreement existing with any mine manager, superintendent, or operator at the present time. We have got a minimum scale of wages ... (and) the eight-hour day, and we did not have a legislative lobby to accomplish it." Quoted in Paul Brissenden, The I.W.W., New York, Columbia University, 1920, p. 80.

two extremes, many unionists advocated the election of labor representatives to the legislatures to press for advantageous laws and ward off hostile measures.

Political action did achieve a number of reforms desired by the workers,⁶ but it was not nearly so effective as its proponents had expected. The geographic distribution of wage-workers was such as to make them a minority in most of the electoral districts of North America; they were largely concentrated in and around the towns, and political representation is traditionally weighted in favor of rural districts. In most constituencies a candidate could not hope to get elected on a straight labor platform; there were just not enough labor voters. Except when circumstances favored an agreement between labor and farmers, the political aspirations of labor seemed doomed to continuous frustration by an unsympathetic farm vote.⁷

⁶ In British Columbia, for example, union-supported M.L.A.'s such as Smith Curtis of Rossland were largely instrumental in obtaining and maintaining eight-hour day legislation for the metal-miners; labor and socialist members like J.H. Hawthornthwaite of Nanaimo, by exploiting a balance of power in the Legislature, were able to get a similar law for coal miners, a Workmen's Compensation Act, and other concessions.

⁷ Upon the defeat of the Labor Party candidate in Yale-Kootenay-Cariboo in the 1900 federal election, the Lardeau Eagle commented:

Chris Foley's lead in the Kootenay and Boundary amounts to 512, but the remaining portion of this world-wide constituency gives Galliher a plurality of 751. The farmers of Vernon made the result as it is. May Heaven forgive them; the Eagle can't. (December 3, 1900).

In addition, a letter from J.C. Harris, New Denver, to Andy Shilland, Sandon, October 29, 1909, advised that the Canadian Socialist Party could not hope to win in Slocan owing to the presence of new voters (farmers and settlers) in the Arrow Lake district. (Letter held by T. & D.S.W.U., Trail).

Legislation, moreover, was not readily adaptable to the ever-present problem of getting the best possible terms from the individual employer. Consequently the third policy -- that of bargaining between the union and the employer -- came into wide use. It is at present a key function of nearly all unions.

It did not, however, completely displace political action. Although the A.F. of L. has only twice broken its policy of political neutrality -- once to support La Follette as the Progressive Party candidate for the Presidency in 1924, and again to support Stevenson and the Democratic Party in 1952 -- it has always maintained an interest in legislation affecting labor, and in the election or defeat of individual candidates. The newer C.I.O., which grew up under the favorable legislation of the Roosevelt era, has consistently aligned itself with the Democratic Party.⁸

Canadian labor's political action has been more positive than that of the A.F. of L., but less fixed in one path. The Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, analogous and linked to the A.F. of L., has gone into politics somewhat more than has its American counterpart;⁹ The Canadian Congress of Labor, counter-

⁸ It should also be noted that in Britain the Trade Union Congress has preserved a close connection with the Labour Party since the beginning of the century.

⁹ In 1894 the T. & L.C.C. endorsed a resolution favoring political action "like that of the Socialist Workers' Party," but did not pursue the matter. In 1898 it adopted a legislative platform containing fifteen planks. In 1899 it took a stand against labor support of the old political parties. In 1900 it asked its President, Ralph Smith of Nanaimo, to give up his provincial seat and run federally -- which he did, successfully. In 1906 Congress recommended the formation of a Canadian Labor Party in provincial sections. This policy was re-affirmed in 1914, and given a more centralized aspect in 1917. Logan, op. cit., passim.

part of the C.I.O., has given its approval to the C.C.F. Other unions, including the provincial and local bodies of the T.L.C.C., especially in British Columbia, have often displayed great activity in the endorsation or nomination of candidates in municipal, provincial and federal elections.

In the early period of large-scale Canadian labor organization (1873-1902), the unions of Ontario and of Montreal in Quebec were very active politically. For several years their efforts quite overshadowed anything attempted in the West, but about 1890 the pattern began to change. As Logan puts it,

It is noteworthy that the centre of the political actionists during the later years of the century shifted unmistakably to the newly-organized West. British Columbia, in particular, dissatisfied with the failure of the Congress to get results at Ottawa was calling at one time for an independent labor party, at another for a "progressive party" to be composed of labour unionists and reformers. ¹⁰

From 1886 to 1900 there were five provincial elections in British Columbia; labor took part in at least twenty-one contests in these elections, and seven times saw its nominees elected. In 1896, a labor party initiated the nomination and election of Rev. George R. Maxwell to the federal House; in the 1900 federal election labor backed three candidates in British Columbia, and almost ran a fourth; of these, two were elected, while the third came second in a three-way contest. The increase in political interest was unmistakable, and put British Columbia in the forefront of Canadian labor's political action.

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¹⁰
LOGAN, op. cit., p. 31.

iii. This shift, the effects of which can still be felt in Canadian politics, was not in any noticeable degree due to the influence of eastern Canadian unionism upon the labor movement of the coast province. It can be ascribed more to the impact of special conditions peculiar to British Columbia upon new settlers, many of whom brought radical ideas with them.

These special conditions which shaped the local labor movement derived largely from the geographic position of British Columbia. Until the completion of the railroad in 1885, the West Coast was a world apart from Canada. Very little transportation was overland; communications were by sea, with California, Britain and the Orient. Early settlement came from those areas. In 1789 Captain John Meares brought fifty Chinese artisans to the harbor at Nootka;¹¹ they, along with Captain Meares, were soon removed by the Spanish, but their importation was a foreshadowing of future events. Later, when the Hudson's Bay Company sponsored the colony of Vancouver Island, the few farmers, tradespeople, artisans and coal-miners who did come in were almost entirely British -- again, coming by sea and not by land.

The discovery of placer gold in British Columbia in 1858 brought a flood of immigrants from the depleted goldfields of Australia and California. A cosmopolitan horde of gold-seekers in which British and American elements predominated spread over the colony; when the flood receded after a few years it left behind a layer of English-speaking settlers and many Chinese -- but few Canadians.

¹¹ F.W. Howay and E.O.S. Scholefield, British Columbia, Toronto, S.J. Clarke, 1913 (?), I, 128.

When British Columbia agreed in 1871 to join the Canadian Confederation, the Dominion government promised that a trans-continental railway would be built. The construction of the British Columbia section demanded more men than the sparsely-settled province could provide, so the contractors turned to the same source of cheap human labor that Meares had used over eighty years before -- the Orient. Shiploads of coolies from southern China were imported to build the Canadian Pacific Railway. Later railway builders took the same cue, and throughout the period of railway building the Oriental population of British Columbia increased rapidly.¹² From the railways the Chinese moved into other occupations, and by long hours of work and the acceptance of low wages provided serious competition to the white workers of British Columbia.¹³

The Chinese provided the labor for building the C.P.R., and thereby opened the way for large-scale immigration from eastern Canada. In the following years, a great influx of settlers and wage-workers came through the Rockies.¹⁴ An important ocean port began to grow at the railhead with industrial aspects based

¹² In 1881 there were 4,350 Chinese in this province; by 1891 the figure had grown to 8,910, and in 1901 there was a total of 19,482 Chinese and Japanese here. (Canada, Government, Census of Canada, Ottawa, Queen's Printer, 1881, 1891, 1901).

¹³ The word "white" is used here to designate people of European origin, either immediate or remote; it is a convenient term, and it is regrettable that it has become associated with racial prejudices. No other single word accurately refers to the category of people meant here.

¹⁴ Canadian-born persons in B.C. (other than B.C.-born)

1881	1891	1901
2,782	20,150	40,023

(Census, 1881, 1891, 1901).

upon timber and fish -- the more easily exploited natural resources of the province. In 1881 Vancouver did not exist; by 1891 it had twice the population of New Westminster, or three times that of Nanaimo, and was rapidly overtaking Victoria. By 1901 it had far surpassed Victoria in size and importance,¹⁵ and was the economic center of British Columbia. Previous to 1885 the ports of British Columbia had been little more than termini, dealing in the limited trade of the North Pacific area; after 1885 Vancouver's hinterland became continent-wide, and the port a link in the system of world trade. The railroad made feasible the economic development of British Columbia, so long delayed by geographic isolation.

After making a good start in the late 1880's, this development was temporarily slowed by outside conditions; world trade went into a depression, the effects of which were felt in Vancouver from late in the first half of 1893 until the middle of 1896.¹⁶ When it had passed and money was released for new investment, the exploitation of the mineral resources of the southern Interior was commenced. Geographically an extension of the Mountain States, which had already been subjected to considerable mining development, this area was naturally invaded by capital and techniques from the south. American money was invested; American prospectors and miners, some of whom had been operating in the area on a small scale for several years, arrived in considerable

15	1881	1891	1901
Victoria	5,925	16,841	20,919
Vancouver	-----	12,709	27,010
New Westminster	1,500	6,678	6,499
Nanaimo	1,645	4,595	6,130
		(Census, 1911, I, 554)	

16 Vancouver World, June 20, 1896, p. 5.

numbers to carry on their accustomed work, bringing with them their organization -- the Western Federation of Miners -- and their political ideas.

By the early 1900's, a rough correlation could be made between certain occupations and national groups, especially in the field of labor organization. Many of the attitudes and policies evident in the British Columbia labor movement can be traced back to the national origins of the predominant groups.

The most important element in labor organization in the coal-fields was British. The Vancouver Island mines were first worked by Scottish miners imported by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1849. Subsequent additions to the mining force came mainly from Britain, although minorities of French, Italians, Belgians, Germans and Finns existed as early as 1890.¹⁷ Large numbers of Chinese and, later, Japanese were employed, but these did not take part in labor organization; their presence in and around the mines was a constant cause of disputes between the unions and the management. In the newer Crow's Nest Pass mines, opened toward the end of the century, labor organization was at first carried out mainly by miners from Britain. Ukrainian and Italian immigrants were numerous, but were slow to organize.¹⁸ There were relatively few eastern Canadians,¹⁹ and even fewer Americans, in western coal-mining; Welsh, Scottish and Northum-

¹⁷ Nanaimo Free Press, May 28, 1890, p. 4.

¹⁸ A report in the Rossland Industrial World, November 24, 1900, stated that of 700 men at Fernie, 550 were Slavonians (Slavs), and that this situation made the union's work very difficult.

¹⁹ There were some from the Cape Breton mines, but they seem generally to have amalgamated with the kindred British element.

berland miners, with an established tradition of organization and political action,²⁰ dominated the miners' unions.²¹

The pattern was quite different in metal-mining; there the dominant group was American or American-influenced, although the majority of the workers were British and Continental European. At first, indeed, a great number of the miners were Americans. Although their proportion of the total working force declined rapidly around the end of the century,²² the American influence remained strong in union affairs. Italians and Finns, many of whom had worked in the United States for several years, and a smaller number of Britishers (often Cornish, possibly heirs to the tin-mining tradition) appeared during the years about 1900;²³ it is doubtful that they added any significant features to the philosophy or attitudes of the union. The American metal-miners had already set a pattern of class-conscious radicalism in clashes with state power at Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, in 1892, and at Cripple Creek, Colorado, in 1894. The Finns, under the rule of the Russian Tsar, were developing a strong social-democratic

²⁰ Sidney & Beatrice Webb, The History of Trade Unionism, London, Longmans, 1950, passim. Of the three groups mentioned, the Welsh and Scots appear to have been much more aggressive than the Northumbrians.

²¹ Much of this material on the coal-miners in the early 1900's comes from conversations with retired miners, notably Dai Phillips at Fernie and Lew Lewis and Jimmy Phillipson at Nanaimo.

²² As early as 1898 Rossland was more Scotch-Canadian than American. (Vancouver World, June 14, 1898, p. 4).

²³ cf. W.F.M. "Application for Membership" forms (held by T.& D.S.W.U., Trail). The Sandon Paystreak reported that about 35% of the Rossland payroll was Italian (April 13, 1900).

movement²⁴ whose ideas coincided in many ways with the radicalism of the Americans. The Finns seem to have supported the Americans in leading the British Columbia section (District Association No. 6) of the W.F.M. into support of the Socialist Party; no specific British or Italian influences are observable.

In the urban trades -- those associated with construction, commerce, and services -- the British predominated. These workmen were mainly skilled craftsmen, basically conservative but capable of becoming radical under pressure. In their home country they were on the verge of taking political action,²⁵ but they were not yet convinced of its value or its most effective form. The rather erratic course of political action pursued by the T. & L.C. unions in British Columbia may be traced to their uncertainty and to the A.F. of L. policy of "political neutrality."

Very little pattern can be discerned with regard to national groups in the other two major industries of the province. Whites of various origins, Orientals, and native Indians have been

²⁴ In 1907, when the first general election was held under the liberalized Finnish constitution, forty percent of the representatives elected were Social-Democrats. Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th edition, X, 385. The political bent of many Finns in B.C. is evidenced by the existence of a Finnish-language "Constitution and By-laws" of the Socialist Party.

²⁵ The Independent Labor Party was formed in 1893, but received little support; the Labor Representation Committee appeared in 1900, with the support of many trade unions, but did not receive much recognition from labor as a whole until 1902. (The Webbs, op. cit., pp. 683 ff.). There was a definite link between the L.R.C. and British Columbia, in that the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners of Vancouver (a branch of a British union and a member of the Vancouver T. & L.C.), endorsed the L.R.C. as a model for Canada. (Independent, Vancouver, Dec. 7, 1901, p. 8).

active in fishing and lumbering since the inception of those industries. Labor organization in these fields was fragmentary, and on the whole, transitory until the 1930's. Possibly racial and cultural rivalries, added to the seasonal and migratory nature of the industries, can be blamed for the difficulty of building comprehensive and long-lasting unions in lumbering and fishing.

The working population of British Columbia, mixed as it was in its origins, could be divided roughly into two great groups: those in the ultimately European tradition (more exactly, the western European tradition), familiar with labor organization and demanding a relatively high standard of living, and the unorganized Orientals, accustomed to living at a bare subsistence level. This thesis is centered upon the former group, since organized activity in the period under discussion was almost entirely confined to the white workers; the Orientals were more often the involuntary cause of such activity than participants in it.

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CHAPTER II

KNIGHTS IN POLITICS

i. By 1879 the main British Columbia gold rushes were over; the placer miners had gone on to new fields, settled on the land, or turned to wage labor. Some of the Chinese who had followed the rush were laboriously panning for the remaining specks of gold, while others had looked for new occupations. There were Chinese gardeners, house servants, laundry workers, cooks, and tailors, and in all these fields their low cost of living and their acceptance of long hours of labor gained them favor with employers, to the detriment of other workers. The effect of their competition was also felt in other fields, as it tended to force white workers out of those occupations named on to the general labor market. Other charges were made against them: they would not and could not be assimilated to the rest of the population; their customs and living conditions were unhygienic; they were disease-ridden; they were spreading the practice of opium-smoking.¹ Their acceptance of low wages and long hours, however, was the point which most closely touched other workers and was the main cause of the anti-Chinese bias of the British Columbia labor movement.

The earliest suggestion of labor political action in British Columbia was, in fact, connected with the Oriental problem. Subsequent activity throughout the period under discussion continued to hinge largely upon the same matter. Indeed,

¹ Cf. contemporary newspapers; also abstract of Part I, "Report of Royal Commission on Chinese & Japanese Immigration," Canada, Department of Labour, Labour Gazette, Ottawa, King's Printer, April, 1902, pp. 599-609.

if there was one point upon which organized labor in British Columbia was unanimous, it was the question of Asiatic competition for jobs.

In 1879 there existed in Victoria an organization known as the Workingmen's Protective Association.² No record exists of its membership or objects; its name (cf. the slightly later Miners' and Mine Laborers' Protective Association in the Nanaimo district) suggests that it was a general union of workmen, with the normal function of improving the lot of its members. Like many craft unions, it deprecated political discussion within its ranks; however, upon the issue of Chinese labor, this shadowy organization heard the first suggestion that workers, as such, should take action upon the political field.

The W.P.A. of 1879 was certainly concerned about the Chinese question; in February of that year it held two meetings on the subject. At the first meeting its president, a Mr. Shakespeare,³ advised those present that " ... it would be the duty of the workingmen to get their members to introduce measures to get rid of this class (the Chinese)."⁴ At the second meeting C. Booth, a guest speaker, wanted to go further. Shakespeare apparently did not regard his own previous statement as having political implications; Booth remarked that

² Victoria Colonist, February 4, 1879, p. 3.

³ There is no further identification of Shakespeare; however, in 1888 Fred N.E. Shakespeare was secretary-treasurer of Victoria Typographical Union No. 201. (Geo. Bartley, An Outline History of Typographical Union No. 226, Vancouver, Sun Publishing Co., 1938, p. 7). This may have been the same man.

⁴ Victoria Colonist, February 4, 1879, p. 3.

The President of this association has told us that we should not talk politics here. I differ with him. This is a political question and deserves the consideration of the statesman.⁵

There, so far as is known, the matter rested. The arguments had been made that the Chinese question could only be settled by legislative action, and that the workingmen should exert themselves to influence the elected members; Booth had made it clear that the whole matter was political in nature, and must be dealt with politically. Nothing, however, was done at the time; the implied ban on politics within the W.P.A. may have prevented action; alternatively, the relative obscurity of the organization may have cast the veil of time over the appeals of its members.

The first attempt of a group of workingmen to obtain their own political representation came three years later, when both provincial and dominion elections were scheduled. On June 27, 1882, seventy-five workmen assembled in Central Hall in Victoria to select candidates for both elections. A speech was heard on the subject of Chinese immigration, and a resolution was passed by a vote of 20-6 that " ... no candidate not willing to protect the interests of the province should be elected." A Workingman's Association was organized, with R. Nuttall as president and C.B. Brown as vice-president. Nuttall was then nominated as the Association's candidate for the local legislature, and the meeting adjourned.⁶

⁵ Ibid., February 27, 1879. (Note: Booth's first name is nowhere given).

⁶ Ibid., June 28, 1882. No explanation is offered as to why only 26 out of the 75 voted, nor why six people voted against the resolution. (Note: Nuttall's first name is nowhere given).

When the group met again two days later, with Nuttall as chairman, the political effort disintegrated. There was first a wrangle over the minutes of the previous meeting and the accuracy of certain statements in the preamble to the resolution passed at that time. The chairman used his position somewhat autocratically, and was presented with a motion that his nomination as candidate be rescinded on the grounds that he was not a workingman.⁷ Although the motion was later withdrawn, it was plain that personal antagonisms had made the organization ineffectual. The meeting was adjourned until the chair should call it again; since no mention appears of subsequent meetings, it is probable that the Association dissolved. Nuttall appeared in public as a candidate on at least one occasion, but his candidature was not registered on the official nomination day and he did not contest the election.

From the scanty reports available, it appears that this attempt to elect a labor candidate was essentially a matter of personal ambition on the part of Nuttall, taking advantage of the current discontent of the workers over Chinese economic competition and lack of effective legislation to curb it. The quick break-up of the Association indicates an unwillingness to sink personal differences and ambitions in order to get a candidate elected on a labor, anti-Chinese ticket. Personalities counted for more than principles, and the movement collapsed.

Two things were necessary for the development of a serious political effort by labor: a group of economic and poli-

⁷ It was stated in his defence that he was a member of the "Labor League;" no claim was made that he was a wage-worker. Ibid., June 30, 1882. EARNER

tical issues which could be formulated as a campaign platform, and strong organization reflecting an idea of community of interest. By 1886, the year of the next election, both these conditions existed.

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ii. The two basic issues prompting labor political action in 1886 were not new. The Chinese problem has been mentioned previously; the other -- the question of land grants -- has not.

Of these two problems, that of land grants was the first to cause complaint. As early as 1850 Governor Blanshard of Vancouver Island had occasion to mention in a letter to Earl Grey the lands held by the Hudson's Bay Company. He wrote that

Some complaints of Indian outrages have reached me from Sooke, ... where a gentleman by the name of Grant ... has a small settlement. He complains of lack of protection, which, owing to the distance at which he is located cannot be afforded him; he informs me that he was anxious to settle near Victoria, but was not allowed to do so by the Hudson's Bay Company, who have appropriated all the valuable land in the neighbourhood.⁸

In fact, the area of land reserved to the Company was rather vague. The Company's claim was based mainly upon use, but it put up a certain part of its lands for sale, especially to persons associated with the Company. The existence of the Hudson's Bay Company Reserve on Vancouver Island hampered free settlement, and was the subject of vigorous protest by Amor de Cosmos and others in the late 1850's and the 1860's. The policy of making large grants of land on favorable terms to retired army officers

⁸ Howay and Scholefield, op. cit., I, 519-520.

was endorsed in the period of representative government. For example, in 1860 Captain Edward Stamp received 15,000 acres around Barkley Sound for the establishment of a sawmill and other works.⁹

With the entry of British Columbia into Confederation and the beginning of railway building in the province, land grants started to climb to enormous proportions. Lacking any immediate financial inducement to stimulate construction, the British Columbia government began to give large tracts to those who would undertake to build railways, roads, and other works.

The first such grant passed through the legislature in 1880, implementing the agreement with the Dominion government concerning the building of the C.P.R. This measure officially gave to the company a forty mile wide strip along its track, less such land as had already been alienated or was reserved. The deficiency was made up in 1883 by a grant to the Dominion government of 3,500,000 acres in the Peace River district.¹⁰

The C.P.R. grants, although large, were only a beginning. In 1883 the Smithe government took up the policy of land grants in earnest. In that year four grants were made: one of 750,000 acres in the Kootenay and Columbia country, including the future mining districts of Nelson and Slocan, to assist in building a railway and steamship line; one of 78,000 acres in Kootenay for a canal project; one of 60,000 acres in Yale and Kootenay for

⁹ For a study of early land grants, vide Leonard A. Wrinch, "Land Policy of the Colony of Vancouver Island, 1849-1866," an unpublished M.A. thesis, University of British Columbia, 1932.

¹⁰ British Columbia, Legislative Assembly, Statutes, Victoria, Queen's Printer, 1883, p. 39.

wagon road; and the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway grant of 200,000 acres on Vancouver Island to the Dunsmuir interests. The first of these grants was later canceled, owing to the failure of the company to carry out its plans; the remainder became operative. Then, in 1885, a smaller but very valuable grant was made of 6,000 acres near Burrard Inlet, plus some lots in the settlement of Granville, in order to encourage the C.P.R. to extend its line to Coal Harbor.¹¹ In addition, the C.P.R. grant was to be untaxed for twenty years and the E. & N. grant (apparently) in perpetuity. It must have appeared to many people that this policy, although speeding the industrial development of the province, would leave no decent farm or timber land available to the individual settler. Moreover, it deprived the government of tax revenue and placed great economic power in the hands of corporations. In 1886 the land grant policy was condemned as tending toward "the worst sort of feudalism;"¹² indeed, the economic and political situation which later developed in the "company towns" had much in common with feudalism.

These two issues -- land grants and Chinese immigration -- pressed not only upon the workingmen of British Columbia but also upon other social groups. Land grants threatened to make both wage-workers and farmers dependent upon the will of the land-holding corporations; the Chinese were competing with white tailors, gardeners, grocers, laundrymen, restaurant-operators,

¹¹ This list of grants is taken from Howay & Scholefield, op. cit., II, 431-442, and Alexander Begg, History of British Columbia, Toronto, Briggs, 1894, pp. 431-2.

¹² Victoria Workingmen's Platform; vide Appendix, p. i.

and other small businessmen as well as with wage-earners. These were not strictly working-class issues; they had a much wider application. However, they were the issues which most agitated the workingmen.

The opening of the railway connecting British Columbia with the rest of the continent coincided with an outburst of labor organization that swept both Canada and the United States. In the space of one year, 1885-6, a union known as the Knights of Labor grew from a membership of 104,066 to a total of 702,924,¹³ and temporarily dominated the labor scene.

The Knights of Labor was neither craft nor industrial in structure. Formed in Philadelphia in 1869 as a secret society of garment cutters, it slowly built up locals of many trades. In 1881 it dropped its cloak of secrecy and began a period of more rapid expansion in which the separation of trades was generally unrecognized; local assemblies took in members of all accepted trades within a given area. All those who had at any time worked for wages, except only lawyers, doctors, bankers, and those engaged in the liquor trade, might join.

The official tone of the K. of L. was idealistic; it rejected the idea of a class struggle, and aimed at the improvement of the workers physically, mentally, and spiritually by improving their conditions of life. It opposed strikes, favoring co-operation between labor and capital, and took a strong interest in politics in order to obtain reform legislation.¹⁴

¹³ Anthony Bimba, History of the American Working Class, New York, International Publishers, 1927, p. 174.

¹⁴ Ibid., pp. 173-5.

This was the organization to which the workers of British Columbia flocked in the middle 1880's. Two assemblies were organized in the New Westminster district, and two more in Victoria and Nanaimo.¹⁵ The total membership of the K. of L. in British Columbia, although nowhere exactly stated, must have been comparatively large; there were 600 members in the infant city of Vancouver alone,¹⁶ and the Assemblies in the older and more populous centers were almost certainly even greater. The Knights of Labor, with its idealism and its breadth of membership, was the first body to unite a large section of the British Columbia working class on the economic field and develop the organizing techniques necessary for political action. Appropriately enough, the first serious attempt to elect labor representatives to the Legislature is associated with the K. of L.

The Workingmen's Party which appeared in connection with the provincial election of 1886 ran candidates in only two of the three main labor centers of British Columbia -- Victoria and Nanaimo. For some undisclosed reason, the Lower Mainland did not share in this political effort.¹⁷ Two candidates in Victoria and two in Nanaimo were all that the contemporary labor

¹⁵ Bennett, op. cit., p. 25.

¹⁶ Vancouver People's Journal, Mar. 25, 1893, p. 3.

¹⁷ There is a suggestion that the platform of the Workingmen's Party may have been used in New Westminster (Industrial News, Victoria, July 10, 1886). This, however, probably merely refers to the appeal of W. Norman Bole, Oppositionist, for labor support (British Columbian, New Westminster, July 3, 1886, p.2). The Industrial News approved the candidature of Hans Helgesen in Esquimalt and of John Grant in Cassiar (June 12, 1886) -- both Conservative Oppositionists. This, however, is hardly labor political action, although Bennett treats the approval of Helgesen as such (op. cit., p. 30).

movement could afford; considering that each candidate represented a very risky investment of \$200 in a deposit, the effort was not a minor one.

So far as can be ascertained, the K. of L. organization took no part in the 1886 election; nowhere is there any mention of endorsement of the Workingmen's Party by that union.¹⁸ The political effort was organized independently of the union, although it aimed at ends favorable to the labor movement.

Of the two labor candidates in Victoria, neither was at the time a wage-worker. A.J. Smith had been a carpenter, but had turned to building contracting; he was already well-known in politics, having served several terms on the Victoria City Council. J.M. Duval, formerly a wood-turner, had been incapacitated by an accident and gone into the printing business.¹⁹ Their previous status as wage-earners made them eligible for membership in the K. of L.

The political campaign really began with the introductory issue of the Industrial News. Duval stated editorially that

¹⁸ The official records of the K. of L. seem to have disappeared with the extinction of the union. Bennett intimates that the K. of L. did take action by stating that the Industrial News, which was an active element in the election campaign, was the official organ of the K. of L. (op. cit., p. 124) and treats its statements as embodying official K. of L. policy. Actually, the Industrial News did not receive the official approval of the K. of L. until November 1886, some time after the election (Industrial News, November 6 and 20, 1886).

¹⁹ The files of his newspaper, the Industrial News, cover the period from December 1885 to December 1886, thus giving complete coverage of this episode of labor political action from the first hint of independence of existing political groups through the election campaign to the subsequent recapitulation of the campaign.

In politics it will be thoroughly independent, devoted to no clique or party, but will not hesitate at any time, whenever the interests of the workingmen and women require it, to take sides and fearlessly advocate what we believe to be right.²⁰

He soon followed this declaration by an indirect hint at direct political action, in the form of comment upon the success of the K. of L. in backing candidates for municipal office in Whatcom City and in Toronto.²¹ Two weeks later, attention was directed to the local scene:

This is the last session of the present local parliament....Any workingman failing to see that his vote is properly registered, will have no right to complain if the legislation of the next parliament is inimical to the interest of the working classes. Workingmen see that your votes are recorded. Your power lies in the Ballot.²²

This warning to the discontented was soon followed by an even more pointed leading article:

The time is gone by for class government.... an educated and enfranchised democracy... will become the arbiter of its own fate and destiny at the polls. It will seek within its own ranks, and not in vain, for delegates pledged to reform, economy, and the investigation of recent jobberies -- men, too, pledged to set aside aims of personal aggrandizement for that grander object, the recognition of the worker and the cause of labor.²³

While the ground was thus being prepared in Victoria, organization was going ahead at Nanaimo. The origin of the political movement there is unrecorded, but its connection with the Victoria group is certain. The party bore the same name, its platform was essentially the same,²⁴ and Duval came from

²⁰ Industrial News, December 26, 1885.

²¹ Ibid., January 16, 1886.

²² Ibid., January 30, 1886.

²³ Ibid., March 13, 1886.

²⁴ cf. Nanaimo Free Press, June 2, 1886, p. 2.

Victoria to support the Nanaimo candidates in their campaign.²⁵

In whatever way it may have been started, by the middle of May the Nanaimo Workingmen's Party was in existence and had nominated James Lewis, a Gabriola Island farmer, and Samuel H. Myers, agent for the Industrial News, as its representatives in the coming election.²⁶

In Victoria, the platform of the Workingmen's Party was adopted on May 27, at a meeting in the Theatre Comique.²⁷ A strengthening of the class spirit of the new party might be inferred from the comment of the Industrial News reporter:

That platform every candidate wishing to present himself on the workingman's ticket will be called upon to sign, and pledge himself to uphold.... But... what are required are not candidates pledged to carry out the views of the workingmen, but workingmen candidates.²⁸

Despite this attitude, when nominations took place Duval and Smith -- contractor and editor-publisher -- were recommended by a committee of fifteen and then endorsed at a public meeting as the Workingmen's Party candidates.

At this stage the campaign ran into difficulties which were not immediately made public. It appears that a "saw-off" had been arranged between the Workingmen's Party and the Opposition, led by Robert Beaven. In Victoria, each of these groups was to put up only two candidates in opposition to the four Government candidates. As soon as Duval and Smith were nominated,

²⁵ Ibid., July 3, 1886, p. 3.

²⁶ Myers' regular occupation is unstated in contemporary reports.

²⁷ Industrial News, May 29, 1886.

²⁸ Loc. cit.

the Opposition named a full slate of four and left the new party to fight alone. A letter was sent to the chairman of the Workingmen's Committee as follows:

Victoria, June 11th 1886

Dear Sir,-- Adverting to our conversation last evening, I am authorized by the opposition delegates to state that they are unable to include Messrs. Smith and Duval, the gentlemen designated by you, in the opposition nomination.

Yours truly,
J. Roland Hett.²⁹

It is apparent that the Workingmen's Party, despite the rather fiery tone of some pronouncements in the Industrial News, was willing to compromise. As a result, it fell between two stools. To retain its raison d'être, it had to be organizationally separate from other political groups, free to name its own candidates and to criticize others; to win seats for its man, it had to make an agreement with an existing group -- and that depended upon its naming candidates acceptable to the senior party, and forfeiting its independence. Its offer to share the opposition ticket in Victoria was rejected, and it was forced to be the independent party that it claimed to be.

There was more than one motive for this rejection of the overtures of the Workingmen's Party. For one thing, the Opposition wanted a pledge that the Workingmen's candidates would unconditionally oppose the Government Party;³⁰ this promise was not made, since the Workingmen's Party intended to oppose or support legislation upon its merits -- not necessarily upon its origin. Again, some statements in the Industrial News may well

²⁹ Ibid., July 17, 1886.

³⁰ British Columbian, June 19, 1886.

have frightened the Opposition by their radical nature, and led it to fear that an alliance with the new party might be more embarrassing than useful. Also, there was no shortage of straight Oppositionist aspirants for the seats at stake,³¹ and therefore no real desire to share the available nominations with an outside group.

Free of any obligation to another party, Smith and Duval carried on a fairly vigorous campaign. Since it was now clear that their party would field no more than four candidates in the province, they limited the party's current objectives to the independent criticism which Duval had promised in the first issue of his paper:

The workingmen's candidates simply stand in the position of watchmen, to see that if the opposition come to power they will not do as they did before, but that they will really and earnestly legislate in the interests of the working classes; to keep a sharp eye on the present government if they are continued in power, and make sure that they will not revert to their old ways, but walk a straighter course in the future than they have done in the past.³²

In Nanaimo, no such abortive agreement with the Opposition was attempted; throughout the campaign, the Workingmen candidates retained their identity as a "third force." At first they were favored by the Nanaimo Free Press, which declared edit-

³¹ The Opposition slate did include workingmen. J. Wriglesworth, a member of the Workingmen's Committee, was nominated as an Opposition candidate; of course, his association with the Workingmen's Party was immediately terminated (Industrial News, June 12, 1886). R.T. Williams, in his election appeal, (Daily Standard, Victoria, June 21, 1886, p. 2) referred to himself as a worker and called for legislation in the interests of the workers, such as a lien law, payment of jurors, and simplification of the voting laws.

³² Industrial News, July 3, 1886.

orally that both capital and labor should be represented in the legislature;³³ as election day came closer its cordiality waned, and it swung more closely to support of Dunsmuir and Raybould, the Government candidates. On the eve of the election the following squib appeared:

Workingmen!

Our best friends are the Capitalists, who give us employment, and pay us our wages regularly. Discard the humbugging alliance with adventurous fire-eaters, who have nothing to lose and only want to gain their own selfish ends.³⁴

To judge by their election appeal, however, Lewis and Myers were hardly "adventurous fire-eaters."³⁵ They made no reference to any clash of class interests, or need for the election of workers' representatives. Indeed, they went so far as to promise their "... best endeavours to encourage all honest industries and promote the interest of Capital and Labor so that they may work harmoniously to develop the resources of the Province."³⁶ Their campaign appears to have had a much milder tone than that of Smith and Duval in Victoria.

Whether the approach were mild or strong, British Columbia was not yet ready to elect labor candidates to the legislature; the new party was snowed under in both cities. Drawing only a small fraction of the total vote, Lewis and Myers footed the Nanaimo polls. In Victoria Smith and Duval did somewhat

³³ May 19, 1886, p. 2.

³⁴ Ibid., July 7, 1886, p. 3.

³⁵ vide Appendix, p. iii.

³⁶ Loc. cit.

better, but still lost their deposits.³⁷ The first bid for working-class representation in politics had been decisively rejected.

The main issues of the Workingmen's Party had been Chinese immigration and land grants; since these matters were of general interest, they were hardly sufficient to justify the formation of a "labor" party except insofar as the non-labor sections of the community were taking no effective steps to deal with these problems. This was, indeed, the case; however, there were certain items in the Workingmen's Platform of 1886³⁸ which were peculiarly of interest to labor and which, in the light of later political development, serve to relate the Workingmen's Party to subsequent labor political action.

The call for working-class representation in government, expressed in the first clause of the 1886 platform, has certainly been very durable; it is still with us. Its significance in this platform comes from its being the first political

³⁷ The actual results were:

<u>Victoria</u>		<u>Nanaimo</u>	
R. Beaven.....	540)	R. Dunsmuir.....	366)
E.G. Prior	540)	Wm. Raybould	267)
J.H. Turner	472)	Dr. O'Brian	192
Theo. Davie	463)	C.C. McKenzie	134
S. Duck	456	G. Thomson	90
R.T. Williams	413	Jas. Lewis	78
R. Lipsett	362	S.H. Myers	30
J. Wriglesworth	321		
A.J. Smith	208		
J.M. Duval	127		
J.W. Carey	53		

(J.A. Gemmill, ed., The Canadian Parliamentary Companion, Ottawa, J. Durie & Son, 1887, pp.354-355. (Note: this source of contemporary information was published irregularly until 1898-99, when it was succeeded by Arnott J. Magurn, The Canadian Parliamentary Guide. Subsequent references to this series will be made as CPC or CPG.)

³⁸ vide Appendix, pp.i-ii.

formulation in British Columbia of the idea that there is a basic divergence of interests between the "toiling masses" and the "wealthier part of the community."³⁹ The existence of such a conflict was never fully accepted by the Knights of Labor as a whole; insofar as they did recognize it they sought to diminish or overcome it by improving the economic lot of the workers and encouraging their "moral, intellectual and physical progress."⁴⁰ However, this early and limited recognition of class interests expressing themselves in politics may be regarded as the forerunner of the Socialist Party doctrine of the class struggle. It spread the concept of conflicting classes in society, although it included the idea that the conflict could be resolved by compromise; when the idea of a relentless, uncompromising class struggle was propounded about the turn of the century, at least part of the idea was familiar to the workers of British Columbia. For this reason, the first clause of the 1886 Workman's platform deserves to be regarded as a landmark in British Columbia labor history.

Another highly significant point in the platform is the proposal which concludes the clause on land grants -- "lands held for speculative purposes to be taxed to their full value."⁴¹ This is a limited application of the "single tax" principle for-

³⁹ Ibid., p. i.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. ii.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. i.

ulated by Henry George as the answer to exploitation.⁴² The early appearance of the idea in British Columbia can be attributed to the existence of these great tracts of privately owned land, much of it untaxed. It would continue to hold a prominent position in labor platforms until greater industrialization changed the relative importance of land and capital.

The clause on Chinese exclusion also provides a link with later platforms. In various forms the demand would reappear time after time, as successive candidates of all political faiths expressed themselves as anti-Chinese and succeeding provincial governments found their efforts hampered or nullified by constitutional provisions and by the reluctance of some influential employers, especially in the canning and coal industries, to dispense with cheap labor. The ineffectiveness of different administrations in this matter was certainly a prime factor in disillusioning many workers with the existing political groups, and leading them to demand their own representation.

The sixth clause, in calling for legislation to protect the lives of miners, also foreshadowed future labor pressure on politics. The coal-miners, already a sizable group on Vancouver Island, would soon be joined by metal-miners in demanding protective legislation.

⁴² Henry George: U.S.A., 1839-1897. His major work, Progress and Poverty, (1879) attributed poverty to the private ownership of land and the private appropriation of rent. George advocated public ownership of land, and as a means to that end the taxation of all land at its full rental value -- otherwise, the confiscation of rent. This, he calculated, would meet all costs of government and would make unnecessary all other taxes -- hence the name, "single tax." His economic ideas were based upon agrarian or small-scale production, not upon an industrial society.

Clauses seven and ten, which may be considered together, were hardly labor planks; they are better regarded as appeals to the farming community for support. Such appeals have been very common in the labor-political movements of this province, if only because the political weight of British Columbia has always lain in the non-industrial districts.

The ninth clause, an attempt to restrict the liquor trade, was very characteristic of the "moral uplift" attitude of the K. of L. Indeed, the "temperance" movement was continental in scope in the latter years of the century, and was very active politically. With the growth of trade unions this movement lost its hold on organized labor; the jobs of the brewery workers, bartenders, etc., had to be considered.⁴³

The final clause is of especial interest, both for its origin and its later development. An aspect of the principle of popular sovereignty, the "recall" is not at all in the line of British political development; rather, it derives from the French and American revolutionary traditions. Its first appearance in British Columbia may safely be attributed to American influence, working through the Knights of Labor. The idea of direct democracy, expressed in demands for this and other political reforms, would later receive strong reinforcement from another source.

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In 1908 the United Brewery Workers of America circularized the various unions, asking for their support in the coming U.S. election in opposing the demand for prohibition. The Sandon Miners' Union was probably almost alone in advising the U.B.W.A. to pay no attention to side issues, and rather to study and work for Socialism. (Sandon M.U. to U.B.W.A., March 10, 1908, held by T. & D.S.W.U., Trail).

The Nanaimo candidates of the Workingmen's Party added little of importance to this list of demands. They did complement the "recall" clause with a proposal for a referendum on all important issues; however, their most notable addition to the platform was in calling for a "lien law" to protect the wages of workingmen. At this time a worker had no effective means of enforcing a claim to wages; he could only sue for debt -- a slow and often costly process, and uncertain of success. A lien law would allow him to make a legal claim against the product of his labor, and thus reserve a source of payment.

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iii. Information on subsequent political activity by labor in this period is somewhat sketchy. In November 1886 a "Reform Party" endeavored, without success, to bring out a candidate in the New Westminster district for the House of Commons.⁴⁴ This attempt was of some interest to labor, and was probably associated with the K. of L.⁴⁵ It received no attention in the contemporary press; even the Industrial News did not report it.

In the same period, labor invaded municipal politics. In the first Vancouver civic elections (May, 1886), striking loggers financed and elected Malcolm MacLean, a real estate dealer, to be mayor. The motivation was largely personal; R.H. Alexander, the employer against whom the strike was called, had been nominated for the mayoralty, and the loggers were deter-

⁴⁴ "Twenty-five Years of the B.C. Labor Movement," B.C. Federationist, November 18, 1911, p. 4.

⁴⁵ Bennett, op. cit., p. 29.

mined not to allow him victory.⁴⁶

Later in the year, after the provincial election, the Knights themselves took a hand in civic politics. On November 28, 1886, the two Lower Mainland Assemblies issued a joint manifesto on municipal affairs and, we are told,

A little later an alliance between the K. of L. and the local Vintners' Association was formed to elect a ticket for the (Vancouver) city council.⁴⁷

Rather a surprising move, in view of the Knights' official attitude toward the liquor trade!

The manifesto, naturally enough, took cognizance of the Chinese question; it called for the democratization of civic affairs by the payment of all public officers, and public discussion and votes on all questions of increased taxation; it demanded city waterworks, a public library, and a city hospital, and it recommended "... the encouragement of local industries and their exemption from taxation."⁴⁸ Labor's demand for the exemption of industry from taxation would be repeated in later years, with an indication of some close reasoning behind the demand; in 1886 it was probably little more than a desire for increased employment through industrial expansion, with an element of single tax being expressed in negative form.

In this campaign not only Mayor MacLean and R.D. Pitt, (the latter a Master Workman of the K. of L. and candidate for city council) but also Alexander, again running for mayor, sup-

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 25. The vote was 242 for MacLean, 225 for Alexander. (Howay & Scholefield, op. cit., II, 435).

⁴⁷ "Twenty-five Years &c.," loc. cit.

⁴⁸ Loc. cit.

ported labor's manifesto.⁴⁹ MacLean, first elected by the loggers in May, was again successful; Alexander, despite his acceptance of the manifesto, was defeated, as was Pitt. The labor vote might be strong enough to defeat a candidate; it was not strong enough to elect a labor man.

In 1885-86 the Knights of Labor was at its peak of power, in British Columbia as elsewhere. It declined rapidly in the following years. In 1886 it had around 600 members in Vancouver alone.⁵⁰ Early in 1891 Shaftesbury (mixed) Assembly in Vancouver reported a membership of thirteen, and in October 1893 it dissolved. The other Assembly in Vancouver, composed of stevedores, seceded from the K. of L. in December 1896.⁵¹ The concepts and organizational form of the union were too broad for its time; it disintegrated under pressure, and its place was taken by the trade unions with their stronger appeal to individual bread-and-butter interests. In Vancouver, Shaftesbury Assembly was only kept in existence by the efforts of a few very active members such as Thomas Hallam, George Pollay, and G.F. Leaper.⁵² The Vancouver T. & L.C., to which the Assemblies adhered in their later years, supported their efforts; the mixed

⁴⁹ Loc. cit.

⁵⁰ v. sup., p. 27, n. 16. Definite figures on the K. of L. are hard to find, since it did not believe in making its affairs overly public.

⁵¹ Vancouver T. & L.C. "Minutes," 1889-1896, passim. (hereafter referred to as "VTLCM".)

⁵² All three were delegates to the Vancouver T. & L.C. in the period 1889-1896, and took part in the work of that body. Pollay was also active in the Single Tax Club, and Leaper edited the People's Journal (1893).

Assembly was a means of organizing the unskilled laborers. The other Assembly was practically a trade union of stevedores, and was held together by its internal unity of occupation. As an effective organization, however, the K. of L. in British Columbia was a spent force by 1890.

It may be said that the political efforts associated with the Knights of Labor accomplished almost nothing; no labor candidates were elected, although the loggers did back a winner in the Vancouver mayoralty contest of May 1886. The importance of these efforts lies in their being the first move of labor into politics; they broke the ground and sowed the first seeds. The campaign experiences would provide lessons for future use, and the Workingmen's Platform of 1886 would influence later formulations of labor's demands. The score was not entirely on the debit side.

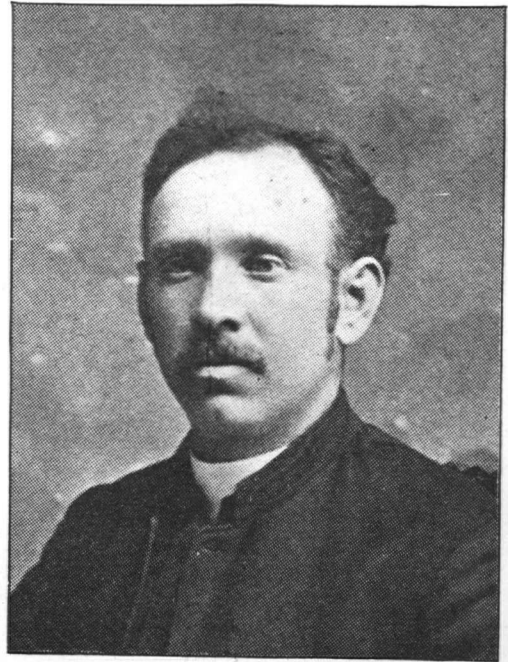
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(to follow page 41)



Robt. Macpherson Van.

Member of the Legislative
Assembly, 1894-1900
(Nationalist-Opposition)



REV. G. R. MAXWELL,
(Burrard.)

Member of Parliament,
1896-1902
(Liberal-Labor)



The City of Vancouver in 1890
(As seen from the south side of False Creek)

CHAPTER III

MINERS AND "NATIONALISTS"

i. The late 1880's show no signs of labor interest in politics. The Knights of Labor was fading into oblivion, and the craft unions were very much occupied in re-forming the ranks of labor along their own lines. Moreover, there were no general elections to stimulate interest and provide an immediate outlet for politically-expressed energies. Political interest only appeared in petitions to the senior governments and in such pressure as could be brought to bear on municipal affairs. Noticeable activity did not return until 1890 -- a provincial election year, with a federal election expected to follow closely. The revival of interest that occurred then was to run, with only a minor setback in 1898, into the new century; in a variety of forms it has persisted to our own times.

Labor's political efforts in the 1890's were concentrated in two areas -- the Vancouver district, where the Trades and Labor Council was the central body, and Nanaimo, where the Miners' and Mine-Laborers' Protective Association (M.M.L.P.A.) was the dominant influence. Although the labor organizations of the two cities were in touch with each other and sometimes worked together, their environments, organizational structures, and specific problems led them to act separately in most cases. Vancouver was already becoming a commercial and industrial center, with no one predominating industry or employer, whereas

in Nanaimo all things hinged upon the coal mines and the Duns-muir interests; the Vancouver labor movement was an agglomeration of trade unions, while most of the Nanaimo unionists were miners in an industrial union; the workers of both places were interested in shorter hours, a lien law, and limitation of Chinese labor, but while the Vancouver tradesmen busied themselves with the union label, public ownership, and municipal reform, the Nanaimo men found that such matters as land grants, monopolies, accident prevention, and arbitration of industrial disputes were of more immediate concern. Not until the turn of the century did co-operation between the two centers become at all close.

The Vancouver T. & L.C. was very hesitant about taking part in politics, to judge from its minutes in connection with the 1890 provincial election. A few of its member unions were pressing for action: on February 7 the Typographical Union unanimously passed a resolution calling for the adoption of a labor platform or for other measures whereby the unions could obtain "the most disinterested representation" in both the federal and provincial Houses, and then presented the resolution to Council;¹ this move was supported by Shaftesbury Assembly, K. of L., in a similar resolution.² Two weeks later, the matter was thoroughly discussed in Council:

¹ "VTLCM," February 14, 1890. vide Appendix, p. v, for resolution.

² Ibid., February 28, 1890.

The question of a working Man's Candidate on a platform suitable to working men was then taken up. Mr. Dixon thought the best way was to co-operate with the business men. Mr. Irvin considered that the working men held the balance of power. After further discussion Mr. Walker moved secd. (sic) by Hallam that this subject be laid over with a view to having the matter brought by the delegates in the various unions.³

A month later, the matter was carried further; presumably the member unions had favored political action. The secretary was to write to the Toronto T. & L.C. for "Copies of Political Platform suitable for such Councils," while a local committee was named to draw up a platform.⁴ However, so far as the minutes go, nothing resulted from these instructions; nothing is said as to any reply being received from Toronto, and there is no mention of a report from the "Platform Committee." Council did, later, pass a motion that "Each union be requested to send one representative to take into consideration the coming Provincial elections,"⁵ but there is no record of any action having been taken by the individual unions. The whole affair gives the impression of a few activists being frustrated in their aims by a membership which agreed with them, but was unwilling to commit itself to action.

As the drive within the T. & L.C. for action in the provincial election was being slowed down, the federal election of 1891 began to arouse attention. The Workingmen's League of New Westminster -- apparently a class organization for the pur-

³ "VTLCM," March 14, 1890.

⁴ Ibid., April 11, 1890.

⁵ Ibid., April 25, 1890.

poses of political action -- requested a delegate conference with the Vancouver T. & L.C. in connection with the coming dominion contest. The T. & L.C. accepted the invitation, and set up a committee to meet with the New Westminster people.⁶ No report was ever made of this meeting -- if, indeed, it took place -- but later in the year George Bartley (Typographical Union) brought in a report on politics, from which resolutions were passed recommending pressure on both provincial and federal governments to institute (1) manhood suffrage in municipal elections, (2) the abolition of property qualifications for municipal office, (3) a legal half-holiday on election, (4) an effective Sunday Observance Act, (5) provincial franchise to all persons receiving a salary of \$300 per year (as a step toward manhood suffrage), (6) legislation against intemperance, and (7) election of the Governor-General.⁷

These resolutions may be regarded as the first attempt at formulation of a labor platform in Vancouver, and it is worth noting that all its items except the fourth and sixth are demands for the liberalization of politics. Although the Knights of Labor formed but a small minority of the Council, all the resolutions reflect the "moral uplift" principle and the general approach of the K. of L. rather than the atomistic attitude characteristic of trade unions. The organization of

⁶ "VTLCM," April 25, 1890. It is interesting to note that the K. of L., although shorn of most of its membership, was one of the more active bodies in demanding political action. It presented resolutions of a political nature to the T. & L.C. (*Ibid.*, February 28, March 14, August 22, 1890, September 9, 1892) and its delegates were usually placed upon political committees.

⁷ *Ibid.*, October 3, 1890.

the Knights might be disintegrating, but their attitude was fastening itself upon their successors.

At the end of October, a Provincial Labor Congress was held in Nanaimo. There a new demand was made: labor wanted an eight-hour day in all federal, provincial, and municipal works.⁸ In addition, to put strength behind labor's demands, the Congress gave its executive committee permission "to devise ways and means of putting labor candidates in the field at the coming federal election."⁹ Thus the British Columbia labor movement as a whole approved the principle of independent labor political action, although leaving its form and implementation indefinite.

Those persons in the Vancouver T. & L.C. who favored the political approach, however, appear to have had their position reinforced by the decision of the Congress. The matter of nominating a labor candidate was again brought up,¹⁰ and "the parliamentary committee was instructed to obtain an interview with a certain New Westminster gentleman with reference to the coming election."¹¹ The candidature of E.S. Scoullar, a Liberal, was finally endorsed by the Council.¹² At last the trade union

⁸ "VTLCM," November 6, 1890. This demand for the eight-hour day was part of a continental movement initiated by the A.F. of L., beginning with a general strike of carpenters on May 1, 1890. It was thus not entirely of local origin. cf. Bimba, op. cit., pp. 210 ff.

⁹ Loc. cit.

¹⁰ Ibid., January 9, 1891.

¹¹ Ibid., February 13, 1891.

¹² Ibid., February 27, 1891. The report of the interviewing committee was made verbally, and the terms of endorsation were not recorded.

movement in Vancouver had taken a definite step into the field of political action.

It does not seem that the T. & L.C. took any steps other than this to aid Scoullar in his campaign. The minutes are singularly barren of any reference to the election campaign after the endorsation was agreed upon. Certainly the results of the voting were not likely to encourage future endorsation; Scoullar was beaten, three to one.¹³

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ii. In contrast to the hesitancy, inactivity and failure of the Vancouver trade unions during the elections of 1890-91, the industrial M.M.L.P.A. of Nanaimo showed a picture of energy and decision,¹⁴ crowned with success, in at least the provincial contest. The miners seem to have had no doubts about their engaging in politics; they nominated two candidates, endorsed a third, paid their election expenses, and saw all three returned to the legislature.

The immediate causes of the miners' interest in unified political action are not difficult to find; the conditions under which the miners worked and lived were not of the best.

¹³ G.E. Corbould (Cons.) 1694
 E.S. Scoullar (Lib.) 532
 (CPC, 1891, p. 191).

¹⁴ It seems fair to generalize that, on the whole, industrial unions have been more willing to engage in politics than have trade unions, and their efforts have been more successful. The K. of L., the coal and metal miners' unions, and the Canadian Congress of Labor unions all have a record of political action unmatched by their contemporary "trade" unions. This may possibly be ascribed to their being more "class" than "trade" organizations, to their more unified structure, and to their wider interests.

Tully Boyce, president of the M.M.L.P.A.,¹⁵ reported that at the Union Mines the average wage was not over \$2.00 per day, many Chinese were employed, some of them underground,¹⁶ the Company store was charging highly inflated prices, and the miners were forced to sign notes empowering the Company to stop store bills out of their wages.¹⁷ Moreover, coal-mining was a hazardous occupation, to say the least, and on the Island more so than elsewhere.¹⁸ Many of the miners felt that the desire of the owners for profit led them to neglect the safety of the workers. To this situation, legislation appeared as the only practical answer; major strikes in 1871, 1874, 1876, and 1877¹⁹ had not remedied affairs, and had, in some cases, been countered by militia and police action. It was plain to the miners that the government was not on their side. In addition, the Dunsmuir interests were based upon government grants, and Robert Dunsmuir himself had thought it worthwhile in 1886

¹⁵ Tully Boyce is the exception (and a notable one) to the general rule that the coal-miners' organizations were dominated by Britishers. He was from Pennsylvania; he left there in 1875, worked in the mines of Wyoming and other places, and came to Wellington in 1888. He was instrumental in forming the M.M.L.P.A., and was for a few years its leading figure.

¹⁶ A major complaint against the Chinese in the mines was that they did not observe necessary safety precautions, and that their command of English was not sufficient for them to understand vital instructions and warnings. cf. "Arbitration Hearings," Nanaimo Herald, November 17, 1899 and succeeding issues.

¹⁷ Nanaimo Free Press, May 23, 1890, p. 4.

¹⁸ Bennett (op. cit., p.68) quotes from a report in the Labor Gazette, April 1902, stating that the death-rate for miners in British Columbia was over three times that for the British Empire as a whole.

¹⁹ Bennett, op. cit., pp. 66-67.

to become an M.L.A. The natural conclusion was that the miners, in their turn, should go into politics with the aim of influencing or controlling the government.

Nanaimo labor officially opened its 1890 election campaign with a union-sponsored parade and mass meeting at Wellington, attracting over 800 miners.²⁰ The opening speeches dealt with matters not strictly political -- demands upon the employer for an eight-hour day bank-to-bank,²¹ and for union recognition. Then the meeting got down to political affairs.

No platform of specific demands was advanced at this time; the central idea was to get labor candidates in the field, and elect them. It is possible that there was enough agreement among the miners as to their needs, so that no special enumeration of demands was necessary.

It was first made known that the union had decided to co-operate with the farmers in an effort to win the two seats of the Nanaimo District.²² A representative of the farmers (it

²⁰ Unless otherwise stated, information on this meeting is taken from the Nanaimo Free Press, May 17, 1890.

²¹ It was the custom for the men coming on shift to arrive before time; they would be taken down in the lift immediately, and were expected to start work forthwith. In this way, all members of the shift would be at work by the time the shift officially began. Similarly, the men were expected to remain at work after the shift's end until they could be taken above ground. The miners wanted the work period made into a definite eight hours at the coal-face. (Interview with Lew Lewis, Nanaimo, July, 1954).

²² The District took in eastern and central Vancouver Island from the north edge of Chemainus to the Qualicum River, except for Nanaimo City. In such an area, the assistance of the farmers would be necessary for success. Fortunately for the miners, many farmers were discontented over the land grant system and distrustful of the promises of both Government and Opposition factions.

is not stated whether or not he spoke for an organization) recommended C.C. McKenzie, an Opposition candidate in the 1886 election, as the farmers' choice for one District seat. The meeting accepted the recommendation.

Dr. W.W. Walkem, an independent aspirant for the legislature, then requested that the meeting likewise endorse him; his bid was neither accepted nor refused -- it was ignored.²³ The miners were determined to put up their own candidates. Two men were nominated, and both were accepted by the meeting: Thomas Keith, a Belfast-born miner, for Nanaimo City, and as McKenzie's running-mate in Nanaimo District Thomas Forster, a Northumbrian who had worked in the Nanaimo mines before settling on a farm near New Westminster.²⁴

As the "farmer" part of the second Farmer-Labor ticket,²⁵ McKenzie does not properly come into this study. He endorsed the labor platform, and he received the support of the labor movement. He must be regarded, however, as an ally rather than as a representative of labor. The miners supported him in order to gain his support for their candidate, not for what he himself might do for them in the legislature.

²³ The way in which Walkem was brushed aside, and in fact the smooth running of the whole meeting, gives the impression that the choice of candidates had been made earlier by the group which organized the demonstration; the lack of opposition to the proceedings indicates that the organizers had the confidence of the miners.

²⁴ CPC, 1891, and letter signed "X" in Nanaimo Free Press, May 26, 1890, p. 4.

²⁵ Lewis and Myers, in 1886, formed the first such actual combination, although its coalition nature was not stressed explicitly.

Although committed to a single platform,²⁶ Forster and Keith displayed very different approaches to the problem of labor and politics. Forster, as befitted a miner-turned-farmer running in a largely rural constituency, was mainly interested in the land question; this he saw, as did Henry George, as the basis of all social evils. He told the miners' meeting:

You talk about the wrongs under which you labor but that will not remove the evil, I think you will find there is an evil that lies far deeper and that is you have lost the power over the land.²⁷

He advocated government control of railroads, and the cessation of land gifts for individual profit.²⁸ Keith, on the other hand, the working miner in an urban constituency, showed less concern with the question of land ownership; indeed, his campaign was not based upon any specific issues. The miners were discontented; he did not feel it necessary to recapitulate their grievances, but merely recommended working-class representation in the legislature as a general remedy:

... you are misrepresented and that has occurred simply because you have not sent in the right man as a representative to look after your interests. You should have sent the workman there. He would have understood your wants and he has the same feelings.... Do not believe the capitalist will advance your interests and wants. The only man who will do this is the workingman.²⁹

The idea of class conflict, hinted at in the 1886 Victoria Workingmen's Platform, was now being expressed more clearly; the ground was being thoroughly prepared for the appearance of

²⁶ vide Appendix, p. vi.

²⁷ Nanaimo Free Press, May 17, 1890.

²⁸ Loc. cit.

²⁹ Loc. cit.

socialism in British Columbia.

The taxation ideas of Henry George, also implied in 1886, became a very live issue in the 1890 election. Forster's remarks on the basis of social evils³⁰ are a re-statement of the central idea behind "single tax;" the platform upon which Keith and Forster ran called for all land held by corporations or speculators "to be taxed to its full rental value."³¹ In Victoria, Oppositionists Robert Beaven and John Grant said at a Single Tax meeting that the idea was good in principle, but would have to be worked out, and thereby provoked a storm of editorial criticism.³² The full single tax doctrine, involving the absorption of all rent in taxation, was indeed revolutionary for that time; it is comparable to a modern proposal to put a 100% tax on all profits. This was the doctrine that, in some form or other, was permeating the thought of the urban workers; it would be only a short step from the idea of abolishing rent to the idea of abolishing profit.

The three candidates supported by the miners in this election had no difficulty in being elected. For some reason, neither Government nor Opposition representatives appeared in

³⁰ v. sup., p. 51.

³¹ vide Appendix, p. vi.

³² Victoria Colonist, June 1, 1890. The Colonist berated Beaven and Grant for this statement much as a Conservative newspaper of today might attack an incautious Liberal who, at election time, made a similar remark about Communism.

the two constituencies.³³ Keith was returned unopposed in Nanaimo City, while in the Nanaimo District Forster and McKenzie edged out the hopeful Dr. Walkem.³⁴ The miners had elected the first labor M.L.A.'s to sit in the B.C. Legislature.

The measures demanded by the miners in 1890 may be divided, historically, into two sections: repetitions of demands made in the previous election,³⁵ and new demands. Clauses one, six and seven repeated the earlier protest against large grants of land, and were inspired by recent railway land grants in the Southern Interior.³⁶ Clause two reiterated the demand for safety measures in mining, expanded to include all industry. Clause four is not paralleled in the Victoria platform, but does cor-

³³ Due to the absence of real party lines or discipline, candidates usually appeared either independently or in groups, and ran their campaigns without a provincial organization. The strong appearance presented by the miners' mass meeting may have discouraged prospective opponents.

³⁴ The vote was:

Forster	160
McKenzie	157
Walkem	154

(CPC, 1891, p. 377).

³⁵ A comparison of the Nanaimo Workingmen's Platform of 1890 with the Victoria Workingmen's platform of 1886 shows some striking similarities in phrasing, suggesting that the writers of the 1890 document used the older one for guidance. For example, the first sentence of the later platform is almost identical with the opening of the earlier one. Clauses one and seven in the 1890 platform are the operative parts of clauses two and three in the 1886 platform; the originals have merely been stripped of their specific references and their excess wordage.

³⁶ In 1889 the Robson administration granted up to 20,000 acres per mile of track for a proposed line from Tete Jaune to Bute Inlet; in 1890 it empowered the Lieutenant-Governor to grant the same amount to four other lines: Crows Nest & Kootenay Lake, Ashcroft & Cariboo, Okanagan Valley & Kootenay, and C.P.R. (this last for a Revelstoke-Nelson-Lower Kootenay line). (British Columbia, Statutes, 1889, 1890, passim.)

respond to a demand in the Nanaimo "Election Appeal" of 1886 for a lien law to protect workers' wages. Clause five was a modification of the previous call for anti-Chinese legislation: to reduce Chinese competition on the labor market, provincial charters should in future prohibit the employment of Chinese. This move was an attempt to circumvent the constitutional provision whereby aliens came under the jurisdiction of the federal government, and the province could not legislate directly against the Chinese; it was hoped that charter prohibitions would be legal. Clause nine merely repeated the call for a shorter work-day.

New demands were few, being restricted to arbitration, taxation, and school administration. The last of these appears to have been prompted by a dispute between the Wellington school trustees and the Department of Education over the hiring of a certain teacher.³⁷ The other two demands are more significant.

The call for arbitration of labor disputes with enforceable awards should be noted, as it marks the beginning of a long argument within the B.C. labor movement over the relative merits of compulsory arbitration as against government non-interference. The reason for the demand, as it was put forward in 1890, is not hard to see: the miners had gone on strike repeatedly in order to improve their conditions, but their grievances still remained. The strikes had been expensive, and violence had occurred. The miners wanted a less unpleasant way of obtaining their immediate demands, and this was their sug-

³⁷cf. British Columbia, Legislative Assembly, Journals, Victoria, Queen's Printer, 1890, "Appendices," p. i, for correspondence.

gestion. However, the objections to compulsory features in arbitration would not become obvious until the beginning of the new century.

The clause on taxation is somewhat puzzling; the prevailing taxation ideas of the period, among the workers at least, were those of Henry George, and Thomas Forster seems to have been influenced strongly by "single tax." On the other hand, very little was heard in British Columbia about an income tax. Britain had a small income tax; the United States had introduced one during the Civil War, but had subsequently abolished it. In neither country, however, had it significantly equated taxes with ability to pay and thus possibly recommended itself to the Nanaimo miners. There is a stronger possibility that it indicates the first direct influence of socialist thought upon the B.C. labor movement. In 1848 Marx and Engels had recommended as a primary measure in the building of socialism "a heavy progressive or graduated income tax;"³⁸ this idea was taken up by the European socialists, and may well have been brought to Nanaimo by the European miners.

It is, at least, reasonable that this idea should appear first among the miners, the most industrialized workers of British Columbia. Farmers and independent artisans were more likely to be paying rent than to be directly producing profits for others; rent occupied their thoughts more than did profit, and they were consequently attracted to single tax. Miners, employed by a large corporation to dig coal for immediate sale,

³⁸ The Communist Manifesto, Kerr, Chicago, 1915, p. 41.

could clearly see profits accruing to the corporation from their work, and were receptive to the idea of a tax which would reduce those profits. Thus they were ready to endorse the principle of an income tax.

The accomplishments of the first labor representatives in the British Columbia Legislature were few, and small. There was no balance of power -- the dream of small political groups -- to exploit; the Government had a solid majority, and needed to make no concessions to remain in power. Despite Keith's insistence upon political independence, the little group from Nanaimo found itself aligned with the Opposition on nearly all issues. The Labor members had been elected to criticize the actions of both the other groups; since only the Government party could take any effective action, it was the real target of labor's attacks. The Opposition was also criticizing the Government, and was in no position to implement measures which would arouse the hostility of Keith and Forster. Over the four years until the next election the Labor members became more and more identified with the Opposition group, and ceased to be a recognizable independent factor in the House.

In presenting labor matters to the House, Keith was much more aggressive than Forster. In every session from 1891 to 1894 he introduced a bill to amend the Coal Mines Regulation Act in the interests of the miners. On the first occasion his bill was voted down 14-13; the second time it was tabled for six months, thus being killed, by a vote of 17-12; the third time it was defeated 16-12; his fourth and final attempt at amendment was ruled out of order by the Speaker

because it would impose indirect and unequal taxation on the mine-owners. Keith challenged the Speaker's ruling, but was again defeated by the House. He also initiated resolutions in the 1891, 1892, and 1893 sessions appealing to the Dominion government to further restrict the immigration of Chinese; the first resolution was endorsed by the House, but the others were rejected. Then, in 1894, Ottawa replied to Keith's resolution and similar requests by others, to the effect that "In view of the commercial relations of Canada with China and its possible extension, it is not expedient ..." to introduce any measures which might antagonize the government of China."³⁹

In addition to these moves, Keith also introduced a bill to abolish the garnisheeing of wages; this was "talked out" by both sides of the House.⁴⁰ In 1891, with the support of Forster, he called for a committee of the Legislature to investigate the 1890 strike or lockout at Wellington, during which the militia had again been brought into action. The request was granted, and Keith became chairman of the committee; the committee found that the trouble was based in the refusal of the mine-owners to recognize the union. This might have been considered a victory for the labor members, except that the matter died with the presentation of the committee's report. No concrete action was taken.

³⁹ British Columbia, Legislative Assembly, Sessional Papers, 1894, p. 1004.

⁴⁰ Garnishees were especially obnoxious to the miners in the smaller centers, where they could only buy from the Company stores. In such places a man whose wages were garnisheered would find it very difficult to get clear of debt.

Although Keith was frustrated in his attempts to get measures passed in the interests of the miners and of labor generally, the very election of himself and Forster appears to have awakened the Government and Opposition groups to the fact that a new force was moving in provincial politics. Certainly the Opposition attempted to win labor to its side; the Beaven faction in the House fairly consistently supported Keith's bills and resolutions, and introduced certain motions along the lines of labor's expressed desires. In 1891 the Opposition attempted to insert anti-Chinese clauses in all railway charters which were presented; in 1891 and 1893 an Opposition member moved endorsement of the principle of the eight-hour day in provincial works. These moves were defeated, the first time by referral to a committee which did not report back and the second time by a straight vote. An 1893 move by Beaven for regular payment in cash of workers in provincial works was rendered innocuous by an amendment which turned the resolution into pure gibberish.

For its part, the Government remedied a standing grievance of the workers by introducing a Mechanics Lien Law in 1891; this was passed without division. In 1893 it appeared to meet the demand of the miners for arbitration machinery by bringing in "An Act to provide for the establishment of a Bureau of Labor Statistics, and also of Councils of Conciliation and Arbitration for the settlement of Industrial Disputes;"

this, too, was passed unanimously.⁴¹

Of the two measures, only the first was put into operation; the second was never fully implemented. A survey of the unions in British Columbia was initiated, without too much success; the unions appear to have been rather unwilling to divulge their "vital statistics" to a government agency. The conciliation and arbitration clauses of the Act were never invoked.

On the surface, the election of labor M.L.A.'s from Nanaimo did not bring about any results beneficial to the labor movement; Keith's motions were brushed aside by the Government majority. From that point of view labor political action was a failure, and probably appeared as such to many workers. In fact, however, the appearance of labor on the political scene led the older-established groups to make certain concessions called for by the unions, in an effort to break up this intrusive force and attach its elements to their own ranks.

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iii. Although they had been so successful in the provincial election, the miners did not follow up their victory by running a candidate in the federal election of 1891. Their organization had been severely weakened by the Wellington strike and lockout of 1890,⁴² and was mainly concerned with problems of recovery. However, in 1893 there was a by-election

⁴¹ The foregoing data on Keith's activities in the Assembly comes entirely from the Legislative Journals, Sessional Papers, and Statutes, 1891-94 inclusive. The references are not individually footnoted, since the indexing and arrangement of these volumes makes reference a simple matter.

⁴² Jas. Young, "Tully Boyce as Unionist," Nanaimo Free Press, October 23, 1900, p. 3.

following the death of the sitting Member of Parliament, D.W. Gordon (Cons.). The M.M.L.P.A. met to consider the existing political conditions, and to look for a suitable federal candidate.⁴³

The main speech was given by Thomas Keith, M.L.A., and it certainly was not encouraging to the political actionists. His story was one of frustration. He had tried, unsuccessfully, to get the Chinese excluded from underground work in the mines; he had twice been defeated by a margin of one vote in attempts to have Chinese immigration restricted; he had introduced a copy of the English law on garnishees, only to have it rejected by both sides of the House -- even Forster had opposed it.⁴⁴ The Cabinet members had told him that such a bill was merely a protection for rogues, and he had received the impression that "those who did manual labor were looked down upon in the Provincial House." Keith closed with an appeal for more political action by the Nanaimo miners. His previous remarks, however, did not lend support to the belief that such action would be of any immediate value; Nanaimo appeared to stand alone in electing labor members, and could, by his own admission, do little or nothing alone.

Possibly because of Keith's dampening recital of

⁴³ Information on this meeting is taken from the Nanaimo Free Press, March 4, 1893.

⁴⁴ Forster later explained that he had voted to exempt wages up to \$40 for married men, and \$25 for single men, from garnishee; he had not voted for the abolition of the garnishee, and had therefore been censured by a meeting of Northfield miners. (Nanaimo Free Press, April 9, 1894, pp. 1-2).

failure, the meeting showed little enthusiasm. The cost of electing and maintaining a federal member was mentioned, and Tully Boyce intimated that the miners would be very reluctant to assume this cost. He suggested that they support a man able to finance himself, such as Mayor Haslam of Nanaimo. To this Keith, despite his earlier remarks as to the necessity of electing a workingman,⁴⁵ assented. Joseph Hunter, superintendent of the Island Railway and provincial member for Comox, was already in the field and it was felt that no straight labor candidate could defeat him. On Keith's motion, the M.M.L.P.A. decided to support Haslam if he would endorse the principles of Reciprocity and Chinese Restriction. The motion carried with only small support, although there was but one negative vote; most of the miners present were passive.

In this campaign, restricted though the role and aims of the Miners' Union may have been, there were signs of the development of a broad labor unity. The Nanaimo T. & L.C. co-operated with the miners,⁴⁶ and the Vancouver T. & L.C. pledged its moral support.⁴⁷ There was as yet no concerted action by the Island and Mainland labor centers, but there was a recognition of common interests.

Hunter, closely identified with the Dunsmuir interests through his position with the Railway, was defeated, and

⁴⁵ v. sup., p. 51.

⁴⁶ People's Journal, March 11, 1893, p. 1.

⁴⁷ "VTLCM," March 10, 1893.

the miners could regard this as a victory. Haslam, however, was in no way a labor member; he was merely a Liberal pledged to two principles which did not really set him apart from other British Columbia Liberals. The miners' victory was negative, not a positive gain.

In the meantime, the Vancouver labor movement was coming closer to active participation in politics. Immediately following its hesitant endorsement of Scoullar in the federal election, the T. & L.C. started looking toward the next provincial contest. Consideration was given to getting unionists on the voters' list, and the member unions of the T. & L.C. were invited to suggest suitable candidates.⁴⁸ However, interest in politics was not easily sustained, probably because the next elections were too far in the future. A year later the matter was brought up again, and concrete action was recommended. It was agreed that a "responsible person" should be paid to make sure that all unionists were on the voters' list, and that ways and means should be devised to finance the election of an "eligible workingman" to Ottawa.⁴⁹ It is not recorded that these resolutions were implemented.

Even though there was no election campaign to stimulate action, the T. & L.C. continued to show its interest in politics through resolutions on political matters. It passed a motion of want of confidence in the provincial government,

⁴⁸ "VTLCM," May 8, 1891.

⁴⁹ Ibid., May 6 and June 3, 1892.

centered upon three points: a lack of beneficial legislation, lack of action on the Chinese question, and the governments projected scheme for deep-sea fishing by crofter immigrants.⁵⁰ Later in the same month it petitioned the dominion government to restrict Chinese immigration and employment by the same measures advocated by Keith and Forster in Victoria.⁵¹ It took a stand against militarism by endorsing a resolution from Shaftesbury Assembly, K. of L., "most strongly and emphatically" objecting to the establishing or enlarging of any armed forces in Canada.⁵² A letter from the Toronto T. & L.C. approving of the initiative and referendum was circulated among the Vancouver unions,⁵³ and was endorsed by several of them. In turn, the British Columbia unions impressed the seriousness of the Chinese question upon the T. & L.C. of Canada, so that the national Congress prepared a petition to Ottawa asking that the entry tax upon Chinese be raised from \$50 to \$500, and that an annual \$100 tax be levied on all resident Chinese.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Loc. cit. The only "labor" bill of the 1892 session was a proposed amendment to the Coal Mines Regulation Act, moved by Keith; it was rejected 17-12. A bill by Keith and Forster, repeating an 1891 request of the Assembly for the Lieutenant-Governor to ask the federal government to further restrict Chinese immigration, was voted down 14-13; Opposition attempts to have anti-Chinese clauses inserted in provincial charters were regularly lost. (British Columbia, Legislative Assembly, Journals, 1891, passim.)

⁵¹ "VTLCM," May 20, 1892.

⁵² The immediate cause of this resolution was the establishment of a battalion of volunteer riflemen in Vancouver. The basic cause was the use of the armed forces to protect strike-breakers during labor disputes. (Ibid., September 9, 1892).

⁵³ Ibid., June 3, 1892.

⁵⁴ Ibid., January 27, 1893.

While thus engaged in making resolutions and petitions, the Vancouver T. & L.C. kept in touch with affairs at Victoria through two of the members of the legislature.

F.J. Carter-Cotton, editor of the Daily News-Advertiser and member for Vancouver, sent the T. & L.C. information on current legislation and presented its communications to the government;⁵⁵ Thomas Keith also endeavored to attend to the legislative desires of the Council.⁵⁶

The years 1893 and 1894 were marked by a growth of labor political organization wider in scope than anything recorded previously. Early in March 1893 a meeting called by the president of the New Westminster T. & L.C. decided to organize a Workingmen's Political Club, and set up a committee to draft a constitution and by-laws.⁵⁷ The aims of this club were not published, but it may be suspected from its only recorded action that its scope was very limited.⁵⁸ Just over a year later it was followed and eclipsed by the appearance of the first real "labor party" in British Columbia -- the Nationalist Party.

Before this time, labor political action had been conducted either by the unions themselves, as in the case of the M.M.L.P.A. and the Vancouver T. & L.C., or by "Workingmen's Parties." These latter had tended to be impermanent and very

⁵⁵ "VTLCM," February 10 and 24, 1893. For several years around the turn of the century Carter-Cotton was a well-known figure in political life. At first considered somewhat radical, in later years he became more conservative and lost the sympathy of the unions.

⁵⁶ Ibid., February 2, 1894.

⁵⁷ People's Journal, March 11, 1893, p. 1.

⁵⁸ It sent a delegation to the City Council to press that body into endorsing an extension of the municipal franchise; its demand was refused. (Ibid., March 18, 1893, p. 1).

personal organizations, in that they had appeared at election time in connection with the candidatures of certain individuals. After the election they had dissolved, their work completed. Although the Nationalist Party was personal, in that it was associated with the candidatures of two men, it was a continuing organization in that it lasted for at least two, and possibly more, years.

The exact date of formation of the new party cannot be determined exactly; it was in late March or early April, 1894.⁵⁹ According to one statement, it was "recruited from the ranks of the Knights of Labor."⁶⁰ This may have been true in part, but the K. of L. alone, in its current state of disrepair, could hardly have provided the bulk of the membership necessary to such an organization. It is known that its first permanent officers were W.M. Wilson, president, of whom nothing more is heard, and Rev. George R. Maxwell, vice-president, later a well-known political figure in British Columbia.

There appears to have been no direct relationship between the Nationalist Party and the unions, nor was membership in the unions confined to workers -- the latter point being confirmed by the membership of Maxwell. From available references its claim to being a labor party rests on its having a preponderance of workers as members, including some influential members of the T. & L.C., and upon its platform, which was based upon the political and economic problems of the workers.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Nanaimo Free Press, April 7, 1894.

⁶⁰ Ibid., April 21, 1894.

⁶¹ For the Nationalist Platform, vide Appendix, p. viii.

iv. The Nationalist Party was formed in preparation for the provincial general election of 1894. At the same time labor in Nanaimo was also making political preparations, in the hope that the success of 1890 could be repeated. This time, however, the miners tried a different tactic; instead of rejecting all alliances except that with the farmers, they joined forces with the Opposition group.

At least three reasons present themselves in explanation of this action. First, as Keith had made plain the previous year, one or two members could accomplish little in the House, and it seemed that labor was unlikely to elect more than a handful of representatives for many years yet. Second, in the past few sessions of the legislature the Opposition had generally supported the measures desired by labor, and had thus somewhat redeemed itself in the eyes of the miners. Third, the M.M.L.P.A. was no longer the powerful force that it had been in 1890. Then it had consisted of four lodges covering the Nanaimo district; now it was reduced to one lodge in Nanaimo itself.⁶² The more active among the miners were still determined to get political representation and favorable legislation, and under the circumstances an agreement with the Opposition seemed to be the best way to attain this end.

As a result of this policy, the campaign machinery in this election was not as direct as it had been in 1890, when the M.M.L.P.A. had organized, financed and run the campaigns of Keith and Forster. This time a meeting called by the Opposition set up

⁶² British Columbia, Legislative Assembly, Sessional Papers, 1894, pp. 1007-8.

the Nanaimo Reform Club, to which the Miners' Union, the city trade unions, and the temperance societies sent delegates.⁶³

The objects of this club or party were as varied as its constituent parts; its nature was best expressed by T.R. McInnes, who hoped that it would be a new and vigorous Liberal party.⁶⁴

However, the main interest which it had for the M.M.L.P.A. was that it could be a means of attracting support to workingmen candidates in the coming election.

The newspapers appear to have been somewhat confused by the labor-reform movement at Nanaimo. The News-Advertiser referred to the nomination of a "Liberal" candidate;⁶⁵ it also mentioned an "Opposition" nomination,⁶⁶ as did the Nanaimo Free Press.⁶⁷ Actually the Reform Club was dominated by the Miners' Union, and the regular Opposition and Liberal elements were, locally, auxiliaries. The weight of the M.M.L.P.A. in the combination may be judged by the fact that all three Reform Club candidates in the re-distributed Nanaimo area were miners, and prominent members of the union. It was a labor ticket on a labor platform, but with outside support.

Of the three Labor-Opposition candidates in this election, only one had sat in the last House. The Nanaimo District, formerly held by Forster and McKenzie, had been split up; there were now three separate Nanaimo seats, City, North, and South.

⁶³ Nanaimo Free Press, March 5, 1894, p. 3, and March 7, p. 1.

⁶⁴ Ibid., March 13, 1894, p. 1. This is presumably the later Lieutenant-Governor; less probably, it might refer to his son, Tom McInnes. W.W.B. McInnes was also a prominent member of the Reform Club.

⁶⁵ April 29, 1894, p. 6.

⁶⁶ June 3, 1894, p. 1.

⁶⁷ May 14, 1894, p. 2.

Forster, possibly because the Northfield miners had criticized his voting record,⁶⁸ did not seek re-nomination in Nanaimo but contested his home district in the Fraser Valley. McKenzie, the Farmer ally of the miners in 1890, was able to run in a predominantly rural district and was of no further concern to the miners. Keith, however, was nominated in Nanaimo City at a fusion meeting of those opposed to the recent government. The two new candidates were Tully Boyce, president of the M.M.L.P.A., and Ralph Smith, a Northumberland miner newly arrived in the district who was already becoming known for his oratorical powers.

The Nanaimo Workingmen's Platform of 1890 was drawn up by workingmen. Its language was direct and forceful: it made "demands" upon the government; it referred to existing legislation as "unjust," and it "condemned" a policy imputed to the government.⁶⁹ Its clauses were not presented in parallel or strictly grammatical form, but it carried conviction and a sense of rough determination.

In the 1894 platform⁷⁰ all this was changed. Instead of "demands," "measures" were advocated; no uncomplimentary adjectives were used to describe existing laws; the form of the platform was impeccable both in arrangement and in grammar; careful qualifying clauses were inserted, and in general the

⁶⁸ V. sup., p. 65, n. 60.

⁶⁹ vide Appendix, p. vi.

⁷⁰ vide Appendix, p. xi.

whole document assumed a highly legal or parliamentary form.⁷¹ It was almost certainly put into its final form by a lawyer -- possibly W.W.B. McInnes -- and in the process it lost all traces of the vitality or appeal of the earlier platform. It was no longer a call to action but a cold statement of proposed legislative measures and policies. As such, its ability to attract the support of the miners was doubtless greatly reduced.

The matters enumerated in the 1894 platform as requiring attention were, on the whole, very similar to those listed in previous platforms. Five of the clauses referred to railroads and their land holdings; there was the usual demand for a cessation of such land grants and for the taxation of unused land at its full rental value, and there was a specific proposal that the government purchase the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railroad and its lands. The call for a shorter work-day was made more exact than before: it was suggested that the eight-hour day be adopted on all public contracts. Two clauses dealt with the exclusion of Orientals from public works and from operations chartered by the provincial government. Another enunciated a principle which would later be invoked to exclude Orientals from the coal mines; it called for the examination of all underground workers on their duties and the necessary precautions against

⁷¹ For example, compare the following clauses:

- 5.(1890) That a clause be inserted in all Charters granted by the Provincial Government, prohibiting the employment of Chinese.
- 10.(1894) That a clause be inserted in all charters granted by the Government prohibiting the employment of any person of the Chinese or Japanese race in any capacity for any of the purposes for which the charter be granted.

the dangers of coal-mining. There was also a protest against the importation of foreign labor under contract.

These were enunciations of the grievances expressed in earlier labor platforms; they were accompanied by other demands which had less connection with the immediate concerns of labor. For example, removal of the tax on mortgages might assist some workers to purchase property, but it would have little effect on the miners who lived in Company houses or dwellings of their own construction. The temperance clause may have reflected a lingering influence of the Knights of Labor, but it was more likely a bid for the votes of the members of the local temperance societies. The clause calling for more government control of schools is unexplained, but it might represent an early attempt to cope with the problem of school finance. It should at least be noted that it was a complete reversal of labor's 1890 clause on schools.

The two clauses on political liberalization were both new to labor platforms, and would both be enacted into law in the future. However, the demand for woman suffrage cannot be regarded as a distinctively labor issue. It had been proposed in the House by the Opposition during the last session, and was generally associated with liberal political thinking. The call for abolition of candidates' deposits, on the other hand, has historically been associated with labor movements. Established political parties with adequate funds tend to regard such deposits as a protection against invasion of their field of action by new parties; labor and socialist parties, seldom having

an abundance of funds, tend to interpret such deposits similarly -- and resent their existence.

It will be noticed that three matters dealt with in the 1890 Workingmen's Platform did not reappear in 1894. The demand for a Lien Law and that for arbitration of industrial disputes had been covered by the legislation of 1891 and 1893. As for the third demand (protection of the health and safety of workers in industry), despite the failure of Keith's efforts to have the Coal Mines Regulation Act amended, it could be hoped that protection would be realized through the workings of conciliation and arbitration.

It remains for a few words to be said about the contrast between the taxation proposals of the 1890 and 1894 platforms. When the miners ran their own campaign and made their own platform, they demanded a graduated income tax in place of the prevailing tax structure; single tax was relegated to a minor position, as a deterrent to land speculation. In 1894, when the miners united with liberal and reform elements, the income tax proposal disappeared and it was suggested that the scope of single tax be somewhat extended. The indications are that some of the reformers -- fairly prosperous men, such as the McInnes family -- would be personally affected by an income tax, while the single tax would be borne by the non-reformist land-holding corporations and individuals.

The Nanaimo Reform Club platform of 1894 was to a large extent economic, and dealt with specific legislation. The contemporary platform of the Nationalist Party in Vancouver

emphasized political reforms and was couched in more general terms. If the Nanaimo platform shows the touch of a politically-minded lawyer, the Vancouver platform shows the idealistic and "absolute" attitude of a theologically-trained reformer -- almost certainly Maxwell. Both platforms are carefully laid out and are expressed in good English, but while the Nanaimo platform carefully qualifies most of its general proposals in legal style the Vancouver platform makes great use of the word "all" and other such absolutes and tends to leave its principles in general terms.

The economic sections of the Nationalist platform, on the whole, run very close to the Nanaimo proposals. The eight-hour day, cessation of the importation of contract labor, and the ending of the land grant policy appear in both documents. The Nationalists, however, did not include an anti-Oriental clause in their platform. They went beyond the Nanaimo reformers in calling for useful public works in the interests of the unemployed, and the abolition of the contract system on public works.

On the fiscal side, the Nationalists embraced single tax in its entirety. In no other labor platform do we find such a blanket endorsement of the tax on land values, and rejection of all other taxes. The incorporation of this clause in the Nationalist platform was the high-water mark of "Georgeism" in British Columbia.

Closely linked with the idea of a single tax was that of government ownership of public utilities. It was included in the scheme of Henry George as a necessary social reform. It was also gaining currency from two other sources: the rapid expansion of the German economy through a policy of state ownership and control, and the socialistic argument that only social ownership could curb abuse of economic and political power by monopolies. The Nationalists included in their platform a list of seven widely-used services which they considered ripe for public ownership; in addition, they called for nationalization of the banking system.

Their six demands for political reform could be summed up in a few words: complete adult political democracy. They wanted the recall, initiative and referendum, enfranchisement of all adults, and legal holidays for voting. It will be noted that none of these demands has yet been achieved in full.

The most indefinite clause in the whole platform was undoubtedly the first, demanding "the full product of their labor" for the workers. This might mean anything from a flexible "fair wage" to the total of all social production, according to the economic ideas of the individual. However, it served its purpose; it was eminently moral, and a more definite statement would certainly have created dissension within the party.

Like the miners in Nanaimo, the Vancouver unionists worked in co-operation with the Opposition faction. The Nationalists first named their candidate for the provincial House -- Robert Macpherson, a carpenter. This done, his name was pre-

sented to the Opposition nominating convention, where he was welcomed as a member of the Opposition team of candidates.⁷²

It appears that the radical platform of the Nationalist Party was not taken too seriously by either the Opposition or by Macpherson; the former made no public objection to it, and the latter did not campaign upon it. The Vancouver World, which supported the Government, accused the Nationalist-Opposition combination of attempting to conceal this platform from the public, and remedied the omission by printing the entire Nationalist platform -- together with some very caustic comments -- on its editorial page.⁷³ Certainly the double nomination of Macpherson, by both Nationalist and Opposition conventions, indicated that he was not expected to work actively for the immediate implementation of all the clauses in the platform; the Opposition could hardly have endorsed him, had that been the case. Finally, in answer to a current story that the Nationalists were going to "plump" for Macpherson, A. Grant, secretary of the Nationalist Party, stated flatly that the Nationalists had decided to support the whole Opposition ticket in Vancouver.⁷⁴ If the party were willing to do this, it certainly was not taking its official platform very seriously.

The Vancouver T. & L.C. remained officially passive in this election. Although Macpherson was a workingman and his

⁷² News-Advertiser, May 10, 1894, p. 1.

⁷³ Vancouver Daily World, May 14, 1894.

⁷⁴ News-Advertiser, June 8, 1894, p. 1. (Grant's first name is not recorded).

official platform contained many planks coincident with the expressed legislative demands of the Council, no endorsement of his candidature appeared in the minutes or in the press. He was ignored, and no reason was given for this attitude. It may be suggested that, since the Nationalist Party acted independently of the T. & L.C. in its nomination of Macpherson, the Council felt no obligation to support its candidate. This, however, is only one of a number of possibilities and should not be regarded as a complete explanation.

Despite the passivity of the local T. & L.C., Macpherson was elected.⁷⁵ His success cannot be ascribed to his Nationalist affiliation, since his vote was essentially the same as that of his running-mates. If any benefit were gained by such affiliation it must have extended almost equally to Williams and Carter-Cotton, who also had the official support of the Nationalist Party.

Although the Labor-Opposition alliance achieved success in Vancouver, it met with disaster in Nanaimo. The Government swept the three seats, even to the point of causing Ralph Smith to lose his deposit. Only in Nanaimo City, where Keith was defending his seat and the remaining M.M.L.P.A. lodge was located, did a miner's candidate even come within sight of

⁷⁵ Results of the voting in Vancouver were:
 A. Williams.....1911)
R. Macpherson 1766) elected
F. Carter-Cotton 1736)
 R.A. Anderson 920
 R.J. Tatlow 979
 E. Odium 607
 S. Greer 208
 (CPC, 1897, p. 380).

victory.⁷⁶

No doubt a prime factor in the defeat of the miners' candidates in 1894 was the decline of their union, stemming from the strike and lockout at Wellington in 1890. The dispute had been over union recognition, and the men had finally gone back to work without gaining their point.⁷⁷ The defeat had caused three lodges of the newly-formed union to disintegrate, leaving only the Nanaimo lodge. Thus in 1894 there was no strong organization to finance the candidates and carry on the campaign. The continual frustration of Keith's legislative moves could well have been another source of weakness; it was obviously useless to send minority members to the legislature if their demands were constantly ignored. From the other side, the Government-sponsored Lien Law and Conciliation Act of the past legislature undoubtedly led many workers to support the Government faction in the hope that it would bring in more such legislation. Finally, it is very probable that the alliance with the Opposition cooled the enthusiasm of some workers who believed in independent political action; certainly, the mild tone of the 1894 platform would repel any worker with even a slightly militant attitude.

Macpherson, the only labor candidate elected in 1894,

⁷⁶	Nanaimo City	Nanaimo North	Nanaimo South
	J. McGregor....431	J. Bryden....411	W.W. Walkem...146
	Thos. Keith....411	R. Smith.....139	T. Boyce.....120
		(Loc. cit.).	

⁷⁷ vide "Report of Select Committee on Wellington Strike or Lockout," British Columbia, Legislative Assembly, Journals, 1891, pp. ccxlf.

did not prove to be a particularly active proponent of labor's interests in the House. In 1895 he moved an amendment to the Elections Act designed to protect the secrecy of the ballot; it went to a committee, and was never reported out.⁷⁸ In 1896 he voted with the majority to hoist for six months a Mechanics' Lien bill introduced by Helmcken, only to have a similar bill of his own ruled out of order as "substantially the same" as Helmcken's bill.⁷⁹ In 1897 he introduced no measures, but in 1898 he succeeded in having passed an act which voided all labor contracts made outside British Columbia.⁸⁰ Such a measure had long been desired by organized labor in order to curb the immigration of "contracted" Chinese, and to discourage the importation of strikebreakers. Apart from these efforts, Macpherson behaved much as any other back-bench member of the Opposition.

While Vancouver and Nanaimo labor men were thus taking an increasing part in politics, Victoria labor was becoming less active. After providing a lead for the rest of the British Columbia labor movement in 1886, it did nothing in the 1890 election. Bennett claims that in 1894 the Nationalist Party put up a candidate in Victoria, but that he lost his deposit.⁸¹ Since such a candidate cannot be identified in the

⁷⁸ B.C., Journals, 1895, Bill 41, and Independent, February 16, 1901, p. 1.

⁷⁹ B.C., Journals, 1896, Bills 10, 76.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 1898, Bill 30.

⁸¹ Op. cit., p. 135.

press reports of the election campaign, it must be concluded that the Nationalist-Opposition alliance was even closer in Victoria than in Vancouver.

Whatever the Nationalists may have been doing, at least the Victoria T. & L.C. was considering the political situation. In concert with the Single Tax Association it formulated a platform which demanded (1) a fair wage based upon production, (2) no tax on the products of industry, (3) more equal legislative representation, and the abolition of candidates' deposits, (4) an eight-hour day law, (5) Chinese exclusion from government works, prohibition of Asiatic immigration, and no employment of Asiatics by companies enjoying government privileges, and (6) nationalization of telegraphs, railways and coal mines.⁸² Although no positive action resulted from this agreement, its existence indicates that an influential section of the Victoria labor movement was thinking along lines similar to those of the Nationalist Party in Vancouver. With the exception of the anti-Asiatic clause and the demand for nationalization of the coal mines, all the Victoria demands are to be found in the Nationalist platform.

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v. The Nationalist Party continued to be active after the provincial election, and soon began to prepare for the coming federal election. In the spring of 1895, it called a meeting, which was endorsed by the Vancouver T. & L.C., for the purpose of nominating a federal candidate.⁸³ Rev. George R.

⁸² News-Advertiser, May 5, 1894, p. 1.

⁸³ "VTLCM," March 1, 1895.

Maxwell was mentioned as a likely choice. However, the meeting was premature, since the election was not called until the following year. At that time the question of labor's political position was revived.

By now the T.& L.C. had clearly become used to the idea of taking a stand in politics, and had moreover accepted the idea of working with the Nationalists. It expressed its interest in this election by appointing a committee "... to wait upon the executive of the Nationalists and see what can be done with regard to running a Labor Candidate."⁸⁴ The Nationalists advised the committee that all interested unionists should attend ward meetings on April 24 and endeavor to elect delegates favorable to the nomination of a man who would represent the interests of labor. Upon the recommendation of the committee, Council accepted this suggestion.⁸⁵

These ward meetings were not being called by either of the major political parties. They were sponsored by a combination of groups which had in common only opposition to Sir Charles H. Tupper's Conservative administration and which formed, in effect, "... a fusion party of McCarthyites, Nationalists (labor) and Liberals."⁸⁶

This anti-Tupper fusion was brought about by three

⁸⁴ "VTLCM," April 10, 1896.

⁸⁵ Ibid., April 21, 1896. It was the general practice at that time for primary meetings of interested voters to be called in the wards. These meetings would name delegates to a secondary meeting at which a candidate pledged to a certain principle or program would be chosen.

⁸⁶ Independent, October 20, 1900, p. 2.

issues, two of which were national and the third confined to British Columbia. The Conservative policy on the Catholic schools in Manitoba had led many Conservatives, under the leadership of D'Alton McCarthy, to break with the party and form their own organization. The "National Policy" of protective tariffs was considered by many people to be an important cause of the existing trade depression. The Conservative Party was closely associated with the railway-building program in Canada, and the mass importation of Chinese had been undertaken mainly for railway-building. On these three issues -- Catholic schools, tariffs, and the Chinese in British Columbia -- the Conservative administration was subjected to wide-spread criticism.

In this situation, it was clearly the better strategy for the Liberals not to nominate a candidate. The anti-Tupper elements, taken as a whole, were strong enough to elect a man whose program was essentially that of the Liberal Party. On the other hand, an official Liberal candidate might not be able to draw the votes of the discontented Conservatives who were still anti-Liberal. It was almost certainly these reasons which persuaded the Liberal Party not to contest Burrard (Vancouver and the lower Coast) in this election.

Having decided to run a candidate, the fusionists looked about for a suitable man. Their choice fell upon Rev. George R. Maxwell, a Presbyterian minister, the central figure of the Nationalist Party, and a man well-known for his interest in political and social reform. At first Maxwell refused

the offer, saying that he was committed to continue in the service of his congregation; then, being pressed by "... a number of Liberals, McCarthyites, Conservatives, and the Trades and Labor unions," he allowed his name to go before the nominating convention, and was chosen as Independent candidate for Burrard.⁸⁷

Maxwell was an early representative of that group of ministers who came to be identified with the political side of the Canadian labor movement. Of these, James S. Woodsworth is the best-known; other notable examples are A.E. Smith, William Ivens, and T.C. Douglas. Imbued with humanitarian sentiments and a great amount of idealism, they interested themselves in social problems; trained in vocal and literary expression, they became the accepted spokesmen of large sections of the labor movement and expounded the needs and desires of labor to the rest of the community. Maxwell was a good example of the minister-turned-politician. Born in Lanarkshire, Scotland, he had worked in the Scottish coal mines and had there become familiar with labor organization. He had received a thorough classical and theological education, after that coming to Canada. From the time of his arrival in Vancouver in 1890 he had busied himself with the labor and reform questions of that city. His classical oratory and his florid, sometimes (it must be stated) obscure style of writing gained him attention to the point where he was the most likely person to receive the support of both

⁸⁷ News-Advertiser, April 27, 1896, p. 6, and June 13, p. 2.

liberal and labor elements.

Maxwell put forward no platform for his campaign. His aims and objects were expressed only in speeches, and were not committed to print. On the whole, he adhered to the main general issues of the campaign. He supported secular education in the public schools, he wished to restrict Chinese immigration and employment, and he favored freer trade, especially with Britain.⁸⁸ In addition, he condemned political corruption, and promised to support Laurier and McCarthy as long as they kept faith with the people.⁸⁹

Another candidate besides Maxwell was bidding for the dissident Conservative votes: W.J. Bowser, later to be premier of British Columbia, was making his debut in politics as an Independent Conservative. The effect of his candidature upon the result of the election is difficult to estimate. The votes he received would probably have favored Maxwell slightly, but it is unlikely that his presence altered the outcome of the election.

Although the Nationalist Party may be regarded as the vehicle by which Maxwell became the Opposition candidate in Burrard, the press made no mention of its activities or its platform in the campaign reports. The most likely explanation is that the fusion of elements behind Maxwell was so complete as to absorb the Nationalists temporarily. This effacement further strengthens the impression that the Nationalist platform

⁸⁸ News-Advertiser, May 6, 1896, p. 5, and May 19, p. 1.

⁸⁹ Ibid., June 9, 1896, p. 5.

was not regarded by its supporters as a basis for immediate action.

The voting showed an unqualified victory for the anti-Tupper forces, and a qualified victory for the liberal-reform elements. Maxwell was returned with a good plurality over Cowan, the official Conservative, but with a minority of the total vote.⁹⁰ For the first time, labor had played an important role in the election of an Independent member of the Federal House.

Maxwell's work in Ottawa during the next four years was not spectacular. Technically he was an Independent, but in actuality he voted steadily with the Liberals and defended the actions of the Laurier government.⁹¹ He did voice the grievance felt by British Columbia labor with regard to Chinese immigration, twice asking that the \$50 entry tax on Chinese be raised to \$500.⁹² He also supported a bill to give trademark status to the union label; on two occasions this was passed by the Commons and rejected by the Senate.⁹³ His efforts were credited with the final establishment of a Royal Commission on

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G.R. Maxwell (Ind.).....1512
 G.H. Cowan (Cons.)1214
 W.J. Bowser (Ind.Cons.)... 410

(CPC, 1897, p. 194).

⁹¹ Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, Official Report of Debates, 1898, I, 1527, and 1899, I, 1022, for his defences of the Liberal administration.

⁹² Ibid., 1896 (second session) 893, and 1898, I, 1163.

⁹³ Independent, April 13, 1901, p. 3.

Chinese and Japanese Immigration in 1900.⁹⁴ He did make an endeavor to carry out the wishes of the workingmen who had initiated and supported his election campaign.

After Maxwell's victory, the Nationalist Party went into a decline. The sparse reports on it indicate little activity and small membership; it was probably suffering from the absence of Maxwell, its guiding spirit. Toward the end of 1896 it was planning activity. It asked the T.& L.C. for assistance in its work, and requested that all members of labor unions be notified of its organization meeting.⁹⁵ The Council acknowledged receipt of the request, and a copy of it was ordered to be published.⁹⁶ The last reference to the existence of the Nationalist Party is in 1898, when the World noted that the Nationalists and Social Reformers had decided to take part in the provincial election of that year on a basis of "direct legislation."⁹⁷ The decision, however, seems to have been more hopeful than realizable. No action which the Nationalists may have taken received any publicity, and certainly no candidate was nominated by the group.

In addition to supporting federal and provincial candidates, the Nationalist Party also took an interest in civic politics. In late 1895, in conjunction with the Vancouver T.& L.C., it prepared a platform for the coming civic election.

⁹⁴ Independent, November 22, 1902.

⁹⁵ "VTLCM," November 20, 1896.

⁹⁶ Loc. cit. (Presumably for circulation to the various unions).

⁹⁷ June 10, 1898, p. 2.

In this it stressed an extension of democracy, the eight-hour day, single tax, and public ownership.⁹⁸ This platform was endorsed by the Ratepayers' Association, and was supported by the candidates of that group.⁹⁹ A portion of this platform, containing those clauses of most immediate importance to the labor movement, was re-endorsed by the T. & L.C. a year later for the next civic contest.¹⁰⁰

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vi. The Nationalist Party presents two conflicting aspects. On the one hand, its platform was highly idealistic and radical; it should be noted that not more than four of its proposals have even yet been adopted in British Columbia. On the other hand, the party was willing -- even eager -- to ally itself with political groups which were quite unsympathetic to its official objectives. Apparently the members of the party saw the inconsistency of their position, since they did not attempt to publicize their platform in 1894 or 1896. One member explained in an open letter that the Nationalists' work was basically of an educational nature, dealing with the "new" political economy.¹⁰¹ Thus the party would be agitating for immediate reforms and forming alliances to achieve those reforms, while at the same time it was educating for the institution of what it saw as a new society characterized by public ownership, single tax, and direct democracy.

⁹⁸ v. Appendix, p. x.

⁹⁹ "VTLCM," December 6, 1895.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., December 18, 1896. (It does not appear that the Nationalists were consulted with regard to this revision).

¹⁰¹ "Nationalist," News-Advertiser, May 23, 1894, p. 2.

In this, the Nationalist Party resembled the parties of the Second International and the Socialist Party of Canada before the first World War. Those parties too had both "immediate demands" and "ultimate objectives," insofar as they preached social revolution but gained support as a result of the reforms they advocated.¹⁰² Such a policy might not appear inconsistent, but occasions can and do arise when the measures advocated in order to gain electoral success are not consonant with the general principles of the party. When this happens, discord arises and may destroy the party. Such was the fate of the Socialist Party of Canada in the years following 1917, when the choice had to be made between Bolshevik action and the slower process of socialist education.

The reasons for the decline and disappearance of the Nationalist Party are unrecorded, and can only be surmised from the nature of the party and its known history. It was formed in 1894 in a period of economic depression, and was no doubt in part a protest against current conditions. It was centered largely about one man, Rev. George R. Maxwell; other members of the party, with the exception of Robert Macpherson, were relatively unknown. Its leader regarded existing capitalistic society as beyond redemption,¹⁰³ yet devoted his parliamentary

¹⁰² After 1902 the Socialist Party in British Columbia had no official platform of "palliatives;" however, its candidates in elections often advocated specific reform measures. (cf. Appendix, pp. xxx, xxxiii.

¹⁰³ In 1901, Maswell wrote:

"Our system is wrong. From top to bottom, radically, everlastingly wrong. We need a new system under which our present hideous pursuit for money will be deemed a criminal offence,

career to attempts to repair it. To judge from these circumstances, its decline could well have been due to a combination of three things: the improvement of economic conditions, the absence of its leading members in Ottawa and Victoria, and internal disagreement between those of its members who believed in education and those who demanded immediate action.

Although longer-lived than its predecessors, the Nationalist Party can hardly be termed an unqualified success. It initiated the successful candidature of two political representatives, both pledged to support the interests of labor. It did not, however, succeed in building a consistent labor vote of noticeable proportions; Macpherson's vote was comparable with that of his Oppositionist runningmates, and Maxwell was elected by an anti-Conservative combination. Neither man acted as a distinctively "labor" member. Maxwell was generally classified as an independent Liberal and was a loyal supporter of the Laurier government, while Macpherson was very closely identified with the Opposition. The traditional parties had temporarily headed off the threat of an independent "labor party" challenging their established position by taking the Nationalists into a subordinate alliance.

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when the massing of it will be a criminal offence, and when man's needs will be the only sane consideration in toiling and spinning." ("What is Man?," Independent, October 12, 1901, p. 3).

(to follow page 87)



Ralph Smith

Member of the Legislative
Assembly, 1898-1900
(Labor-Reform)

Nanaimo

Member of Parliament,
1900-1911
(Liberal-Labor)

Vancouver District



Western Fuel Company, Mine No. 1, Nanaimo.

CHAPTER IV

INDEPENDENT LABOR PARTIES, 1898-1906

Part I. To the Kamloops Labor Convention, 1902

i. The decline and disappearance of the Nationalist Party did not mean that the British Columbia labor movement was disillusioned with political action, or that the conditions which first called forth political action had disappeared. It did mean that the Nationalist Party was unsatisfactory to those who believed that labor should take an active part in politics. The years 1898-1900 saw the development of a new form of political action.

In the 1898 provincial election there was a slackening of the tide of labor political action. Only one labor candidate appeared in the whole province -- Ralph Smith in Nanaimo, making his second try for a legislative seat. Macpherson, formerly the Nationalist nominee in Vancouver, was running again, but this time as a straight Oppositionist; his 1898 campaign, therefore, is not relevant to this topic.

In 1894 Ralph Smith was considered as a newcomer in the Nanaimo area, and this certainly counted against him in the campaign of that year. By 1898 he had not only established himself, but he had also become a prominent figure. He was secretary of the M.M.L.P.A., and had served a term as a vice-president

of the T. & L.C. of Canada. His oratorical powers¹ had no doubt developed considerably during this period, and he was to be regarded as a formidable candidate. Moreover, the M.M.L.P.A. had somewhat re-established itself, and had entered into an agreement with the mine-owners for a check-off of union dues from all underground workers.² With the support of the union, which he undoubtedly had, he would be very hard to defeat. In addition, Thomas Forster had secured the passage, in the 1898 session, of an amendment to the Elections Act which guaranteed the secrecy of the ballot. Previously, according to the Nanaimo Free Press, any person who had access to the ballots and books after an election could easily ascertain how every elector had voted.³ Now the employee need no longer fear discrimination because of his vote.

The process whereby Smith was nominated is obscure; indeed, the Nanaimo Free Press had very little to say about the whole 1898 election campaign.⁴ Tully Boyce, in the heat of a

¹ Reports of his speeches convey the impression that he was a smooth and persuasive speaker, not too scrupulous in debate. This impression is confirmed by conversations with some persons who heard his speeches: e.g., Jimmy Phillipson of Nanaimo.

² From the various references, it appears that this check-off was in effect with both the New Vancouver Coal Company (Nanaimo) and the Dunsmuir mines. Conclusion of the agreement was sometimes credited to Ralph Smith; Tully Boyce, however, claimed it as the work of Arthur Wilson, before Smith came into prominence. (Nanaimo Free Press, October 23, 1900, p. 3). Although this agreement ensured the financial solvency of the union, it also made the union leadership largely dependent upon the companies.

³ Editorial, March 14, 1894, p. 2. vide also Independent, February 16, 1901, p. 1.

⁴ Just at this time the Spanish-American War was at its height, and the news columns were devoted to war reports.

later election, referred to the "sneaking" manner in which Smith secured the South Nanaimo nomination;⁵ this could possibly mean that Boyce, who had run in South Nanaimo in 1894, also wished to be a candidate but was forestalled by Smith. At least it can be established that Smith appeared with the backing of the provincial Opposition, and that he was closely associated with Dr. R.E. McKechnie, Opposition candidate in Nanaimo City, and W.W.B. McInnes, Independent Liberal M.P. for Vancouver (Island).⁶ He was certainly not a "straight labor" candidate, as Keith had been in 1890.

Smith's labor backing is almost as obscure as his becoming the recognized Opposition candidate. It is practically certain that the M.M.L.P.A. gave him official support. It had backed the labor-reform candidates in 1894, it would endorse Smith's candidature in 1900, and there is no reason to believe that it acted differently in 1898. Other Nanaimo unions probably also gave him their support, but the only extant record of official labor endorsation for a candidate in 1898 is a letter from the Rossland T.& L.C. strongly supporting Smith.⁷

Smith's platform as "labor and Opposition" candidate, as he was known,⁸ did not appear in the local newspaper; in a

⁵ Nanaimo Free Press, October 17, 1900, p. 2.

⁶ Ibid., June 20, 1898, pp. 4,2. In the 1896 federal election Smith had been offered the Liberal nomination but, for personal reasons, had declined in favor of W.W.B. McInnes. McInnes had been associated with him in the Nanaimo Reform Club of 1894. (Nanaimo Herald, April 17, 1900, pp. 1,5.)

⁷ Nanaimo Free Press, June 28, 1898, p. 1.

⁸ News-Advertiser, July 6, 1898, p. 6.

speech he referred to his "letter to the electors,"⁹ presumably a leaflet which was distributed. The full contents of this leaflet are not available, but in the above-mentioned speech he enumerated certain points of his program. These were (1) provision of a public market in Nanaimo for the farmers, (2) opposition to land grants to railroad corporations or any companies, (3) opposition to the mortgage tax and the tax on laborers in metal mines, and (4) support of squatters' rights.¹⁰ The rest of his program was probably very similar to the Reform Club platform of 1894;¹¹ there is no strong reason to expect any radical changes.

So far as Smith was concerned, the campaign of 1898 was a simple matter. His opponent was Dr. W.W. Walkem, who had requested the labor nomination in 1890 and as a Government supporter had beaten Tully Boyce in 1894. In the last House Walkem had voted against a measure to curb importation of labor under contract. Smith attacked him on this point, and also put Walkem's sincerity in question by asking why he opposed the employment of Chinese around the Texada metal-mines, but remained silent about Chinese in the coal-mines.

Such points, put forward in Smith's expert manner, were highly effective. Wage-workers generally feared the importation of other workers tied to a (usually) low-wage contract, and the coal-miners were especially exercised in the matter of employment of Chinese in the mines. On polling day

⁹ Loc. cit.

¹⁰ Loc. cit.

¹¹ vide Appendix, p. xxi.

there was a landslide vote for Smith.¹²

While Ralph Smith was thus being elected to his first legislative term, Robert Macpherson was winning his second election in Vancouver. Although he was designated as an Oppositionist and had no distinctive platform or -- so far as is known -- any labor organization behind him, he continued to maintain a certain bias for labor interests and was later to be again officially identified with the labor movement. For this reason, it should at least be noted that he was re-elected in 1898 as an Oppositionist, with almost exactly the same vote he had received in 1894.¹³

Thus 1898, a year of transition in the history of labor political action in British Columbia, passed by; only one candidate appeared with any claim to the name of "labor."¹⁴ For the moment, the labor movement appeared to be a spent force so far as political influence was concerned.

In the short period intervening between the 1898 and 1900 elections there was a great awakening of political interest in the labor movement. Several reasons may be advanced

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Smith 193
Walkem 53

(CPG, 1898-99, p. 248).

¹³ In 1894 he came second on the poll with 1766 votes; in 1898 he again came second, with 1795 votes. It would seem that the Nationalist Party, which backed him in 1894, was not much of a vote-getter.

¹⁴ In 1900, the Nanaimo Herald stated editorially that a labor candidate had opposed James Dunsmuir in Comox in 1898. (May 19, 1900, p. 2). This would refer to M.J. McAllan, the Opposition nominee. He is mentioned in the Nanaimo Free Press of 1898 (passim) but there is no indication that he was other than an orthodox Oppositionist.

for this; two reasons of basic importance should be considered here.

The first of these was political. The 1898 election had resulted in a practical stand-off between the Government and the Opposition. When the voting closed only seventeen Government members had been elected as against nineteen Oppositionists, and there were still two seats from Cassiar to be decided.¹⁵ C.A. Semlin formed a new Cabinet of former Oppositionists, with a precarious majority in the House. With party discipline practically non-existent "fringe" members had to be conciliated; this meant that the lone labor member and his allies were in a position of considerable power. Smith, his associate McKechnie, and Macpherson all supported the Semlin ministry and extracted from it a number of reforms.

Five measures of interest to labor were passed in the 1899 session. An amendment to the Master and Servant Act, moved by Macpherson, protected deductions from wages made for the purpose of medical care.¹⁶ Two amendments to the Coal Mines Regulation Act, moved by Dr. McKechnie, included Japanese in the existing prohibition on Chinese working underground, and provided that payment for coal dug should be by weight before screening.¹⁷ An act repealing some of the Railway Aid Statutes was introduced by Joseph Martin and was passed.¹⁸ Finally, a measure introduced by Francis Carter-Cotton prescribed the eight-hour day and certain protective regulations in metal-

¹⁵ Nanaimo Free Press, July 13, 1898, p. 4.

¹⁶ B.C. Journals, 1899, Bill 10.

¹⁷ Ibid., Bills 43 and 44.

¹⁸ Ibid., Bill 75.

mining.¹⁹ In addition, a bill introduced by Ralph Smith in favor of female suffrage was defeated by the narrow margin of 17-15, and Smith was made chairman of a Select Committee enquiring into working conditions under the Victoria and Esquimalt Telephone Company.

Such a flood of legislative concern with labor problems, obviously connected with the favorable position of Smith and his allies, could not fail to impress active unionists with the value of political action. If so much could be accomplished by so few, what might not several labor members be able to do?

The reaction of the mine-owners to the eight-hour law also tended to draw the labor movement into politics. According to Bennett,

To defeat the law the mine-owners in the Slocan formed an association to keep the mines closed till the act was repealed. Every mine-owner in the district put up a \$2,500 forfeit not to recognize any union or labor organization and not to pay more than \$3.00 for eight hours or \$3.50 for ten hours.²⁰

In addition, they petitioned the provincial government to repeal the law.²¹ It was plain that the law would have to be defended in the House, if it were to become an effective and permanent measure.

This was the political aspect; the other aspect was the recent geographic spread of labor organization in the pro-

¹⁹ Ibid., Bill 80. The details of these measures may be found in B.C., Statutes, 1899, passim.

²⁰ Op. cit., p. 136.

²¹ Vide reproduction of petition in Nanaimo Herald, January 26, 1900, p. 1.

vince. The development of metal-mining in the southern mountain area had resulted in a sudden growth of unionism among the incoming workers. Miners, carpenters, printers, railroad men, and many other workers were organized into their respective unions, and set up local Trades and Labor Councils.²² Organized labor was no longer confined to a handful of constituencies on the Island and Lower Mainland, but could now exert itself politically in a significant number of centers.

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ii. The 1900 election, in which labor was for the first time a really serious factor, was a confused episode.²³ As has been noted previously, the Government and Opposition groups were fairly well balanced after the 1898 election. In 1900 the Government group split, and the administration was defeated. Lieutenant-Governor T.R. McInnes then called upon Joseph Martin, leader of the dissident Government faction, to form a new administration. This Martin attempted to do, but was repudiated by the House, which included the Lieutenant-Governor in its disapproval. An election was at last called, in which six groups --

²² There was a Knights of Labor Assembly in Rossland in late 1897 -- probably the last in British Columbia ("VTLCM," November 5, 1897). W.F.M. locals were appearing throughout the area from 1896 onward (cf. Sandon Paystreak, Rossland Industrial World, etc., passim). By early 1900 District Association No. 6, W.F.M. comprised eleven unions with 3,000 members. (Ferguson Eagle, February 14, 1900).

²³ For a detailed study of the issues involved in this election, vide John T. Saywell, "The McInnes Incident in British Columbia," British Columbia Historical Quarterly, Archives of British Columbia, Victoria, July 1905, pp. 141-166.

two Government and four Opposition -- took part.²⁴

The Independent Labor Parties which entered the 1900 election as the successors to the Nationalist Party of Vancouver and the Reform Club of Nanaimo had very little organizational unity. Their appearance in different centers seems to have been, at first, quite spontaneous; for example, a "Reform and Labor Association" was organized at Revelstoke as early as February 29, 1899,²⁵ with political aims and apparently without outside assistance or guidance. Similar groups incorporating the word "labor" in their names appeared in other towns and cities.

An attempt was made by organized labor to co-ordinate this growth of political activity. A convention with delegates from Victoria and Nanaimo was held in Vancouver, and an inclusive Labor Party was organized.²⁶ Its platform called for the eight-hour day, arbitration of labor disputes, public ownership, single tax, government control of the medium of exchange, and cessation of Asiatic immigration.²⁷ The platform, so far as the con-

²⁴ The Independent identified thirty Martin candidates and two Liberals on the Government side, and nineteen Conservatives, eighteen Provincial Party men, eighteen Turnerites, and six Independent Laborites on the Opposition (June 9, 1900, p. 4). The scene was further complicated by a lack of firm divisions between these groups, and the presence of factions within the groups.

²⁵ British Columbia Workman, Victoria, June 10, 1899, p. 7.

²⁶ Bennett, op. cit., p. 136. Cf. Nanaimo Herald, December 27, 1899, p. 1.

²⁷ Bennett, op. cit., p. 137. This platform is not discussed here, since its items all appear in operative platforms and can be considered more effectively in that context.

temporary records show, was not used in any election. However, its provisions undoubtedly were used as a basis for the various labor platforms which appeared in the 1900 election.

During the January, 1900 session of the legislature, as the rupture between the Martin and Semlin factions was plainly leading to defeat of the Government, a feeling of deep concern began to make itself evident within the British Columbia labor movement. The concessions made by the Semlin administration in the previous session were felt to be endangered by the political ambitions of Martin. A mass meeting at Nanaimo unanimously passed a resolution stating that "the labor organizations of the city of Nanaimo" condemned Martin for attempting to wreck the provincial government and for allying himself with James Dunsmuir, thus deserting the cause of labor.²⁸ Upon the assumption of the premiership by Martin, it was followed by other resolutions asking McKechnie and Smith to withdraw their support from the Government.²⁹

If Joseph Martin did not obtain the support of labor in the ensuing election, it was not for lack of trying. His platform included a number of proposed measures which labor had been demanding for some time. He promised, if his group were victorious, to abolish the candidates' deposit, to re-distribute the electoral seats, to re-enact any disallowed anti-Oriental statutes, to stop the spread of Oriental cheap labor, to have

²⁸ Nanaimo Herald, January 9, 1900, p. 1.

²⁹ Ibid., January 19, 1900.

places of work officially inspected, to have a referendum on the eight-hour law, to make no land grants to railways but inaugurate a policy of government construction and operation of railways, and to remove all legislative power from the Lieutenant-Governor.³⁰ What more could labor desire? It was even rumored for a while that he had offered Ralph Smith a cabinet position,³¹ and it was considered possible that the offer might be accepted.

But however much labor liked Martin's promises, it generally distrusted Martin. The Independent quoted an article from the socialistic Citizen and Country, to the effect that

If it is true that Ralph Smith is going into Joe Martin's cabinet, and if that means that the labor people of British Columbia have decided to work with him, Joe will be all right. His platform contains many radical planks that deserve the support of the people, but Joe has been very erratic in many ways, and has not been so trustworthy as his friends could have desired.³²

In an editorial, the Independent conceded that

... looking over the situation in a general way and including even Mr. Martin's past career we are forced to the conclusion that there is no public man in British Columbia that can compare with him as an opponent of corporate aggression and at least incidentally as the friend of labor.³³

However, this was not good enough. The editor immediately made it clear that he was not endorsing Martin, by advising his readers to

³⁰ Independent, June 9, 1900, p. 4, and other newspapers.

³¹ Nanaimo Herald, March 6, 1900.

³² Independent, April 14, 1900, p. 3.

³³ Ibid., April 21, 1900, p. 2.

Nominate and elect a straight independent labor man in every possible constituency. Do this by means of a properly called convention and do not allow the candidates to lean either to one side or the other -- but come out straight as a labor group, prepared to support in the new legislature any party which goes direct for the reform wanted by the labor party.³⁴

Organized labor was beginning to feel confident of its strength and therefore was less willing than formerly to trust its fate to non-labor politicians. It especially distrusted Martin, to judge from the attitude of the labor press during the election period.³⁵ No such bitterness was directed against the other competing groups, possibly because it was felt that the "radical" Martin platform was more likely to attract labor voters than were the more orthodox platforms of the Conservatives, Turnerites, and the Provincial Party.

As had been the case in the 1898 election, a certain amount of obscurity attended the nomination of Ralph Smith. As the sitting member for South Nanaimo, he was generally expected to contest that constituency again. Indeed, when the candidature of James Dunsmuir was announced for South Nanaimo, the Herald informed the public that the "present member will oppose Mr. Dunsmuir on the stump."³⁶ Such a contest, however, was not to be. There would be no elimination of one of these public figures by the other. There would be no conflict, even on the electoral field, which would necessarily end in the

³⁴ Loc. cit.

³⁵ vide Independent and Nanaimo Herald, passim.

³⁶ April 13, 1900, p. 1.

defeat of Dunsmuir by Smith or vice versa. A few days later it was announced that Ralph Smith would be the "People's Party" candidate in Nanaimo City, held during the last legislature by his associate, Dr. McKechnie. Moreover, he would be supported by Dr. McKechnie in this contest.³⁷

This sudden shift left Dunsmuir unopposed in South Nanaimo, but the local labor and reform elements were determined to run a candidate. A meeting was held at Cedar on April 24, at which certain telegrams from W.W.B. McInnes were read. McInnes had tired of federal politics, and was determined to enter the provincial field.³⁸ He was especially insistent upon running against Dunsmuir, claiming that "his defeat is imperative."³⁹ His one condition was complete independence of any party. Upon this basis his candidature was endorsed by the meeting.

This, however, did not settle the matter. Upon arriving in Vancouver from the East, McInnes expressed his approval of the Martin program and stated that it should carry the province. This was not to the taste of the voters who had nominated him, and a second meeting took place at Extension Mines,

³⁷ Nanaimo Herald, April 17, 1900, p. 8. Also Sandon Paystreak, April 28, 1900.

³⁸ He had entertained the idea in 1898, and was then pledged the support of McKechnie, Smith, Hawthornthwaite, and others. However, he finally decided to complete his term in Ottawa. (Nanaimo Free Press, May 25, 1898, p. 1, and June 14, p. 2).

³⁹ Nanaimo Herald, April 27, 1900, p. 1.

attended largely by miners.⁴⁰ J. Lewis of Gabriola Island (possibly the James Lewis who had been a Workingmen's candidate in 1886) explained that, in view of McInnes' remarks in Vancouver, the convention should not be bound to its previous nomination. The meeting concurred in this and proceeded to nominate John Ratcliff, a miner who had been very active in a recent strike at Extension. However, the door was not entirely shut on McInnes. A committee was named to confer with him and offer him a chance to contest the nomination with Ratcliff at a future convention.⁴¹

Such a procedure was not acceptable to McInnes, despite his earlier eagerness to confront Dunsmuir. He withdrew from South Nanaimo,⁴² and a new convention was called in that constituency. It met May 5 with Ralph Smith as chairman to make a final choice of a candidate and to adopt a platform.

The platform placed before the meeting had already been adopted by Ralph Smith's supporters in Nanaimo City.⁴³ It was accepted with the minor alteration that clause 12 (b), which referred specifically to the E. & N. Railway Belt, was changed to read "Taxation of all lands held by corporations." Ratcliff was re-nominated as candidate over Rev. George Taylor,

⁴⁰ Loc. cit. This was reported as a Provincial Party meeting. Although the earlier meeting had apparently accepted McInnes' proviso of complete independence, there was a continuity of business which justifies regarding the two meetings as being of the same organization.

⁴¹ Ibid., April 27, 1900, p. 1, and May 1, p. 1.

⁴² Ibid., May 4, 1900, p. 1.

⁴³ vide Appendix, p. xxviii.

his only competitor for the honor, and the question of Dunsmuir's opponent was finally settled.⁴⁴

The confusion over the South Nanaimo candidature having been resolved, new conflict -- centered again upon W.W.B. McInnes -- broke out in North Nanaimo.⁴⁵ On April 29 a convention, probably of the Provincial Party as in South Nanaimo, nominated an old-time resident, one Dixon,⁴⁶ upon the understanding that McInnes was running in South Nanaimo.⁴⁷ Then McInnes announced his availability as an Independent Liberal, and was hastily nominated by the same group which had already put up Dixon. Dixon, however, was unwilling to retire under these conditions, and remained in the contest.⁴⁸ Thus there were three candidates in North Nanaimo: John Bryden, representing the Dunsmuir interests, the sitting member; W.W.B. McInnes, the Independent Liberal; and Dixon, supporting the platform of the Nanaimo Labor Party (Smith's group).⁴⁹

Of the three Nanaimo labor candidates, Ralph Smith had by far the easiest task. His labor support was solid.

⁴⁴ Nanaimo Herald, May 8, 1900, pp. 1,2.

⁴⁵ Very little of a solidly factual nature about this dispute appeared in the press, especially in the early stages. More has to be inferred than in the South Nanaimo nomination.

⁴⁶ He was referred to in the press as "Dixon" or "Mr. Dixon;" CPC gives no initials or first name.

⁴⁷ Nanaimo Herald, June 1, 1900, p. 1.

⁴⁸ Ibid., May 15, 1900, p. 1, and June 1, p. 1.

⁴⁹ Ibid., May 29, 1900, p. 1.

He was agent for the M.M.L.P.A., and now had the added prestige of being president of the T.& L.C. of Canada. The Nanaimo T.& L.C. unanimously approved his candidature.⁵⁰ In addition, his only opponent was the Martinite J.S. Yates, a Victoria man who was also contesting a seat in the capital city. Being an outsider, Yates' chances were slim. To make matters worse, he did little or no active campaigning in Nanaimo. The only practical result of his being on the Nanaimo ballot was that it forced a vote. The vote itself gave the impression that Smith had the solid support of Nanaimo.⁵¹

Being practically unopposed in Nanaimo, Smith was able to give considerable attention to the promotion of labor candidates in other parts of the province. He attempted, without success, to have a labor man nominated in Alberni.⁵² He was chairman at the nominating convention of the Vancouver Labor Party.⁵³ He toured the Interior, helping to organize local Labor Parties.⁵⁴ Utilizing his influence and connections as president of the T.L.C.C. and as M.L.A., he provided the liaison between and was adviser to the scattered labor political actionists of British Columbia.

⁵⁰ Nanaimo Herald, May 4, 1900, p. 1.

⁵¹ Smith 763
 Yates 86
 (CPG, 1901, p. 409).

⁵² Nanaimo Herald, May 8, 1900, p. 1.

⁵³ Independent, May 19, 1900, p. 1.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 2.

The political action of Vancouver labor, which Smith helped to organize, was quite a different proposition to that of labor in Nanaimo. The electoral tactic in Nanaimo generally seems to have been that unionists entered into an agreement with an existing party, whereby that party locally endorsed a labor candidate and a labor platform. In Vancouver, in 1900, the T.& L.C. itself acted as a political party, convening the organization and nominating meetings and providing the campaign platform. There was no real labor party in Nanaimo; what did exist was a grouping of reformers and unionists about the figure of Ralph Smith, with no firm organization. Moreover, Ralph Smith had a close relationship with one of the non-labor political parties. On one occasion "... he was asked if he would come out straight in favor of the party that represented the old Semlin Government. He ... replied "Yes."⁵⁵ As if to justify his stand, the Herald (a staunch supporter of Smith) ran in the same issue which reported this statement an article entitled "Provincial Party Initiated Workingmen's Rights."⁵⁶

The Vancouver labor movement was slow to take positive action in regard to the election. When the matter was broached in the T.& L.C.,

... it was resolved after much discussion, that the Trades and Labor Council completely ignore the different political parties and request union men to act up to the resolution framed at the (1899) Dominion Trades and Labor Congress.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Nanaimo Herald, April 17, 1900, p. 8.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 5. The Provincial Party, of which the leading spirit was Carter-Cotton, was the heir to the Semlin administration.

⁵⁷ Independent, April 21, 1900, p. 1.

In other words, do not vote for any labor man who stands on the platform of an old-line party.

This directive was merely a stop-gap. Already a questionnaire had been submitted to the member unions of the Vancouver T. & L.C. asking for their opinions on taking political action in this election, and enquiring what financial support they would be prepared to give labor candidates. The response was not tabulated until May 4; it was then found that out of thirty-two unions fourteen had expressed themselves in favor of running independent labor candidates. The remainder had not committed themselves to any policy.⁵⁸

Despite this somewhat discouraging response, the T. & L.C. decided to hold a special meeting and pursue the matter further. The fifty delegates present at this meeting voted unanimously to nominate two independent candidates.⁵⁹ At the actual nominating convention 127 delegates from twenty-five unions named the president of the Vancouver T. & L.C., Joseph Dixon, a carpenter, and Treasurer Francis Williams, a tailor, as their candidates.⁶⁰

Others, however, were also bidding for the votes of the workers of Vancouver, and two of these come definitely within the field of labor political action. Robert Macpherson was running in his third election, this time as a supporter of

⁵⁸ Independent, May 5, 1900, p. 1, and Nanaimo Herald, May 11, 1900, p. 2.

⁵⁹ Independent, May 12, 1900, p. 1.

⁶⁰ Ibid., May 19, 1900, p. 1.

Joseph Martin's platform, and Will MacClain was in the contest as "the first Socialist candidate in a Canadian election."⁶¹

Both men were connected with the trade union movement, and both based their campaigns upon what they conceived to be the needs of the working-class. Therefore they are to be regarded as labor candidates, although they were not the official nominees of the T. & L.C. unions.

It seems that Macpherson made no effort to obtain the support of the T. & L.C. In any case, organized labor's antipathy to Martinism made it certain that such an effort would fail. Insofar as the officially recognized labor candidates had ties, they were with the predominantly Conservative Provincial Party. Macpherson joined the Martin group some time in April because, he said, John C. Brown, "an honest man," had been taken into Martin's cabinet.⁶² The final word on the attitude of the T. & L.C. to Macpherson was pronounced by J.H. Watson, an executive member of the Council. He stated that Macpherson was unlikely to get the support of the labor party, since he had deliberately gone over to Martin after promising not to do so.⁶³

Macpherson's nomination was rather different from the usual type. A meeting of from two hundred to three hundred

⁶¹ Bennett, op. cit., p. 137.

⁶² Independent, June 2, 1900, p. 2. Macpherson also stated that he left the Labor Party at the same time, a statement that seems difficult to reconcile with the fact that the Vancouver Labor Party was not organized until July of that year. A possible explanation is that Macpherson was associated with the rather tenuous provincial Labor Party organized in December 1899. (v. sup., p. 96).

⁶³ Nanaimo Herald, May 11, 1900, p. 2.

unorganized laborers took place in the City Hall, with Macpherson as chairman and Sam Gothard, a prominent member of the local T.& L.C., as secretary. Ralph Smith was also present, but took no part in the proceedings. Three proposals were debated: to support the Government (Martin) platform, to adopt the reform platform generally accepted in Canada,⁶⁴ or to combine the two. Upon a vote being taken the Martin platform was endorsed -- but with the reservation that this did not mean endorsement of Martin himself. Then delegates were named representing different wards, to hold a nominating convention.⁶⁵ As a result Macpherson came before the voters as the nominee of unorganized labor, supporting the platform of Joseph Martin but giving only conditional support to Martin.

The nomination of Will MacClain by the United Socialist Labor Party injected a new element into British Columbia politics which was to bring about a great division within the labor movement and would, for a time, absorb practically all the political energies of labor. Until this time, labor's interest in politics had been almost completely restricted to curbing the power of big capital, as represented by the railway and mining interests, and to obtaining the passage of specific measures dealing with the grievances of labor in general and of the trades unionists in particular. Now there was a group which proposed -- even if only as an "ultimate objective" -- that

⁶⁴ The platform presented under this designation was almost identical to that later accepted by the Vancouver T.& L.C.

⁶⁵ Information on this meeting is derived from the Independent, April 28, 1900, and the Nanaimo Herald, May 1, 1900.

labor's problems could only be solved by the abolition of private ownership in the means of production and the substitution for it of collective ownership.⁶⁶

Socialistic ideas were not new in British Columbia. The principles of direct democracy commended by Marx in his defence of the Paris Commune⁶⁷ had first been advocated in British Columbia in connection with the K. of L. in 1886, deriving then from the American frontier tradition. The idea of a class struggle carried into politics had been enunciated by Thomas Keith in 1890.⁶⁸ Government ownership of public services was a long-standing demand of British Columbia labor.⁶⁹ The single-taxers had long attacked rent as the basic cause of poverty; the socialists would say the same of "surplus value" as a whole, of which rent was only a part. All these ideas were preparing the way for a movement and a social philosophy which would fit them into a unified pattern and advance an over-all solution to the problems of labor. Far from finding "virgin, yet fertile, ground" in British Columbia, as Saywell puts it,⁷⁰ socialism found fertile soil well-tilled and developed by its

⁶⁶ vide Appendix, pp. xx.

⁶⁷ Karl Marx, Civil War in France, International Publishers, New York, 1940, pp. 57, 58.

⁶⁸ v. sup., p. 51.

⁶⁹ vide Appendix, passim.

⁷⁰ John T. Saywell, "Labour and Socialism in British Columbia: A Survey of Historical Development before 1903," British Columbia Historical Quarterly, Archives of British Columbia, Victoria, July-October, 1951, p. 137.

predecessors.

The first appearance of organized Socialism in British Columbia was in December 1898, when Arthur Spencer initiated the Socialist Labor Party in Vancouver.⁷¹ The S.L.P. was at this time under the leadership of Daniel DeLeon in the United States; it had repudiated the orthodox trades unions, and was organizing the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance in opposition to the A.F. of L. in order to achieve the early abolition of capitalism.⁷² The S.L.P., however, was too advanced for the times; some of its members split off and formed, with other socialistically minded people, the United Socialist Labor Party, which coupled with its general indictment of capitalism a program of immediate reforms.⁷³

The U.S.L.P. candidate, Will MacClain, was, like most other early labor and radical candidates, neither a native-born British Columbian nor an Eastern Canadian; he was an Englishman who had been in the navy and had "jumped ship" in Seattle.⁷⁴ As delegate from the Machinists' union to the Vancouver T. & L.C. and as an organizer in the 1900 fishermen's strike on the Fraser, he was an active and well-known figure in labor circles.

His connection with the T. & L.C., no doubt, was the means of his getting endorsement of his candidacy by that body.⁷⁵

⁷¹ Bennett, op. cit., p. 135.

⁷² Bimba, op. cit., pp. 201, 202.

⁷³ vide Appendix, pp. xx.

⁷⁴ Bennett, op. cit., p. 137.

⁷⁵ Independent, June 2, 1900, p. 2. This newspaper, despite the T. & L.C.'s endorsement of MacClain, did not advise its readers to support him as it advised them to support Dixon and Williams. It did, however, give his speeches fairly full coverage.

The latent conflict between the "pure and simple" unionists and the socialists was not yet in evidence, as may be judged by the appearance of socialistic news items and short articles in the columns of the orthodox unionist Independent. Possibly the trades unionists did not yet recognize the implied challenge to their own attitudes and policies; more possibly, they saw in MacClain an added means of taking votes away from Macpherson and the other Martinite candidates without weakening their own nominees.⁷⁶

It appears that another socialistic group besides the U.S.L.P. had a finger in the 1900 election -- and in a rather peculiar way. The newspaper Citizen and Country, of Toronto, stated in a post-election article that

Richard McBride, M.P.P. for Dewdney, B.C., Minister of Mines, endorsed the platform of the Canadian Socialistic League, and was supported by the socialists. He gave a written pledge, but afterwards denied doing so. This caused Organizer Cameron to make affidavit and circulate photographed copies of McBride's written pledge and signature. He pledged himself in favor of a referendum on

⁷⁶ Later in the year Tully Boyce, in a dispute carried on in the Nanaimo newspapers, accused Ralph Smith of encouraging his "stool pigeons," Dixon and Williams, to run in Vancouver for the express purpose of defeating Macpherson. (Nanaimo Free Press, October 17, 1900, p. 2). No previous rivalry appears to have existed between Smith and Macpherson, but the alliance of the two men with opposing factions could be advanced as a cause for such action. It is a fact that Ralph Smith was involved in the nomination of the two I.L.P. candidates in Vancouver, and it is practically certain that the votes drawn by Dixon, Williams and MacClain were the cause of Macpherson's being defeated. It should also be noted that there was only one Provincial Party candidate in Vancouver -- Carter-Cotton; this would make a complete labor-favored slate of two I.L.P., one U.S.L.P., and one P.P. candidate. Beyond this point, any definite statement would be unwarrantedly speculative.

woman suffrage, employment for unemployed, eight-hour day, and union label on Government work, public ownership, free school books, and exemption of improvements from taxation. As Mr. McBride is now Minister of Mines his course will be watched with interest.⁷⁷

It is possible, of course, that McBride may have signed such a pledge without realizing its full nature. The story, however, is not incredible, and receives a certain amount of circumstantial support from McBride's later cooperation with the socialist members in the legislature.

Following the lead of Nanaimo and Vancouver labor, the workers of the southern mountain area of British Columbia stirred themselves to take a hand in politics. This was the metal-mining area, where feelings were now running high over the mine-owners' opposition to the new eight-hour law. The miners were determined to retain the law, despite all opposition.⁷⁸ It was obvious that a law passed in Victoria could be repealed in the same place, and they realized that their best move would be to return members who would fight to keep the eight-hour law on the books. To this end the local miners' unions and T. & L.C.'s adopted the standard tactic of the A.F. of L. They canvassed the existing candidates, and gave their support to those who promised to vote in the interests of labor on measures affecting labor.

Carrying out this policy, the miners' unions of Sandon, Silverton, Whitewater, New Denver and Kaslo gave their

⁷⁷ Independent, June 30, 1900, p. 3.

⁷⁸ The W.F.M. protested that the law must stand, even if it closed all the mines. (Rossland Industrial World, January 20, 1900).

endorsement to R.F. Green, an independent candidate associated with the Provincial Party, in Slocan.⁷⁹ Although Green was a Conservative in federal politics, his campaign platform included public ownership and control of railways and other public utilities where desirable, the eight-hour law and compulsory arbitration of labor disputes, as well as reasonable re-distribution of seats, the restriction of Asiatic labor, and an improved educational system.⁸⁰ In Nelson the local T. & L.C. affiliates, comprising ten unions with 800 members, named John Houston, an editor and a supporter of the Provincial Party, as their chosen candidate.⁸¹

In Revelstoke, where Ralph Smith took a hand in the nomination, matters became somewhat confused. Frank Craig, a carpenter, was entered as a labor candidate; the local T. & L.C., however, endorsed Archie McRae, an independent Martinite. Ralph Smith persuaded Craig to retire, and got the Council to rescind its endorsement of McRae. Council then endorsed Thomas Taylor, a Conservative, as its choice for the Legislature.⁸²

In Rossland, matters were somewhat more straightforward. First, a mass meeting of workers discussed political

⁷⁹ Independent, June 2, 1900, p. 4.

⁸⁰ Sandon Paystreak, May 12, 1900.

⁸¹ Independent, supplement, June 2, 1900, p. 2.

⁸² This interpretation was pieced together from apparently conflicting reports in the Nanaimo Herald, May 25, 1900, p. 1, the Independent, May 26, 1900, p. 1, and the Lardeau Eagle, May 30, 1900.

action, and voted to put up an independent candidate. The Industrial World, organ of the W.F.M., feared that this might result in the election of an anti-labor man,⁸³ and a meeting of trades unionists took place on May 1. This meeting endorsed Smith Curtis, who was generally regarded as a friend of labor; it was felt that at all costs C.H. Mackintosh, the Conservative candidate, must be defeated, and it was thought that a straight labor candidate could not do this.⁸⁴ Smith Curtis, incidentally, was somewhat of an anomaly in the ranks of labor-sponsored candidates; he was the only one, apart from Macpherson, to run upon the Martinite platform.⁸⁵

Victoria labor, it should be noted here, was still politically inactive. Early in April the local T.& L.C. considered the matter, and decided to run a candidate.⁸⁶ Three of the affiliated unions, however, opposed the idea, and nothing was done.⁸⁷

One episode in Victoria at this time also deserves mention. A meeting of unorganized workers took place, and endorsed Joseph Martin and his party; it also deplored the appearance in the field of Independent Labor candidates.⁸⁸ The report of the meeting elicited a prompt letter from the president

⁸³ April 21, 1900.

⁸⁴ Industrial World, May 5, 1900.

⁸⁵ Ibid., June 7, 1900.

⁸⁶ Independent, 7 Apr. 1900, p. 1.

⁸⁷ Ibid., May 5, 1900, p. 1.

⁸⁸ Ibid., June 2, 1900, p. 1.

of the Victoria T.& L.C., explaining that organized labor had nothing to do with the matter, and that the only unionists present were the chairman and the seconder of the resolution.⁸⁹

The Labor Party platforms which appeared in different centers in 1900 display a certain uniformity of approach, although the emphasis varies according to local conditions.⁹⁰ All of them contained anti-Mongolian demands; the Nanaimo platform was the most sweeping in this regard, while the Vancouver platform, in its original form, merely demanded that a minimum wage be paid on all public works. (The intent of the latter was later clarified by the addition of an extra clause almost as sweeping as the Nanaimo demand). All the platforms called for the general recognition of the eight-hour day, while Nanaimo added a rider demanding the maintenance of the existing eight-hour law. They all called for a degree of government ownership in communications and transportation services. Three of them -- the United Labor platform and the Vancouver and Victoria platforms -- wanted government inspection of mines especially, and of places of work generally, in the interests of health and safety. Demands for a fair or minimum wage on public works appeared in the Vancouver, Victoria, and Nanaimo platforms. Victoria called for a Compensation Act, while Vancouver demanded recognition of liability of employers for injuries suffered by workmen. Arbitration of disputes, allied with the implementa-

⁸⁹ Independent, June 9, 1900, p. 2. Presumably from the unions which had blocked the nomination of labor candidates by the T.& L.C.

⁹⁰ vide Appendix, pp. xv-xviii.

tion of the 1894 law setting up a Labor Bureau, appeared in all platforms except the Victoria one.

Besides these basically economic demands, there were others of a political and a general nature. Two programs -- the United Labor and the Vancouver platforms -- called for direct democracy in the form of the initiative and referendum. Victoria, Vancouver, and Nanaimo wanted the candidate's deposit abolished. Nanaimo wanted the secret election of road foremen locally, in order to end political appointments. It also wanted re-distribution of constituencies -- a continual demand in the under-represented urban districts. Vancouver called for free compulsory education, and continued to uphold the banner of single tax.

It is noticeable, in comparing the labor platforms of 1900, how the Nanaimo program differed from the others. The Nanaimo I.L.P. standard-bearer was Ralph Smith, member of the past Legislature and a man with considerable political experience; his familiarity with the procedures and immediate possibilities of legislative action is shown in his platform. Whereas the other platforms were couched in general terms, expressing principles which should be enacted into legislation, the Nanaimo platform suggested detailed measures -- for instance, a minimum wage of \$2.50 per day on public works, and the specific duties of a Minister of Labor. In addition, whereas labor generally was interested in bettering its own position and letting the capitalists attend to their concerns, Smith's platform contained a definite proposal for the attraction of more

capital to British Columbia by means of advertising. In addition, it made no mention of initiative or referendum, as did the United and Vancouver platforms. Smith's platform was that of the established and experienced politician, aimed to conciliate as many groups as possible in order to get certain definite measures passed. The other platforms were those of labor men who knew what they wanted, in general terms, and were stating their wants to the public -- not conciliating or manoeuvring, but merely making known the demands of labor.

The program of immediate demands put forward by the United S.L.P. in Vancouver was a different matter.⁹¹ Although many of the suggested measures were materially the same as those in the Labor platforms, a different spirit lay within them. The call for government ownership of the means of transportation and communication included a proviso for actual "worker control" of the operation of these services. The U.S.L.P.'s fiscal proposal was not single tax, but a progressive income tax and an inheritance tax. Instead of an eight-hour day, it wanted hours of work reduced in proportion to increased production. It called for free use of inventions. Most noticeable of all, it included no anti-Oriental clause; it made no allusion to the problem of cheap Asiatic labor, no doubt upon the basis that this could only be solved through the emancipation of labor as a whole. Along with the usual demand for compulsory, free education to the age of fourteen it made the necessary concomitant proposal for prohibition of employ-

⁹¹ vide Appendix, p. xx.

ment of children under fourteen. Where previous labor M.L.A.'s had tried to get equal political rights for women, the U.S.L.P. added a call for economic equality in the form of equal pay. Indeed, the political demands in the program envisioned a completely democratic system such as nowhere exists even yet.

Some of the ideas enunciated in these platforms were by now acquiring a certain venerability; they had been in British Columbia labor platforms since 1886. The anti-Chinese attitude, now broadened to include the Japanese, was stronger than ever. The "direct democracy" planks were put forward more clearly now than in the past, as legislatures continued to pass measures which labor felt were against the interests and desires of the public. Opposition to the land grants and the great companies built thereon still existed, but was now crystallizing into a demand for nationalization of monopolies, especially in transportation and communication. Single tax was still advocated, if not so strongly as in former years. The old demand for an eight-hour day, far from being allayed by its partial realization in 1899, had grown in force; it was especially stimulated by the mine-owners' attempts to have the measure reversed. All these points had by now become thoroughly acclimatized in the province; they were recognized and accepted as the regular demands of labor.

A number of the newer demands in the Labor platforms bear evidence of inspiration, directly or otherwise, by the A.F. of L. That organization had, during the years 1893 to 1895, considered a number of legislative measures; in 1894 its

convention signified approval of these measures separately, and in 1895 voted to regard them as the "legislative demands" of the A.F. of L.⁹² In 1898 the T.L.C.C. also adopted a legislative platform, which paralleled in many of its aspects the A.F. of L. formulation.⁹³ Common features, which were no doubt suggested to the Canadian organization by familiarity with the American list of demands, were compulsory education, inspection of places of work, and public ownership of services generally used. These three points, be it noted, were not publicly proclaimed by British Columbia labor until the late 1890's; the last of them -- public ownership -- had been adopted by the Nationalists in 1894, but was not publicized by them.

The influence of the A.F. of L. "platform" on British Columbia labor's political demands was exerted not only indirectly through the T.L.C.C., but also directly. On several occasions in the early part of 1900 the Independent published the American list of demands for the consideration of the local labor movement. Items which appeared there and in the 1900 Labor Party platforms, without any apparent connection through the T.L.C.C. platform, included demands for the abolition of the contract system on public works, and employers' liability for injury; this latter found its way unchanged from the A.F. of L. "platform" into the Victoria T. & L.C. platform.

The United S.L.P. manifesto, platform and resolutions

⁹² J.R. Commons et al., History of Labour in the United States, Macmillan, New York 1926, II, 509, 510. For the "legislative demands," vide Appendix, p. xiii.

⁹³ Vide Appendix, p. xiv.

show a mixed origin. The Manifesto section is practically pure Marxist; the Platform appears as an attempt to convey the Marxian analysis of capitalist society in the traditional terms of American political radicalism, even unto "the inalienable right of all men to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness;" the Resolutions are in substance very similar to those currently put forward by the Independent Labor candidates, but they have a flavor of political and economic theory not found in the pragmatic demands of the "pure and simple" unionists. The material basis for the appearance of a socialist party existed in British Columbia, in the grievances expressed in labor platforms from 1886 onwards. In a contemporary comment, the New York Sun said of the spread of Socialism in British Columbia:

It is, in the first place, largely a development of the single-tax movement, which itself grew out of the acquisition, largely by non-resident speculators, of much of the best land about the coast and Vancouver Island cities. Then there is no doubt that a lack of sympathy between too many large employers and their white workmen in British Columbia is responsible for the revolt of labor, which there, as elsewhere, labels itself Socialism. This lack of sympathy itself mainly results from the undue dispossession of white labor by Mongolians in such industries as lumbering, salmon canning, fishing, tailoring and some departments of shipping, mining and railroad work.⁹⁴

Single tax, as a doctrine, had not the same overall appeal to the industrial workers that Socialism was able to exert; for a time it attracted the more radical workers, but lost its hold when challenged by the more complete economic, political and philosophical socialist theory. Although swallowed up, single

⁹⁴ From B.C. Workman, August 12, 1899, p. 7.

tax contributed part of the American tinge which was noticeable in the Marxism of the Socialist Party of Canada.

Once the candidates were nominated, nothing unusual or significant occurred in the course of the election. The Independent Labor candidates made the usual speeches based upon their platforms -- with the exception of Dixon in North Nanaimo, who, to judge by the reports in the Nanaimo Herald, restricted his speech-making to the reading of a five-minute talk at one meeting.⁹⁵ The U.S.L.P. candidate, Will MacClain, however, did succeed in injecting two new items into British Columbia politics. He pointed to the reform and labor legislation of New Zealand as an example of social justice,⁹⁶ and he advocated the use of non-interest-bearing scrip for financing public works such as railways, pointing to the Channel Islands as an instance where this principle had been put into practice.⁹⁷ The first item has been used extensively in recent years by the C.C.F., which has tended to make extensive reference to the experiences of New Zealand in the field of social legislation; the second is a central tenet of Social Credit theory.⁹⁸

⁹⁵ In connection with the North Nanaimo contest, it should be mentioned that the Herald, always closely identified with the cause of Ralph Smith, supported Dixon and was markedly cool towards McInnes. This may have been due to McInnes' refusal to commit himself firmly to an anti-Martin line. It marks the end of several years of co-operation between Smith and McInnes, and the beginning of a short rivalry between them.

⁹⁶ Independent, June 9, 1900, p. 4.

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 1.

⁹⁸ The writer heard Mr. Noel Murphy of the Social Credit Party use the same example from the Channel Islands as a demonstration of Social Credit in operation, in a speech at the University of British Columbia in the winter of 1952-53.

The results of the election were very mixed, but on the whole were favorable to labor.⁹⁹ Although the inarticulate Dixon trailed badly behind the eloquent McInnes and Dunsmuir's son-in-law, Bryden, in North Nanaimo, in South Nanaimo Ratcliff put up a remarkably strong fight and lost to Dunsmuir by only a few votes. However, in Nanaimo City Smith won a smashing victory over his absentee opponent. The score on the Island was not too discouraging from the standpoint of future contests; at least, one candidate had been elected.

In Vancouver, all the labor men took a beating. Macpherson was edged out by twenty-six votes, while Dixon, Williams and MacClain shared the bottom of the poll with their ally,

⁹⁹ Provincial election, 1900; results in constituencies contested by labor-supported candidates.

Vancouver		Nanaimo City	
Garden (Cons.)	1787)	<u>Smith</u> (Lab.) 753
Martin (Martin)	1737)	Yates (Martin)	86
Tatlow (Cons.)	1645)		
Gilmour (Martin)	1465)	North Nanaimo	
Wilson (Cons.)	1457	McInnes (Lib.)	...238
Macpherson (Martin)	1435	Bryden (Turner)	195
McQueen (Martin)	1391	<u>Dixon</u> (Lab.)	73
Wood (Cons.)	1344		
<u>Dixon</u> (Ind.Lab.)	853	South Nanaimo	
Carter-Cotton (Prov.)	802	Dunsmuir (Turner)	249
Williams (Ind.Lab.)	716	<u>Ratcliff</u> (Lab.)	225
<u>MacClain</u> (U.S.L.P.)	683		
Slocan		Nelson	
<u>Green</u> (Prov.)	342	<u>Houston</u> (Prov.)	747
Keen (Cons.)	234	Hall (Lib.)	293
Kane (Martin)	170	Fletcher (Cons.)	508
Revelstoke		Rossland	
<u>Taylor</u> (Prov.)	513	<u>Curtis</u> (Martin)	1353
McRae (Martin)	368	<u>Mackintosh</u> (Cons.)	1287

(CPG 1901, pp. 409, 410).

(Classification according to table in Independent, June 9, 1900, p. 4).

Carter-Cotton. Carter-Cotton remarked in his newspaper, the News-Advertiser, that the labor candidates had reduced the Martinite vote and thus allowed the election of two Conservatives.¹⁰⁰ This must have pleased at least "Parm" Pettipiece, editor of the Lardeau Eagle, who had stated that "the most sincere and influential friends of labor in B.C. today are Conservatives, taking the party's actions as a whole."¹⁰¹

In the metal-mining districts, the policy of supporting friendly candidates met with complete success, Smith, Curtis, Green, Houston, and Taylor were elected -- all men pledged to retain the existing eight-hour law on the statute books.¹⁰² The miners and their allies in the local T. & L.C.'s might well be satisfied with the results of their efforts. On the other hand, their success might tempt them to become more ambitious.

In the legislative session immediately following the election, James Dunsmuir was called upon to be Premier. No legislation had been passed in the previous winter session, so twenty-five members agreed to support the Dunsmuir government for one session in order to transact the necessary business of the province. Smith, Green, and Taylor were included in this group; however, Smith and Green at least reserved their right to take independent action if they saw fit.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ Quoted in Independent, June 10, 1900, p. 1.

¹⁰¹ Eagle, May 30, 1900. (The Conservatives had endorsed the eight-hour law).

¹⁰² The election results certainly do not support Saywell's statement that the eight-hour law "alienated the majority of the people in the mining areas." in B.C. Hist. Quarterly, July 1950, p. 151.

¹⁰³ Independent, June 23, 1900, p. 1.

This session of the legislature saw the introduction of many measures which were of interest to labor.¹⁰⁴ McInnes, elected on a platform which contained several labor planks, twice attempted to bring in a Labor Act restricting shop hours and the hours of work of young persons therein (Bills 9 and 44). The first attempt was ruled out of order, and the second was subjected to a six month's hoist. Smith, Curtis succeeded in getting the Mechanics' Lien Act made more exact in meaning (Bill 32), but failed to get a measure dealing with the deception of workmen through the House (Bill 40). A bill concerned with conditions of employment on works under government franchise, (Bill 42) introduced by Dr. Helmcken, was passed. So was a joint resolution by Helmcken and Smith condemning abuses in the sub-letting of government contracts and insisting on the payment of current wage-rates in all such works. An attempt by McInnes and Curtis to add an anti-Oriental clause to this resolution was defeated.

Probably the strangest vote of the session resulted from a motion by Smith Curtis, that the House re-affirm its belief in the existing eight-hour law for metalliferous mining. If the House voted in favor of the motion, it would signify to the mine-owners that they could not expect the law to be rescinded by this legislature. If, however, the vote went against the motion, the eight-hour law would seem to be in an ambiguous position. Would a refusal to re-affirm imply rejection of the

¹⁰⁴ Details of the introduction and passage of these measures may be found in B.C. Journals, 1900, passim. The text of the measures may be found in B.C. Statutes, 1900, passim.

law, or merely refusal to re-consider the matter? The question was officially settled in favor of the latter interpretation, and although the House refused to re-affirm the law the metal-miners' eight-hour day was preserved.

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iii. Hardly had the excitement of the unscheduled provincial election died down, when British Columbia political circles were again involved in a contest. This time it was a federal election, in which party lines were drawn and erstwhile bedfellows suddenly became bad fellows.¹⁰⁵ Labor's tacit alliance with the predominantly Conservative Provincial Party was quietly shelved and was replaced, to a certain extent, by an alliance with the Liberals.

British Columbia labor's interest in federal politics was not new; it had been building up for several years. Four years previously, the Nationalists had initiated the successful candidature of Rev. George R. Maxwell. In the intervening years several matters had drawn the attention of the labor movement more closely to Ottawa. In 1900 the Laurier government had enacted an Arbitration and Conciliation Act, a fair wage measure,¹⁰⁶ and had arranged for the publication of a labor gazette and created a Department of Labour to supervise the operations of these laws. Labor M.P.'s would be able

¹⁰⁵ For a recent parallel consider the campaigns of 1948, when British Columbia Liberals and Conservatives contested the provincial election as a united coalition, then divided to oppose each other in the federal election.

¹⁰⁶ Canada, Government, Department of Labour, Labour Legislation in Canada, Ottawa, 1945, p. 10.

to press for the active implementation of these measures when necessary, and see that they were fully utilized. The Liberal administration had also raised the entry tax on Chinese from \$50 to \$100.¹⁰⁷ On the other hand, it had disallowed certain anti-Oriental measures passed by the British Columbia legislature.¹⁰⁸ It was plain that the battle over Oriental labor had to be decided at Ottawa, not Victoria.¹⁰⁹

Although Smith and others took part in federal politics in order to support Liberal legislation, some persons favored the election of independent labor men to the federal House for opposite reasons. Their viewpoint was expressed by William McAdams, editor of the Sandon Paystreak, who wrote:

The last election ... hinged largely on the school question, a pure case of racial and religious prejudice. The other issues were the tariff, the railway policy, and in B.C. the Chinese question of Oriental immigration ... The liberals promised to do a number of things, while the conservatives promised that they would not do the things which the liberals said they would do.

... the separate schools are still there. The tariff is in healthy condition.... The railway policy has not been altered.... the Chinese and Japs are with us yet.

In brief, you have your choice between a party in power that will do nothing and a party in opposition that will promise nothing.¹¹⁰

In addition to wishing to send representatives to Ottawa, British Columbia labor was encouraged to take action by

¹⁰⁷ Independent, July 28, 1900, p. 3. For a general discussion of Laurier's labor legislation, vide "Maxwell Interviewed." Ibid., July 21, July 28, August 4, 1900.

¹⁰⁸ Labor Regulation Act, 1898, and discriminatory labor clauses in the legislation of 1899; cf. Victoria T. & L.C. platform, Appendix, p. xvi.

¹⁰⁹ These reasons were advanced by Ralph Smith in the Nanaimo Herald, October 3, 1900, p. 1.

¹¹⁰ Paystreak, September 8, 1900..

the success of Ralph Smith and of the labor-supported Kootenay M.L.A.'s in the provincial contest. These victories had almost certainly engendered a feeling of power among the unionists, and the feeling was intensified when this success was coupled with the election of Arthur W. Puttee, an Independent Labor candidate, in a federal by-election in Winnipeg earlier in the year. The way to Ottawa appeared wide open.

The first move in connection with labor action in the new election was made in Vancouver, by the Parliamentary Committee of the T. & L.C. It called a convention for July 4th, 1900 to discuss the formation of an Independent Labor Party.¹¹¹ The T. & L.C. had conducted the campaign of Williams and Dixon, and obviously wished to relieve itself of the controversial burden of political action by setting up an autonomous body which would maintain labor's interests in the political field.

A hearty debate took place within this meeting; Will MacClain, the socialist, was strongly opposed to the formation of a competitor to the United S.L.P.; Robert Macpherson, ex-M.L.A., also voiced his opposition. On the other side, Francis Williams, the recent candidate of the T. & L.C., and Harry Cowan, chairman of the meeting, argued from the success of the Winnipeg I.L.P. in electing Puttee that Vancouver should follow the example of Winnipeg,¹¹² in forming a Labor Party independent of

¹¹¹ Independent, July 7, 1900, p. 1.

¹¹² In this period the influence of Winnipeg was much felt in the Vancouver labor movement. The Independent was publishing many short items from Puttee's paper, the Voice, and on several occasions published the constitution and platform of the Winnipeg I.L.P. for the consideration of its readers.

both the Tories and the Grits.¹¹³ The arguments of Williams and Cowan prevailed, and a motion for the immediate formation of the Vancouver I.L.P. was carried.

The Vancouver Labor Party, as the organization became known, was formed within the month at a mass meeting of "all citizens in sympathy with and willing to join the labor party."¹¹⁴ Its constitution, aims and objects were copied almost verbatim from those of the Winnipeg Labor Party; only minor alterations were made to suit local conditions.¹¹⁵

Like the Nationalist Party, the Vancouver Labor Party was organized to fill a dual role; it was supposed both to educate and to campaign. Its objects, as set forth in its constitution, were:

To study economic subjects affecting the welfare of Labor and the promulgation of information regarding same; and also to secure for Labor a just share of the wealth it produces by such means as the obtaining (of) representation from our own ranks in the parliamentary and municipal bodies of the country.¹¹⁶

It is very unlikely, however, that the Vancouver L.P. did much in the way of study or economic propaganda. Born on the eve of an election, it was either occupied with electoral campaigns or suffering from lack of interest; its major activity was certainly that of campaigning for votes.

¹¹³ Independent, July 7, 1900, p. 1.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., July 25, 1900, p. 1.

¹¹⁵ cf. Independent, July 21, 1900, p. 4, and July 28, p. 1, for the two documents mentioned.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., July 28, 1900, p. 1.

Section 1 of the "Qualifications for Membership" is worth noting; it stated that

Any person may become a member of this Party who is in sympathy with our principles, and who is willing to forswear allegiance to all other existing political parties; Provided: that three-fourths of the members of the Party shall be wage-earners; but this restriction shall not apply to farmers.¹¹⁷

The four points enunciated are significant: they mark off the Vancouver L.P. -- theoretically, at least -- from other political parties, including the Nanaimo Labor Party.¹¹⁸ Although desiring a broad base of membership, it insisted that voting control should be held by wage-earners -- or by farmers, who would not be very numerous in the geographic area covered by the Party; to that extent, it was definitely a class party. It also took itself seriously; rejecting a subordinate position as a pressure group working upon and assisting established parties, it proclaimed its distinction from other parties and its equality with them by refusing to allow dual membership. Such an attitude is normal in modern political parties; in the loosely-organized political world of 1900 it was unusual, to say the least.

Two months after its organization, the Vancouver Labor Party began electoral activities. The expected federal election had been called, and candidates were being nominated.

¹¹⁷ Loc. cit.

¹¹⁸ As late as January, 1902, the Nanaimo L.P. had neither constitution nor by-laws; moreover, Dr. McKechnie was president of both the Liberal Association and the Labor Party in Nanaimo. Independent, January 4, 1902, p. 1 and January 11, p. 8.

The party received an invitation from T.S. Baxter, secretary of the Liberal Association, to nominate a candidate jointly with the Liberals. The invitation was accepted, and twenty-one delegates were selected to take part in the convention with instructions to put forward the name of Robert Macpherson.¹¹⁹

It is significant that the initiative for this joint convention came in the form of an invitation from the Liberals, and not a request from the Labor Party. It indicates that the Labor Party was regarded as a valuable and effective vote-getter, despite the defeat of the Vancouver T. & L.C. candidates in the recent provincial elections. It also indicated a Liberal hope of containing the growth of independent radicalism by attaching that movement to the Liberal party.

The "fusion" convention resulted in a compromise. The Labor delegates could not secure the nomination of Macpherson, and accepted the Liberal suggestion that Rev. George R. Maxwell be their candidate. In return, an understanding was reached that Maxwell should accept the Labor Party platform.¹²⁰

As might be expected, this compromise by the Vancouver Labor Party provoked some criticism. Opposition to its action was most clearly expressed by Arthur W. Puttee's Winnipeg Voice. Puttee himself had only recently been elected over the opposition of both older parties, and Winnipeg

¹¹⁹ Independent, September 29, 1900, p. 1.

¹²⁰ Independent, September 29, 1900, p. 2. For the platform, vide Appendix, p. xxiii.

labor circles were correspondingly somewhat impatient of compromise. The Voice accused the Vancouver Labor Party of being composed of "schemers" who were "beating the drum and tooting the horn for the Liberal Party," and stated that "the Vancouver Labor men stultified themselves in a party convention."¹²¹ To this the Independent, as the official organ of the Vancouver L.P.,¹²² replied that fusion was to be regarded as only a temporary expedient; labor could not possibly win alone, but by joining forces with the Liberals it could send a man to Ottawa who would support the straight labor members on labor matters. In addition, it took pride in being invited to fuse with the Liberals; its growth was being recognized.¹²³

The nomination of Ralph Smith for the seat of Vancouver (Island), recently vacated by W.W.B. McInnes, was a far more spectacular affair than the Vancouver nomination. For one thing, it was not initiated in British Columbia but in Ontario. The annual convention of the T. & L.C. of Canada, meeting in Ottawa September 18, considered the labor legislation of the Laurier administration and concluded that an official representative of Labor should be present in Ottawa to watch over the implementation of that legislation.¹²⁴ The Congress then requested Ralph Smith, its president, to transfer

¹²¹ Quoted in Independent, October 13, 1900, p. 2.

¹²² Ibid., September 15, 1900, p. 1.

¹²³ Ibid., October 6, 1900, p. 1, and October 13, p. 2.

¹²⁴ Nanaimo Herald, October 3, 1900, p. 1.

his political activities from the provincial to the federal field, and obtain a seat at Ottawa.¹²⁵ This he agreed to do, and returned to British Columbia to prepare his election as the "new leader of the Independent labor party of the Dominion."¹²⁶

While Smith was in Ontario, however, the political pot had begun to boil in Nanaimo. A William Sloan, of Liberal sentiments, announced his candidature as an independent.¹²⁷ He followed this by securing the endorsement of a Liberal convention, and could therefore appear as the candidate of an established party, yet was not bound to that party.¹²⁸ He was opposed in the convention by Dr. R.E. McKechnie, Ralph Smith's ally. McKechnie, however, apparently had no real hope of blocking Sloan's nomination, and confined his activity to proposing motions designed to show that the convention was not properly a Liberal one. Having demonstrated to his own satisfaction that the convention was not loyal to the Liberal Party, McKechnie and his supporters left the meeting.¹²⁹

Sloan's acceptance by the Liberal convention was a blow to Smith; he had hoped to receive that nomination himself.¹³⁰ In fact, Smith would have liked both Liberal and Conservative endorsement; he even went so far as to ask for the latter,¹³¹ but

¹²⁵ Vancouver Province, September 19, 1900, p. 9.

¹²⁶ Independent, September 29, 1900, p. 1.

¹²⁷ Nanaimo Free Press, September 13, 1900, p. 1.

¹²⁸ Nanaimo Herald, September 22, 1900, p. 1.

¹²⁹ Loc. cit.

¹³⁰ Ibid., October 30, 1900, p. 1.

¹³¹ Loc. cit.

it was refused him. He was forced to appear as an Independent without any party affiliations or party support.

This incident illustrates the basic policy of Ralph Smith, and goes far towards explaining his other actions. He was a conciliator, not a fighter, and he used his not inconsiderable talents for conciliation and for oratory in order to obtain whatever concessions those in power might be prepared to allow. He would not take a firm stand against the Dunsmuir interests or the New Vancouver Coal Company. By discussion he achieved certain concessions involving the observance of some provincial labor laws,¹³² but he would never press demands beyond the point of negotiation. He was instrumental in settling a major labor dispute at Rossland, early in 1900, upon the basis of a compromise; Hawthornthwaite later criticized him for abandoning the wage principle in the settlement and accepting a contract system.¹³³

In political life, he successively supported Semlin, Martin (for a brief time) and Dunsmuir,¹³⁴ in return for real or promised concessions to labor. In the 1900 provincial election he vacated the South Nanaimo seat when Dunsmuir's candidature there was announced. In the federal election of the same year he claimed to be on friendly terms with both Liberals and Conservatives at Ottawa, and therefore able to get the most for

¹³² Nanaimo Herald, October 26, 1900, p. 1.

¹³³ Ibid., January 21, 1902, p. 1.

¹³⁴ Ibid., April 17, 1900, p. 8. Independent, supplement, May 29, 1900, pp. 1, 2, and June 23, 1900, p. 1.

the riding whichever party won.¹³⁵ Only two political elements excited his open opposition: Martinism in the 1900 provincial election, and socialism. The latter was especially obnoxious to him in that its theories challenged his policy of conciliation, and its practice threatened his own position in the labor movement and in political life. To him, socialism involved the risk of losing all the concessions which had been granted the labor movement, the cessation of further concessions, and the negation of his life work.

Although sponsored by the T.L.C.C., Smith's nomination was hardly a "labor" convention. No local labor body called it or took an official part in it, nor were workingmen especially invited to it. It was openly called by Smith for his political friends and supporters,¹³⁶ in order to advance his candidature.

In contrast, the nomination of a labor candidate in the Yale-Kootenay-Cariboo riding was a spontaneous development.¹³⁷ The success of the labor-supported candidates in the Kootenay and Slocan areas had encouraged the labor people, and especially the miners, to go a step further with political action. They appear to have had no federal grievances apart from those of British Columbia labor in general, their main complaint being

¹³⁵ Nanaimo Herald, October 23, 1900, p. 1.

¹³⁶ Ibid., October 3, 1900, p. 1. Tully Boyce in Nanaimo Free Press, November 1, 1900, p. 1.

¹³⁷ It did have an international flavor. In the previous month 225 delegates representing 700 labor organizations had met in Butte, Montana, to form a "Labor Party." (Rossland Industrial World, August 25, 1900). This large meeting was no doubt an encouragement to the Kootenay miners.

that neither Liberals nor Conservatives were taking seriously labor's demands. They felt that the legislation which the Liberals had introduced did not deal with labor's basic problems, but was only of minor importance.¹³⁸

The initiative in this campaign was taken by the Rossland unionists, who held a mass meeting in the middle of September to discuss political issues. The meeting decided unanimously to cut loose from existing parties and put up an independent candidate.¹³⁹ The unions themselves were concerned in the meeting. The secretary of the local T. & L.C. was instructed to notify all the Trades Councils and labor unions in the riding of the meeting's decision, and D.A. No. 6, W.F.M. was requested to call a convention of "accredited representatives of labor organizations, independent political clubs and socialistic bodies" for the purpose of naming an I.L.P. candidate.¹⁴⁰ To make the work more effective, it was decided that political clubs centered on the idea of rejection of the two old parties should be formed throughout the riding, with a membership broader than that of the unions. "While the movement will be fathered by labor organizations, every effort will be made to make it thoroly (sic) representative."¹⁴¹

The projected convention was held October 3 and 4, in Nelson, with 43 delegates representing every miners' union

¹³⁸ Sandon Paystreak, September 15, 1900. Rossland Industrial World, September 26, 1900.

¹³⁹ Sandon Paystreak, September 22, 1900.

¹⁴⁰ Loc. cit.

¹⁴¹ Loc. cit.

in the riding and many other labor organizations.¹⁴² On the first day the idea of nominating a candidate was endorsed by a vote of 40-10; a resolution to form an Independent Party was passed, and then made unanimous. Then the platform was drawn up.¹⁴³

The main business of the second day was the nomination of a candidate. Four names were suggested: Chris Foley, of the Rossland M.U. executive committee; Arthur Ferris, president of the Rossland T. & L.C.; James Wilks, secretary of the Nelson M.U.; and John McLaren, president of the Rossland Carpenters' Union.¹⁴⁴ McLaren and Ferris withdrew their names from nomination; a vote was taken, and Wilks was declared elected. Upon being informed of the vote he immediately declined to stand, and the meeting gave the nomination to Foley.

Chris Foley was in many ways typical of the metal miners of the day. Born in Toronto, he had worked on a farm until the age of fourteen. He had then begun traveling. After a few years in the Southern States he moved into the mountain country and mined and prospected from Mexico City to British Columbia. An attempt at building contracting in Vancouver was ruined by the panic of 1893. He then moved to Rossland, and

¹⁴² Ibid., October 6, 1900. Towns represented were Rossland, Greenwood, Sandon, New Denver, Kimberley, Slocan City, Silverton, Whitewater, Ymir, Kaslo, Nelson. There was no representation from the agricultural or ranching sections of the riding or from the railway towns.

¹⁴³ vide Appendix, p. xxiv.

¹⁴⁴ Loc. cit. The influence of Rossland and of the miners in this political movement is plain; of the four candidates, three were from Rossland and three were miners.

settled down to mining in that town.¹⁴⁵

Indeed, he was at his work in the mine when nominated by the Nelson convention. When the matter of independent political action was broached in Rossland he had opposed it on the basis that it might result in the election of a Conservative, and he personally favored the Liberal cause. Upon being overruled he had cheerfully accepted the decision of the meeting. However, he had not been sent to the convention, and had not given his consent to nomination. He was brought word of the nomination, and gave his assent to it, "in a drift on the 400 foot level of the Centre Star mine, standing beside his machine drill, chuck wrench in hand."¹⁴⁶

Only three candidates backed by labor took part in the 1900 federal election in British Columbia. Another, however, was almost nominated -- Will MacClain. There had been a big fishermen's strike on the Fraser River in the summer of 1900, centered on the price of salmon. Considerable bitterness had been expressed, and the militia had been sent from Vancouver to Steveston, ostensibly to keep order. In the course of the strike a considerable amount of organizing had been done, largely by Will MacClain, Ernest Burns, and Frank Rogers, who were all sympathetic to the cause of socialism. Consequently, many of the fishermen were willing to express their grievances

¹⁴⁵ Independent, November 10, 1900, p. 2.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., October 13, 1900, p. 1., from the Industrial World. This passage was reprinted in a number of newspapers sympathetic to labor, to emphasize the genuineness of this labor candidate.

by supporting a socialist -- preferably one of their champions -- in an electoral contest.

The one to claim this potential support was Will MacClain, the most flamboyant of the three. When the Steveston fishermen endorsed the request of the Port Guichon and Canoe Pass fishermen that MacClain stand for the New Westminster federal seat, he immediately accepted.¹⁴⁷ Upon the basis of his recent activities as a provincial candidate and in the fishermen's strike, he began to appear on public platforms as a representative of the socialist wing of the labor movement. He took part in the Nanaimo Labor Day celebrations, and a month later returned to that city in order to lecture on socialism.

MacClain's speeches, to judge by the newspaper reports and quotations, were characterized more by fire and vivacity than by logic or diffidence. Besides explaining his conception of socialism, which embodied elements of both the Marxian system and American radicalism, he became embroiled in a dispute over the leadership of the trade union movement in Canada. He "declaimed strongly" against the labor leaders who opposed socialism, saying that they did so out of pure ignorance. He remarked that

It was a favorite phrase with pretended labor leaders that the interests of labor and capital were the same and that they had to go hand in hand Their interests were diametrically opposed to each other, and no man could stand on both sides of the question.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁷ Independent, September 1, 1900, p. 1.

¹⁴⁸ Nanaimo Herald, October 3, 1900, p. 1.

When asked why the Trades and Labor Congress excluded Socialist organizations from its ranks, he replied that the members of the Congress were ignoramuses, and included in their ranks fake labor leaders who would sell out their cause to feather their own nests.¹⁴⁹ He was also ill-advised enough to attack Ralph Smith upon the basis of a newspaper report which had stated, somewhat ambiguously, that Smith had said "(MacClain) is not brought out by the Independent Labor Party, nor has he been endorsed by the Dominion Labor Party."¹⁵⁰ MacClain took this to mean disapproval of his candidature; Smith maintained that he had merely stated objective facts.

Naturally enough, such episodes brought down upon MacClain the wrath of organized labor and its supporters. The Nanaimo Herald disputed his economic theories and deplored his attack on Smith.¹⁵¹ J.H. Watson, organizer for the A.F. of L. in Vancouver, wrote a bitter personal diatribe against MacClain.¹⁵² The Street Railwaymen's Union demanded that MacClain resign from the Vancouver T. & L.C.,¹⁵³ and his own union, the Machinists', finally withdrew him as their delegate to the Council.¹⁵⁴ Only one ray of light shone upon him through all the storm; the B.C. Socialists endorsed his candidature in the

¹⁴⁹ Independent, October 6, 1900, p. 4.

¹⁵⁰ Loc. cit.

¹⁵¹ October 3, 1900, p. 3.

¹⁵² Nanaimo Herald, October 5, 1900, p. 1.

¹⁵³ Independent, October 20, 1900, p. 1.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., November 17, 1900, p. 4.

New Westminster riding.¹⁵⁵

However, after all this furore, MacClain did not run as a candidate. It appears that on the official nomination day his supporters arrived at the place of nomination just ten minutes too late to enter his name in the contest.¹⁵⁶ It was a sorry ending to a lively incident.

There is a sequel to the story; a letter addressed to MacClain appeared in the Independent, asking:

- 1) Did you not ... claim to be independent of old parties and ... say you had no use for either of them?
- 2) Did you not afterwards take the stump in favor of Hon. Ed. Dewdney, the Conservative candidate?
- 3) Previous to your support of Dewdney, were you not closeted with him?
- 4) What was the weight of the "consideration" which so quickly changed your "principles?"
- 5) While the expenses in connection with your candidature in Vancouver were still unpaid, did you not collect subscriptions for a campaign in this riding, which never came off? How much was collected, and how much, if any, was returned to subscribers?
- 6) What is a labor fakir? 157

The insinuations are clearly enough put, and no answering letter is known. Possibly no answer could be made to some of the questions; MacClain seems to have been of a very mercurial nature, brilliant and possessed of abounding energy, but highly irresponsible and emotional rather than consistent and logical. Such men may accomplish a great deal in a short time, but their lack of consistency often destroys their work and discredits the ideas they hold.

¹⁵⁵ Independent, October 6, 1900, p. 2.

¹⁵⁶ Nanaimo Herald, November 2, 1900, p. 1.

¹⁵⁷ John Jonson, Ladner, B.C., Independent, November 17, 1900, p. 4.

Of the three "labor" campaigns, that of Ralph Smith aroused the most feeling. His policy of conciliation had probably appealed to the Nanaimo and district miners after the disastrous Wellington strike of 1890, and its consequent disruption of the union; by now, its appeal was no doubt wearing a bit thin. Former leaders of the miners like Tully Boyce and Thomas Keith were now working against him, condemning what they saw as his political opportunism and objecting to his failure to put his candidature before the local labor bodies.¹⁵⁸ When it was moved in the Nanaimo T. & L.C. that his candidature be endorsed, that body decided "to take no part whatever in politics"¹⁵⁹ -- despite the fact that it had supported him in the provincial election only a few months before. His own M.M.L.P.A. endorsed him, but only after the supporters of Sloan, the Liberal candidate, had left the meeting.¹⁶⁰ The Victoria T. & L.C. was asked to endorse his candidature, and refused.¹⁶¹ Of the Coast and Island labor bodies only the Vancouver T. & L.C., through its organ, the Independent, and its A.F. of L. organizer, J.H. Watson, gave him any real support.

Watson and Boyce carried on a long and vicious debate over Smith through the letter columns of the Nanaimo Free Press.¹⁶² Boyce had opposed Smith in the 1900 provincial elec-

¹⁵⁸ Nanaimo Free Press, November 1, 1900, p. 2.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 1.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., November 5, 1900, p. 1.

¹⁶¹ Independent, October 20, 1900, p. 1.

¹⁶² October 1900, passim.

tion, feeling that the Labor Party should not have become entangled with the Provincial Party. He and Keith had been delegates to the Liberal convention that had nominated Sloan,¹⁶³ he having lost faith in Smith after Smith's alleged working to get Macpherson defeated in Vancouver.¹⁶⁴ Boyce also objected to "blind worshipers at the throne of Smith" (i.e., Watson et al) attributing all political opposition to Smith to jealousy, envy and malice.¹⁶⁵

Tully Boyce, when accused of treachery, dishonesty, and untruthfulness by Watson, demanded proof; he elicited a statement to the effect that since Smith had been chosen "Labor's Leader for the Dominion," to oppose him was treacherous and dishonest; therefore he (Boyce) was treacherous and dishonest; such a person was always untruthful, in Watson's experience, and so Boyce must be untruthful.¹⁶⁶ Thomas Keith, as a result of attacks on himself by Watson and by a pseudonymous "Business man" in the Nanaimo Herald, took more drastic action; he sued both Watson and the editor-manager of the

¹⁶³ Nanaimo Herald, September 18, 1900, p. 1.

¹⁶⁴ v. sup., p. 110, n. 76.

¹⁶⁵ Nanaimo Free Press, October 1, 1900, p. 4. He had reason to speak of "blind worshipers at the throne of Smith;" a subsequent letter-writer referred to "our honored Leader and Champion -- Ralph Smith -- the brilliant Orator and Debater, the Astute Diplomat, the wise General under whose skilful leadership the hosts of Labor will march on to a magnificent and triumphant victory." James Young, Ibid., October 23, 1900, p. 3.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., October 13, 1900, p. 2.

Herald for criminal libel.¹⁶⁷

Not only was there revolt within the ranks of labor, but a very potent political figure was arrayed against Smith. W.W.B. McInnes, formerly an ally, had become estranged from the Nanaimo Labor Party during the provincial election. Now he was campaigning on behalf of Sloan, the Liberal. His eloquence was at least a match for Smith's, and it was to be expected that he would sway a considerable number of votes in the riding.

Despite all this weight being thrown against Smith, he had advantages on his side. McKechnie was gathering in the independent Liberal vote for him, and Hawthornthwaite the radical labor vote. He was now opposed by two candidates; C.P. Wolley, a Conservative, had joined in the contest and would certainly take votes that would otherwise go to Sloan. Smith, moreover, claimed the friendship of both major parties on the highest level.¹⁶⁸ The Liberals at least had demonstrated their esteem for him by offering him the Deputy Ministry of Labour, or alternatively the position of Commissioner on the projected Board of Conciliation and Arbitration, and Smith had demonstrated his labor integrity by refusing to take a government position.¹⁶⁹

On the local level, Smith's conciliatory policy had

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., October 24, 1900, p. 2., and October 25, p. 2. The case was referred to the spring assizes; its disposition has not been ascertained.

¹⁶⁸ Nanaimo Herald, October 23, 1900, p. 1.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., September 28, 1900, p. 1, and October 9, p. 1.

gained him the support of a large section of the business element. A published letter signed "Churchman" stated in regard to Smith that

Mr. Robins, superintendent of the New Vancouver Coal Company, said "I am proud that the New Vancouver Coal Mining and Land Company, Limited, produced such a man.... Mr. Dunsmuir is also on record as having perfect confidence in him."¹⁷⁰

An editorial in the Herald quoted a leading businessman as saying that "... party candidates aside, not four of the business men of this city will fail to vote for Mr. Smith."¹⁷¹ The claim was certainly exaggerated, but it did have some basis in fact.

The contest between the candidates, as distinct from the newspaper battle over personalities, was bare of significant controversy. Smith published no platform; the only clue to his position is in an article headed "Smith's Federal Program;"¹⁷² this merely stated that the candidate advocated legislation for the whole people, that he would always be ready to help the farmers of Vancouver Island -- and also the miners, merchants, and capitalists -- and that he would be an Independent friendly to both sides of the House. A later issue of the same paper explained that he was prepared to oppose the Liberal government if it did not carry out its labor pledges, and that he favored compulsory arbitration of labor disputes.¹⁷³ His campaign, on the whole, was calculated to offend the fewest number of people possible, and please the greatest.

¹⁷⁰ Nanaimo Free Press, October 25, 1900, p. 2.

¹⁷¹ October 5, 1900, p. 2.

¹⁷² Nanaimo Herald, October 23, 1900, p. 1.

¹⁷³ October 26, 1900, p. 1.

The final days of the campaign saw the publication by the Herald of what is known as a "roorback" -- a charge made too late to be answered -- against the Liberal candidate. It appears that in 1896 Sloan had considered settling in the United States, and had completed the form preliminary to naturalization. This form, naturally enough, contained a repudiation of all other allegiance than to the United States, and in the case of British subjects made especial reference to Queen Victoria. The Herald printed a reproduction of the document, and headed it "Foreswore his Queen!"¹⁷⁴ The allegation of disloyalty conveyed in this "roorback" was disastrous to Sloan, especially since the South African War was still in progress. His vote fell even below that of the Conservative. The result was a solid victory for Smith.¹⁷⁵

Although Smith carried the riding, he did not carry all the coal mining districts. He won Nanaimo by a great majority, as well as Cedar and Cumberland. Sloan, however, took Wellington, Extension, and Comox, while Wolley led in South Wellington and Union Bay.¹⁷⁶ Smith had plainly lost his hold on a great number of the miners; only his victory in Nanaimo City and a fairly strong vote in the agricultural areas won him his federal seat.

¹⁷⁴ November 6, 1900, p. 1.

¹⁷⁵

Ralph Smith.....	1256
C.P. Wolley	868
Wm. Sloan	832

(CPG, 1901, p. 185).

¹⁷⁶ "Report on Votes by Polls," Nanaimo Herald, November 9, 1900, p. 1.

Unlike the campaign on the Island, that on the Coast (Burrard) was uneventful. Both Liberals and Laborites appeared to be satisfied with their alliance, and there was a minimum of "mud-slinging" in the election. Maxwell's emphasis was upon the immediate, pressing problem of British Columbia -- Oriental labor and immigration. He was determined that the matter must be dealt with, and soon. To the other clauses of the Labor platform, both the immediate, pragmatic demands such as that for direct employment of day labor on Government works and the more theoretical points such as single tax and direct legislation, he gave his support, but the main theme of his campaign was the Asiatic question.

His Conservative opponent was J.F. Garden, Mayor of Vancouver and a successful candidate in the provincial election earlier in the year. Garden's candidature was a strong one; he was popular in Vancouver, but his voting record in the 1900 session of the provincial Legislature was not favorable to labor.¹⁷⁷ However, the combination of labor interests with Liberal sentiment was even stronger. The victory went to Maxwell by a wide margin.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁷ Independent, October 6, 1900, p. 1. The Parliamentary Committee of the Vancouver T.& L.C. reported that while Martin and Gilmour had generally supported measures approved by the T.& L.C., Garden and Tatlow had generally opposed such measures. Since it was widely accepted that the two latter had been successful only because labor candidates had reduced the Martinite vote, it may be conjectured that a certain amount of chagrin was felt in the T.& L.C.

¹⁷⁸

G.R. Maxwell 2716
J.F. Garden 2089

(CPG, 1901, p. 136).

The 1900 election in Yale-Kootenay-Cariboo did not take place until a month after the rest of the Dominion had voted.¹⁷⁹ The campaign proceeded without notable incident until the day of the general election had passed. Foley concentrated mostly upon the issue of railway service, financing and control, criticizing the record of past and present governments in the matter and advocating government ownership.¹⁸⁰ The matter of Oriental labor was not a prime issue in his riding, since few Chinese or Japanese were living in the metal-mining districts.

In the latter period of the election Foley received the active support of Smith, safely elected on Vancouver Island. While Foley confined his campaigning to the south-eastern part of the riding, among the mining camps and towns, Ralph Smith worked further north. The Lardeau Eagle paid tribute to his efforts, remarking:

Ralph Smith is doing yeoman work for Chris. Foley and the cause of labor, along the main line, Revelstoke, Golden and Kamloops.¹⁸¹

Within three weeks it changed its stand; the editor published and endorsed a letter from a friend in Revelstoke, who wrote:

You may not know it, but Ralph Smith's speech hurt Foley, both here and in Kamloops. You see, most of the Conservative working men here would have voted for Foley, but they had to be cured of the notion that Foley was a Liberal in disguise. Then Smith spoke and over went our "apple cart."

¹⁷⁹ The Burrard voting was similarly deferred; however, in that case the fact appears to have had no significant results.

¹⁸⁰ Independent, November 10, 1900, p. 1.

¹⁸¹ December 6, 1900.

The correspondent gave a synopsis of Smith's speech, which had consisted of damning the Conservatives and praising the Liberal measures of the past session. All that he said in favor of Foley's candidature was that he knew Foley to be an honest man. The writer concluded by saying, "There's no use talking, we will have to get rid of Smith if we want to accomplish anything."¹⁸²

Foley did not win; the vote was fairly closely grouped in the total,¹⁸³ but the Labor Party appeal was not strong enough to carry the riding. Foley's platform was, to a great extent, a verbatim reproduction of the 1898 T.& L.C.C. platform; the clause on immigration was adapted from the platform of the Vancouver Labor Party.¹⁸⁴ In its economic, and in many of its political aspects it was a platform designed for wage-workers; it made no mention of farmers or of their specific problems. Foley himself campaigned almost exclusively in the south-eastern part of the riding, where the mining population was concentrated; he paid little attention to the rest of the district. The result was that he carried the Kootenay and Boundary areas, but lost heavily to the Liberal in the north and west.¹⁸⁵

In 1900, the political picture was much confused; the attitude of labor had not yet settled into any definite pattern.

¹⁸² Eagle, December 26, 1900.

¹⁸³ W.A. Galliher (Lib.) ... 3,112
Chris Foley (Lab.) 2,652
John McKane (Cons.) 2,563 (CPG, 1901, p. 190).

¹⁸⁴ vide Appendix, pp. xxiii.

¹⁸⁵ Lardeau Eagle, December 13, 1900.

In the provincial election, labor had generally acted in concert with the Provincial Party of Carter-Cotton, the only exceptions being in the cases of Curtis and Macpherson, both Martinites. In the federal election, three attitudes manifested themselves: in Burrard, a formal Liberal-Labor alliance backed Maxwell; in Vancouver (Island), Smith ran as a labor candidate but claimed friendship with both Liberal and Conservative parties; in Yale-Cariboo-Kootenay, Foley ran as a labor man in definite opposition to the old parties. The results of this confusion are most clearly shown in the Interior contest. Maxwell and Curtis, both regarded as friends of the labor movement, attended the Liberal nominating convention and thus endorsed the candidature of Foley's opponent.¹⁸⁶ John Houston, backed by the Nelson T. & L.C. in the provincial contest, attended the Conservative convention.¹⁸⁷ Smith, by his partisanship for the Liberal Party, possibly damaged Foley's chances of success. The policy of locally supporting members of the old parties, or of entering into alliances with them, was certainly damaging to the cause of Independent Labor candidates.

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iv. While the federal contest was still in progress, two provincial by-elections were called. Smith and Garden had vacated their seats at Victoria in order to run for Ottawa, and those seats had to be filled.

¹⁸⁶ Rossland Industrial World, September 8, 1900.

¹⁸⁷ Lardeau Eagle, October 31, 1900.

In Nanaimo, no contest took place. In November, the friends and supporters of the Labor Party nominated J.H. Hawthornthwaite for the vacancy.¹⁸⁸ On February 18, the official nomination date, no further names were put forward so he was declared elected. Probably, after Ralph Smith's crushing defeat of Yates earlier in the year, nobody wished to try consequences with a labor candidate in Nanaimo.

Hawthornthwaite's career up to this time had been somewhat unusual. Born in Ireland, he had come to British Columbia in 1885 and worked as secretary in the U.S. consulate, Victoria. From that position, he had been promoted to the position of U.S. consular agent in Nanaimo. Giving up his consular duties, he went into the real estate business. He then became interested in some ideas for new mining machinery, and moved to San Francisco to develop his ideas; this venture failed, and he returned to Nanaimo as night-watchman for the New Vancouver Coal Company. From this he soon advanced to become clerk of the Company's land department. This position he held at the time of his nomination.¹⁸⁹ He had been associated with Ralph Smith for several years, assisting him in his campaigns by organizing and speaking, and was already quite prominent in Nanaimo political circles.

In Vancouver, labor suffered defeat. The Vancouver Labor Party named the veteran campaigner Robert Macpherson as its representative, this time to be completely independent of

¹⁸⁸ Nanaimo Herald, February 19, 1901.

¹⁸⁹ Loc. cit.

all other parties.¹⁹⁰ He did no active politicking at first; there was no other candidate or party in the field to serve as a target. Hopes of acclamation, however, were shattered when J.F. Garden, the former occupant of the seat and the unsuccessful opponent of Maxwell in the federal contest, was nominated to regain the seat.

By then, little time was left for campaigning; the Vancouver T.& L.C. belatedly endorsed Macpherson,¹⁹¹ but it is hard to see how this last-minute action could have assisted the candidate in any way. The Martinite Opposition likewise endorsed him,¹⁹² without putting any party ties upon him. The Independent, which had said very little about the candidate or the contest so far, at last published an article contrasting the voting records of Macpherson and Garden in the House. It was all of no avail; in a fairly close election, Garden was returned.¹⁹³

This defeat practically marked the end of Macpherson's political career. Successful as a Nationalist in 1894 and as an Oppositionist in 1898, he had been brought down by the official labor movement in 1900. Making his peace with the T.& L.C., he nevertheless failed to get the federal nomination.

¹⁹⁰ Independent, November 24, 1900, p. 1.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., February 16, 1901, p. 2. (T.& L.C. Report).

¹⁹² Ibid., February 9, 1901, p. 4, and February 16, p. 2.

¹⁹³ J.F. Garden1942
 Robt. Macpherson..1621
 (Ibid., February 23, 1901, p. 3).

An apathetic campaign cost him the by-election, and he disappeared from the larger political stage. For a few years he remained active in the political work of the Vancouver T. & L.C., especially in municipal affairs, and in the winter of 1904-5 successfully contested Ward Four with the endorsation of that body.¹⁹⁴ After serving a year on the City Council he completely retired from politics.

The local Labor Parties set up in 1900 for the immediate purposes of the elections seem to have continued through 1901 without much incident. The only sign of electoral activity worth noting was the consideration by the Victoria L.P. of contesting a by-election in that city.¹⁹⁵ However, second thoughts were apparently less encouraging, for nothing more was reported of the idea.

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Part 2. The Kamloops Convention, 1902, and After

i. Towards the end of 1901 a movement in favor of labor and reform political unity appeared and made considerable headway. A few current situations might be noted as the stimuli of this movement.

Most noticeable was the rapid growth of socialistic

¹⁹⁴ "VTLCM," December 15, 1904.

¹⁹⁵ Independent, September 14, 1901, p. 2.

groups in many parts of the province,¹⁹⁶ creating a serious split in the existing labor-reform movement. The socialists were also making their presence felt within the unions. Ernest Burns, secretary of the British Columbia Socialist Party, was president of the Fishermen's Union; together with Frank Rogers (later killed in connection with a 1903 strike of C.P.R. employees)¹⁹⁷ he was able to get a number of planks from the Socialist Party platform written into the declaration of principles of his union.¹⁹⁸ Some attempt had to be made to heal the growing breach between laborism and socialism. In addition, the union movement as a whole was felt to be in danger. The Rossland mine-owners were suing the local W.F.M. for \$50,000 as compensation for losses sustained in a recent strike.¹⁹⁹ They were awarded \$12,500.²⁰⁰ As the unionists saw it, the whole value of the strike as a weapon was destroyed if the strikers had to make up the company's losses. This was a matter for legislation, demanding political action, and the miners were not satisfied with the overall result of their previous

¹⁹⁶ Independent, December 21, 1901, p.6, listed Socialist Party locals in sixteen British Columbia centers. By February 6 there were nineteen, and by March 27 outlying locals at Calgary, Alberta, and Maple Creek, Assiniboia, had been added to the list. (Lardeau Eagle, February 6, 1902, and March 27). There were also other groups, such as the S.L.P. in Vancouver.

¹⁹⁷ Bennett, op. cit., p. 63.

¹⁹⁸ Independent, October 5, 1901, p. 1.

¹⁹⁹ Lardeau Eagle, September 26, 1901.

²⁰⁰ Bennett, op. cit., p. 36.

efforts. It seemed that

... the victory of the labor element in one district was frequently neutralized by another labor constituency endorsing an opposite party. For instance ... R.F. Green ... and Smith Curtis ... were elected by the labor party, but until this session each has been following a different faction in the house, voting against each other and thereby making a stand-off.²⁰¹

Such a situation would emphasize the value of having a unified labor-socialist-reform party.

The first published suggestion for uniting the scattered labor and reform groups came in the form of an editorial in the Independent, which called upon the Vancouver Labor Party or T.& L.C. to take the initiative.²⁰² This was followed by a suggestion from Kamloops Federal Labor Union No. 18, that there be a delegate convention at Kamloops to nominate a party leader whose motto would be "A government for the people with equal rights to all and special privileges to none."²⁰³ The Parliamentary Committee of the Vancouver T.& L.C. then drew up a report in which it stated that it did not favor a narrow political party, which would nominate only union men for election.²⁰⁴ Only about one tenth of the workers were in the unions, making a union labor party a hopeless gesture.²⁰⁵ The report concluded:

We therefore favor political action on a more broad and progressive basis, whereby all who hold similar views and ideas can join together in a common cause, united

²⁰¹ Sandon Paystreak, April 19, 1902.

²⁰² September 14, 1901, p. 2.

²⁰³ Independent, October 26, 1901, p. 2.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., November 23, 1901, p. 1.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., November 30, 1901, p. 4.

in fighting monopoly -- our common enemy -- whose great bulwark is special privilege. 206

Despite the interest shown by the Vancouver labor movement in the idea of a "unity" convention, the actual convention was called at the instance of the Western Federation of Miners. In December, 1901 the Slocan City Miners' Union voted unanimously in favor of the question,

Shall the officers of Dist Assn No 6 (sic) call a convention of all unions in the District for the purpose of preparing a Provincial Platform, also to formulate a set of rules for the holding of conventions to select candidates to contest the different ridings in the interest of the Independent Labor Party in the next provincial Election. Also to invite all Labour and Socialist Bodies in the Province to a seat in the convention. 207

Apparently there was some feeling in the District Office against the last proviso of the question, since Slocan City M.U. sent a later communication to Parr, asking that the remainder of the question be put. 208 Parr complied, as is shown in another letter:

I am instructed to submit the following question for your referendum vote.
No. 6. "Shall the Secy. of Dist Assn No 6. (sic) Invite all Labour and Socialist bodies in the Province to a seat in our convention." 209

On the whole, the miners favored the idea of an inclusive conference. The extant letters show that New Denver, Whitewater, and Slocan City voted for it, the latter two unani-

206 Ibid., November 23, 1901, p. 1.

207 Letter from D.B. O'Neail, secretary Slocan City M.U., #62, to Alfred Parr, sec-treas. D.A. #6 W.F.M., Ymir, B. C., December 12, 1901. Held by T.&D.S.W.U., Trail, B. C.

208 Slocan City M.U. to Parr, December 27, 1901.

209 Parr to Ymir M.U. #85, January 2, 1902.

mously. Almost certainly many other locals did similarly. Rossland, however, turned it down without comment; Nelson M.U. was specifically opposed to the invitation of Socialist bodies, and favored having only a convention of District No. 6, W.F.M., for union business.²¹⁰

Letters of invitation to the proposed convention were sent out. The Vancouver T. & L.C. "Minutes" report a communication from D.A. No. 6, W.F.M. to the effect that "... a convention will be held in Kamloops B.C. on Monday Ap 14 1902 for the purpose of discussing political action being taken on the part of organized labor,"²¹¹ and further:

On motion the holding of the proposed convention was approved and that two delegates be appointed to represent this Council at our next meeting. Carried. 212.

The two delegates were the persistent Robert Macpherson, and Thomas H. Cross. The T. & L.C. was sufficiently interested in this political convention to pay the transportation of delegates, plus wages of \$3.00 per day.²¹³

The convention was held at Kamloops in conjunction with the regular convention of the W.F.M. The miners' meeting took place on Friday April 11; the political convention was

²¹⁰ New Denver M.U. #97 to Parr, January 4, 1902.
Whitewater M.U. #79 to Parr, January 4, 1902.
Slocan City M.U. #62 to Parr, January 29, 1902.
Parr to F.E. Woodside, sec'y Rossland M.U. #38,
January 4, 1902; returned, noted "against X."
Nelson M.U. #36 to Parr, January 7, 1901 (sic).

²¹¹ March 20, 1902.

²¹¹ Loc. cit.

²¹³ Op. cit., April 3, 1902.

scheduled for Monday and Tuesday, April 14 and 15.

It was the most representative assembly of labor and reform bodies to have gathered in the province up to that date.²¹⁴ The sixty-three delegates spoke for nineteen locals of the W.F.M. and D.A. No. 6 as a whole, seven railroad unions, ten other local unions, seven Trades and Labor Councils, three Labor Parties, seven Socialist groups, and a Single Tax Club. Although the W.F.M. predominated with its twenty-three delegates -- and indeed, most of the delegates were from Interior points -- there were eleven men present from the Coast, representing such influential bodies as the Vancouver, Nanaimo and Victoria T. & L.C.'s.

Among the delegates were several of established standing in the labor or radical world, and others who would later become well-known. Chris Foley represented D.A. No 6 of the W.F.M.; Robert Macpherson was there for the Vancouver T. & L.C.; George Bartley, editor of the Independent, spoke for the Vancouver Labor Party; William McAdams, editor of the Sandon Paystreak -- one of the most lively and biting papers in Western Canada -- was sent by the Sandon Socialist League; Ernest Burns, secretary of the British Columbia Socialist Party and president of the Fishermen's Union, came from the Vancouver S.P.; J.H. Watson, A.F. of L. organizer, brought credentials from the Vancouver Boilermakers. Some who would make their mark in public life at a later date were William Davidson, future Labor M.L.A.,

²¹⁴ Vide list of delegates, Appendix, p. xxv.

from Sandon; E.T. Kingsley, for many years editor of the Western Clarion, co-editor of the B.C. Federationist and a prominent Socialist speaker, from Nanaimo; Charles M. O'Brien, from Fernie, to become Socialist M.L.A. in Alberta; and J.D. McNiven of the Victoria T. & L.C., later a Liberal M.L.A. Such a collection of organizational, literary, and oratorical talents, coupled with an immense variety of political shades of opinion, presaged a lively meeting but a lack of effective action.

As might have been expected, the main feature of the convention was a struggle between the socialists and the reformers. Over a year before this J.M. Cameron, Socialist Party organizer, had responded to "unity" overtures by stipulating that if the I.L.P. would accept the Socialist program the S.P. would support the I.L.P.²¹⁵ Now the showdown was here: would the I.L.P. elements accept a socialist program at Kamloops?

The main speakers for the socialist view were Ernest Burns of Vancouver and E.T. Kingsley, the crippled printer from Nanaimo. They criticized a number of the proposed planks bitterly,²¹⁶ usually condemning them as trivial. When woman suffrage was brought up, Kingsley declared it irrelevant to the class struggle; only labor and wage questions should be discussed here. Burns pointed out that the single tax proposal was absurd, in that it merely shifted taxation from one capitalist to another; he called the inclusion of judges in the demand for free transportation for public functionaries "trivial;" he

²¹⁵ Lardeau Eagle, January 2, 1901.

²¹⁶ For the platform adopted, vide Appendix, pp. xxvii.

moved to table the "Sunday labor" clause as being too indefinite.²¹⁷ Two other socialist delegates moved a resolution warning against government ownership while government was still under the control of the capitalist class. The resolution was tabled.²¹⁸ The concern of most of the delegates was with specific issues and immediate solutions; the most generalized social and economic view they could encompass was single tax -- not socialism.

Despite the efforts of the socialists, the delegates assembled a platform of immediate demands without expressing any long-term objectives.²¹⁹ The preamble emphatically endorsed the "recall" principle; the first clause was a demand for the institution of single tax, and the third called for woman suffrage. Beyond that, the main emphasis was upon government intervention in the economy. The government was to own the railways and means of communication, establish and operate smelters and refineries, set aside public lands for educational purposes, arbitrate labor disputes, enforce government scaling of logs, plan for future state-owned coal mines, and municipalize control of the liquor traffic. With all these proposals, it is no wonder that the socialists put forward their cautionary resolution on government ownership!

Possibly the most significant of these demands was the call for government construction and operation of smelters and refineries; it was the miners' reaction to the fact that

²¹⁷ Independent, April 19, 1902.

²¹⁸ Loc. cit.

²¹⁹ vide Appendix, p. xxvii.

something was the matter with B.C. metal mining. The ore had to be shipped in bulk from the mines to distant smelters, often in the United States. Thus a heavy tribute was imposed upon metal mining by the transportation companies. The British Columbia product, moreover, had to compete on the market with American ores not subject to such high costs of transportation. The miners felt that a local smelter could so reduce the cost of the refined metal as to make British Columbia production competitive on the market, and that the establishment of such a plant was the duty of the government.

The other items listed in the platform were somewhat more usual. The demands for a limited use of the referendum and the abolition of property qualification for public office were not new. The proposal that farm improvements, implements and stock be not taxed was an obvious bid for farmers' votes. The clause on Oriental immigration was standard, except that it proposed a new type of legislation to achieve exclusion -- the Natal Act.²²⁰ The change was due to the disallowance of provincial legislation directed to that end, and the unwillingness of the federal government to embarrass Imperial ties with Japan and economic relations with China by passing openly discriminatory laws.

In addition to the formal platform, the convention expressed its approval of several subsidiary resolutions, which

²²⁰ So-called because the colony of Natal had passed an Act in 1897 restricting immigration to those who could write in the characters of a European language. Its effect was to bar Asian immigrants: in the case of Natal, East Indians; in the case of Canada, Chinese and Japanese.

are best summarized as follows: (1) All British Columbia school texts to be printed at the government printing offices and sold at cost; (2) Union label to appear on all provincial government printing and contracts, where a label is available; (3) the Dominion Government to pass an Act recognizing the union label; (4) the government to take over the Canadian Pacific Telegraphs; (5) the Attorney-General of B.C. and the Minister of Justice to be compelled to enforce the Alien Contract Labor Law; (6) the Sunday law to be rigidly enforced; (7) all wages to be paid every two weeks, under penalty; (8) to approve Hawthornthwaite's Workmen's Compensation Bill and Smith Curtis' Bill to stop damage suits against trade unions; (9) to organize an independent political party; (10) to elect certain officers.²²¹

The new political party was named the Provincial Progressive Party, for simple reasons. It was provincial in its aims; its platform was almost entirely composed of legislative demands on the provincial government. The name "Progressive" was broad enough, it was hoped, to satisfy all reform elements. Although the unions had been instrumental in forming the party they wished to bring into it the farmers and the discontented among the "petit bourgeoisie," thus giving it a chance of electoral success.

When it came to the business of electing officers, the hope of broadening the party took a severe setback. Almost all, if not all, the delegates to the convention were unionists.

²²¹ Lardeau Eagle, April 24, 1902.

Consequently, all the offices were filled by unionists. Chris Foley was elected president, and James Wilks, another miner, became vice-president; J.D. McNiven of Victoria was named secretary-treasurer, while J.H. Watson, H. Buckle, D.W. Stevens, and Thomas Buckton made up the Executive Committee. All were unionists; three -- Foley, Wilks, and Buckton -- were metal-miners, and a fourth, Buckle, was associated with the Nanaimo coal-miners. The P.P.P. was primarily a miners' party; although it extended its activities to the Vancouver area, its core and center never moved far from the metal-mining districts.

The first failure of the new party which became apparent was its inability to please the socialists. They had been unable to impress upon the P.P.P. platform any mark of socialism. Although twenty-four *here did this count come down (12)* socialists had attended the meeting, most of them had come as union delegates with binding instructions; hence they had been unable to give support to Burns and Kingsley. Consequently, in their view, "every vital issue to labor was either ignored or straddled, and the platform finally adopted was of a weak and indefinite description."²²² The Executive Committee of the Socialist Party stated that any attempt by any local officially to endorse the platform of the P.P.P. would be entirely unconstitutional, explaining that "the Progressive Party deliberately rejected all that was vital in our platform; therefore, that party is no more entitled to special consideration at our hands than either the Liberals or the

²²² Citizen and Country, in Independent, May 10, 1902.

Conservatives." It did, however, permit members to use their own judgment in voting where no Socialist candidates were nominated.²²³

The most caustic comment upon the new party came from Eugene V. Debs, at the time upon a lecture tour of the North-Western States and Southern B.C. When asked in Vancouver for his opinion of the P.P.P., he described it as

... a middle-class movement, which proposes to take the short cut to power and distribute official favors. In this party are to be found anarchists, single-taxers, direct-legislationists, cast-off capitalist politicians, and many honest, but misguided men, who know little or nothing about socialism. The party promises those who are inclined to socialism that it is the very party needed at this time to lead up to socialism. In the next breath it assures others, who are opposed to socialism, that it is just the party to head off the socialist movement.... The party has no mission except to retard the progress of the bona fide socialist movement in twelve months, or less, it will have ceased to exist.²²⁴

And certainly, within twelve months it had ceased to exist in most parts of the province.

Actually, the P.P.P. was doomed by an incident which occurred at Denver, Colorado, only two months after the Kamloops Convention. There, in mid-June, the full convention of the Western Federation of Miners voted 230-73 in favor of a resolution that

We endorse the platform of the Socialist Party (of America) and accept it as the declaration of principles of our organization. We call upon our members as individuals to

²²³ Citizen and Country, May 30, 1902, p. 2.

²²⁴ Sandon Paystreak, July 19, 1902.

commence immediately the organization of the Socialist movement in their respective towns and States.... 225

James Wilks, B.C. Vice-president of the W.F.M., opposed the resolution and, after its passage, declined re-election; his place was taken by a socialist, James A. Baker of Slocan City.²²⁶

The British Columbia section of the W.F.M. did not immediately commit itself to implementation of this new policy. The influence of such men as Wilks and Foley was strong enough to retard any precipitate change of front. However, a process was now under way; the socialists in D.A. No. 6 found their position very much strengthened by the convention decision, and were able to build up their power within the local unions and the District. In general they avoided open conflict with the non-socialists in the W.F.M.; wherever possible, they quietly assimilated them. Within two years, D.A. No. 6 was ripe for full conquest, and in its 1904 convention pledged itself to support of the Socialist Party.²²⁷

The action of the 1902 convention of the W.F.M. deprived the P.P.P. of its main base. That union had been the driving force behind the Kamloops convention, and had provided many of the officials and members of the new party. Now that its official support was given, as a whole, to socialism, the Progressive Party was robbed of its lifeblood; it might carry on

²²⁵ Canadian Socialist, Toronto, June 20, 1902.

²²⁶ Loc. cit.

²²⁷ Letter, Sandon M.U. #31 to Rossland M.U. #38, November 10, 1901, Held by T. & D. S.W.U., Trail.

for a time, but only as a skeleton animated artificially.

The main beneficiaries of the Kamloops convention seem to have been, of all people, the radical Marxian socialists. The initial growth of the Socialist Party had brought in a number of members who were little more than "sentimental" socialists, more interested in immediate reforms than in social revolution. These people were drawn toward the P.P.P. in 1902, and lost interest in the Socialist Party. This is at least a reasonable explanation of the fact that in the 1902 convention of the Socialist Party of British Columbia, which closely followed the Kamloops convention, the official list of "immediate demands" was dropped,²²⁸ and the party as a whole was devoted to the attainment of socialism through education and agitation. It is doubtful that Kingsley and the other "educationalists" could have scored this victory without the purification of the Socialist Party accomplished by the Kamloops convention.

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ii. The Provincial Progressive Party had elected Chris Foley as its president, he being the leading labor figure in the Interior and being also well-known outside that area. After his defeat in the federal election of 1900 he had been offered -- and had accepted -- a seat on the Royal Commission investigating the Chinese problem. For this act he was roundly castigated by the vitriolic "Billy" McAdams, editor of the Sandon Paystreak. In an editorial entitled "Chris Foley is

²²⁸ G. Weston Wrigley in Western Clarion, September 28, 1903, p. 3.

throwing off on himself" (i.e., sacrificing political prestige), McAdams gave voice to a widely-held and quite sound analysis of such appointments:

He (Foley) knows that Ralph Smith had the blind staggers when he fell into the ranks of the liberal party and that Mr. Smith's services to the labor party in Yale-Cariboo-Kootenay were not worth hell-room. He knows that the Laurier government has never overlooked an opportunity to put influential labor men out of politics by giving them government jobs which lead to a less or greater subser-viency to the party machine at Ottawa. 229

Foley, however, although very much a Liberal in sentiment, returned to his union duties after the completion of the Commission's work. After the Kamloops Convention he left Rossland and mining and moved to Vancouver. There he became an active member of the Building Laborers' Union, and took part in the formation of a Vancouver branch of the P.P.P.²³⁰ During the months of July, August and September he carried out a debate with the local socialists (Ernest Burns and others) upon the subject of labor political action versus socialism, through the columns of the Independent. Then, in November, the federal seat of Burrard fell vacant.

Rev. George R. Maxwell, the labor-supported M.P. for Burrard, had been a very active man. He had taken his duties at Ottawa seriously, and had put forward the demands of British Columbia labor with vigor, especially in regard to the Oriental problem. Most of his work had been done during his first term

²²⁹ Paystreak, January 12, 1901.

²³⁰ Independent, June 28, 1902.

in the House;²³¹ since the 1900 election he had been less active, although in 1901 he had sponsored, in concert with Ralph Smith, an unsuccessful motion in favor of the referendum principle.²³² In general he had restricted himself to supporting the efforts of Puttee and Smith and had refrained from initiating action in the House.

Maxwell had been much more active in British Columbia than at Ottawa. He had contributed many philosophical and sociological articles to the Independent,²³³ and was president of the British Columbia Liberal Association. The total amount of work involved was apparently too much for a man not naturally very robust, and he died November 19, 1902, at the early age of forty-six.²³⁴

A large section of the Vancouver labor movement no doubt felt a sort of proprietary interest in the Burrard seat, through labor's association with Maxwell. The Vancouver Labor Party appears to have acted rapidly in the matter. Before the new year Chris Foley was in the field as an Independent Labor Party candidate. On January 8 his union, the Building Laborers, endorsed his candidature.²³⁵ Then his candidature was presented to the Vancouver T. & L.C. for approval, and for the first time

²³¹ v. sup., p. 183.

²³² Independent, April 13, 1901, p. 3.

²³³ 1901-02, passim.

²³⁴ Ibid., November 22, 1902.

²³⁵ Ibid., January 10, 1903.

in the history of that body the idea of "no politics" was officially brought into action.

The proceedings were most succinctly and vividly recorded by the secretary, F.J. Russell:

Moved Bro Dobbin & sec. that we endorse the candidature of Cris (sic) Foley. refused by the chair (W.J. Lamrick) as reasons that political discussions are debarred.

Moved that a vote be taken as to whether the chair be sustained. Ruled out of order

Moved by Bro Mortimer that candidature of Foley be discussed. Carried

After some discussion again moved that Foley be endorsed.

Moved by Bro Little we adjourn, & during a discussion as to procedure, time ran out & Council was declared adjourned. 236

A special meeting was called to discuss the matter of Foley's candidature. After an argument as to who could be present, the meeting was reduced to 74 delegates representing thirty unions. Then the anti-Foley element took the initiative:

Moved by Bro Mortimer sec. Bro Lear that this Trades Council do not endorse the candidature of any person in this by election.

The debate was opened & discussion started....

The motion was put and lost by a vote of 44 to 22....

Moved by Bro Hilton sec by Bro Sully that whereas this Trades & Labor Council of Vanc is established for the purpose of effecting legislation for the better recognition of our Labor Unions and for contracting our efforts in the betterment of the condition of the toiler generally and whereas these objects can only be made permanently effective by electing our own representatives to the Provincial & Dominion Parliaments and whereas further this Council has already established numerous precedents as the records will doubtless show by endorsing straight Labor representatives. Therefore be it resolved that this Council endorse the candidature of our Bro. Cris Foley an old member of the Miners Union in the

upper country a member of the Building Laborers Union of this city and until recently a much respected delegate to the Vanc Building Trades Council.

This motion carried 41-20.²³⁷

The invocation of the widely-accepted "no politics in the union" ruling was not quite what it appeared to be -- a sudden upsurge of anti-politicalism. Its meaning becomes clearer when it is noted that Mortimer, the mover of the anti-endorsation resolution, was a few months later a provincial candidate for the Socialist Party, and in 1904 a federal candidate for that party. Some of the opposition to endorsing Foley no doubt came from Liberal or Conservative voters within the Council; the center of it, without doubt, was the rapidly growing rival of political laborism -- socialism.

Although the endorsation of Foley was carried and published, nothing was done to follow it up. There is no further mention of the campaign in the T. & L.C. "Minutes," and it is most likely that the division over the endorsation was a temporary damper on any political discussion. Even the Independent had very little to say about Foley's campaign.

This by-election drove what must be regarded as the last nail in the coffin of the Provincial Progressive Party. In the previous November the P.P.P. had elected as its Honorary President T.R. McInnes, formerly Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia. He accepted the tribute with evident pleasure, declaring that "For many years he had been an ardent supporter

²³⁷ Ibid., January 19, 1903.

of the cause that they advocated in the association."²³⁸

In January the Honorary President of the P.P.P. appeared as an Independent candidate in opposition to Chris Foley, President of the P.P.P. The absurdity of the situation was evident; it is no wonder that from this time onward nothing more is heard of the Progressive Party in Vancouver.

The real reason for McInnes' entering the contest was probably connected with his dismissal from the post of Lieutenant-Governor by the Laurier cabinet, in consequence of his role in the matter of the short-lived Martin government of 1900. It may be plausibly argued that his 1903 candidature was an attempt to revive the matter in Ottawa, and to embarrass the Liberal government. Certainly McInnes advanced no more convincing reason than this for his attempt to win a federal seat, especially in the face of his opposing a man of whose politics he apparently approved.

The main contest was between Foley and the official Liberal Party candidate, R.G. Macpherson (not to be confused with Robert Macpherson, former M.L.A.). In this election there was no Liberal-Labor fusion such as had distinguished the 1900, and, more loosely, the 1896 election. The Liberals wanted a straight party man, not an Independent; the Labor Party felt confident that it could win unaided. In addition, there was no Conservative candidate to spur united action; for their own reasons, possibly connected with the established strength of the Liberal and

²³⁸ Nanaimo Herald, November 9, 1902, p. 3.

Labor elements which had elected Maxwell, the Conservatives did not contest the by-election.

No specific platform appeared as an expression of Foley's principles or of labor's demands. Most probably the Vancouver Labor Party still adhered to its 1900 platform, which had been endorsed by Maxwell in the election of that year; no evidence exists to the contrary.

Although Foley ran as an Independent Laborite, his actual political sentiments were basically Liberal; he opposed the Liberal Party only on what he considered to be its neglect of the problems of British Columbia labor. He claimed, on occasion, to be a socialist, but he was generally at odds with the Socialist Party on the basic issues of economics and politics. Even in the course of this campaign he advertised his basic Liberalism by saying

Until two years ago I had always been a Liberal in Dominion politics, but I will never vote a Liberal ticket again until the Liberal government changes its immigration policy; fulfils its pledges to British Columbia on the Mongolian question, and enforces the provisions of the Alien Contract Labor Law 239

In other words, he had been a Liberal up to the time of his nomination in 1900, and would again support the Liberal Party if it would make some moves to satisfy labor's demands.

These three points can be considered as summarizing Foley's campaign issues. The Liberal policy of assisted immigration had been attacked in the federal Labor platforms of 1900: organized labor then, as today, saw the current influx

of workers used to a lower standard of living than was prevalent in Canada, and unfamiliar with labor organization, as a threat to Canadian living standards and to the existence of unions. Despite the raising of the entry tax on Chinese, Oriental immigration to British Columbia continued. Finally, although there existed a federal law against the importation of alien labor under private contract, the labor movement felt that its provisions were often evaded. Sometimes the law was enforced,²⁴⁰ but the complaints of its violation exceeded its use.

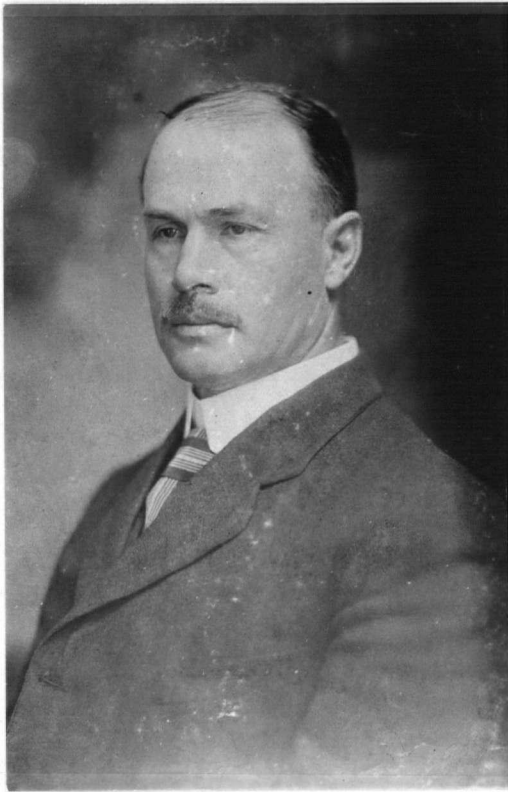
The entry of McInnes into the by-election had one result; it was almost certainly the cause of Foley's defeat. Those who voted for McInnes were most likely habitual anti-Liberals or temporarily discontented Liberals; their votes would certainly have gone to Foley rather than to his opponent. When the votes were counted there were very few for McInnes, but they more than made up the difference between Foley's total and Macpherson's. Thus the Honorary President of the Provincial Progressive Party repaid that party, in the person of its president, for the honor accorded him.²⁴¹

This second defeat was the end of Chris Foley's political career. For a short time he had ranked next to Ralph Smith as a labor figure in British Columbia. He had contested

²⁴⁰ Cf. Labour Gazette, 1901-02, passim.

²⁴¹ Almost-complete returns showed R.G. Macpherson...1867
Chris Foley 1754
T.R. McInnes 349
(Independent, February 7, 1903).

(to follow page 171)



James H. Hawthornthwaite

Member of the Legislative Assembly,
1901-1912
(Labor, Socialist)

Nanaimo

Parker Williams

Member of the Legislative Assembly,
1903-1917
(Socialist)

Newcastle

two federal seats, and on both occasions had suffered damage at the hands of supposed allies -- first Ralph Smith, and second T.R. McInnes. His former political base, the W.F.M., was now officially committed to socialism, and the socialist influence in the Vancouver T. & L.C. was growing; there was becoming less scope for his Liberalism within the B.C. labor movement. Finally, he was no longer a young man, and his eyesight was failing; later in the year he resigned from the Parliamentary Committee of the T. & L.C.²⁴² and disappeared into obscurity.

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iii. While the Western Federation of Miners was organizing the Kamloops Convention, and while Vancouver labor was attempting to get Foley elected, events in Nanaimo were following quite a different course. There, the split between laborism and socialism was precipitated more rapidly, and was quickly resolved in favor of socialism. The comparative speed of the development there was probably due to two causes. The roughness and danger of the miners' work and the politico-economic power of the mine-owners inclined the miners toward a thorough-going remedy; the identification of Ralph Smith's policy of conciliation and political opportunism with laborism gained support for Smith's socialist opponents.

The division between the two elements was foreshadowed in 1901 at a Labor Day speech in Victoria, when J.H. Hawthornthwaite expressed the conviction that, although the

²⁴² "VTLCM," November 19, 1903.

extreme remedies of socialism were not yet necessary in B.C., the remedy which would eventually be applied to social ills was socialism, pure and simple.²⁴³ Since Hawthornthwaite was Ralph Smith's left-hand man (Dr. McKechnie being his right-hand man) the statement had some significance.

The significance of Hawthornthwaite's shift to the left became more clear upon the publication of an interview by the Nanaimo Free Press. Hawthornthwaite displayed great dissatisfaction with the Nanaimo Labor Party in both its organization and its policy, and implicitly criticized Ralph Smith's collaborationist ideas. He stated:

I believe there is no such party as a Liberal-Labor party; that combination in the local house as advocated by Smith-Curtis and supported by myself simply means a temporary coalition of both parties for a joint action against the Dunsmuir administration. The Liberal and Labor parties are quite distinct, both in principles and methods. The Liberal party does not believe in class legislation, and does not advocate progress along socialistic lines. The Independent Labor party was formed in Canada, England and New Zealand to study economic subjects affecting the welfare of labor, and to obtain direct legislation for the benefit of the labor class, which includes all wage workers. The Independent Labor party is not supposed to form a permanent alliance with either of the older parties. 244

The matter was then taken up in a meeting of the Nanaimo Labor Party. Hawthornthwaite repeated his contention, and asked the party to endorse his position.

He was immediately opposed by many of the members, who wanted to attend a Liberal convention and take part in the nomination of delegates to the coming provincial convention of

²⁴³ Independent, September 7, 1901, p. 3.

²⁴⁴ Ibid., January 4, 1902, p. 1.

the Liberal Party. The leadership of that party was to be decided, and they considered the choice to be vital to the Nanaimo Labor Party and to the labor movement generally. Hawthornthwaite replied that, whether Bodwell or Martin (the two leading contenders) were chosen leader, he personally could not support him. Furthermore, he wanted to know, why should labor men concern themselves with the Liberal leadership? Could they not be content with having their own convention?

The main opposition to Hawthornthwaite's position was made by Ralph Smith himself. He attacked Hawthornthwaite for first making his complaint to the press, stating that since the Nanaimo Labor Party had neither constitution nor by-laws, to declare that it endorsed certain principles to the exclusion of others was an attempt to dictate policy. He opposed class legislation, and favored the Liberal Party only as it rose above class prejudice.²⁴⁵ His speech was, on the whole, that of an experienced politician defending an uncertain position; smooth, yet sharp.

The debate was continued a week later; although Smith had the majority of the Nanaimo Labor Party with him, Hawthornthwaite was able to force a compromise. The meeting agreed

...that members of one political party who would support the candidate of the Labor Party might be affiliated members of that party during the time such support was given but would not be eligible for office. ²⁴⁶

²⁴⁵ Independent, January 11, 1902, p. 8.

²⁴⁶ Nanaimo Herald, January 19, 1902, p. 1.

This had one result; Dr. McKechnie, who was not only president of the Nanaimo L.P. but also president of the local Liberal Association, retired from his Labor Party position and was replaced by a miner, George Johnston.²⁴⁷

Despite the compromise, the battle still raged. Smith warned Hawthornthwaite that if they were to rebuff the Liberals and Conservatives neither of them, nor any other labor candidate, could get elected. Nevertheless, Hawthornthwaite objected again to the Labor-Liberal overlap -- especially to Labor Party members taking an active part in the Liberal convention.²⁴⁸ His conviction was that the Labor Party, to be anything, must stand on its own feet and fight the established parties, and take whatever consequences came; in its present state the Labor Party was little more than a semi-autonomous appendage of the Liberal Party.

The final split in the Nanaimo L.P. followed immediately. Hawthornthwaite called a public meeting to air the matter, and proceeded to make a number of charges against Ralph Smith. Specifically, he charged him with (1) accepting railway passes, thus obligating himself to the railway companies; (2) making the settlement at Rossland in 1900 upon a contract rather than a wage basis; (3) weakening the position of the C.P.R. trackmen in their 1901 strike by opposing their connection with the A.F. of L.; (4) advocating the employment of cheap labor, in that he had expressed a qualified approval of Japanese; and

²⁴⁷Ibid., p. 3.

²⁴⁸Ibid., pp.2,3.

(5) using his political influence for the economic benefit of Dr. McKechnie.²⁴⁹ Smith, in his reply, cleared himself of these charges to the satisfaction of his supporters but not, of course, to the satisfaction of his opponents. The division had already become too deep for resolution by reason; it would have to be fought out.

At about this time, Hawthornthwaite was dismissed from his job at the New Vancouver Coal Company; it was immediately assumed in some quarters that the dismissal was connected with his disagreement with Smith.²⁵⁰ The incident further embittered relations between the two wings of Nanaimo labor.

The final break between Ralph Smith and the Nanaimo Miners' Union soon followed. In the spring of 1902, Smith went on a trip to Europe; while there, he wrote to the M.M.L.P.A. requesting that the union elect him as its delegate to the coming T.L.C.C. meeting in Berlin (Kitchener), Ontario. Instead of complying, the miners tabled the request,²⁵¹ and

²⁴⁹ Nanaimo Herald, January 21, 1902, pp. 1,3.

²⁵⁰ Ladysmith Leader, in Lardeau Eagle, January 30, 1902. The idea that opponents of Ralph Smith were in danger of dismissal was not new, nor did it die easily. As early as July 22, 1899, the Herald carried a denial by Smith of an accusation that the men in the Miners' Union could not speak their minds without fear of being fired; Jimmy Phillipson, who came to Nanaimo in 1907, stated that the basic reason for the miners' turning against Smith was the firing of men who spoke against Smith. (Interview, July 1954). Certainly, many of the miners regarded Smith as a Company man running under Labor colors; the approval of Smith by Dunsmuir and other employers reinforced this belief.

²⁵¹ Canadian Socialist, July 12, 1902, p. 1.

followed up this action by disaffiliating from the T.L.C.C.²⁵²

The reasons for disaffiliation were explained by Parker Williams, a new figure in the miners' movement.²⁵³ According to him, Congress had become a part of the Liberal political machine; a number of employees and favorites of the Laurier government were holding important places in the Congress.²⁵⁴ To make matters worse, Liberal legislation was not of real benefit to the workers; the Laurier administration was importing labor at public cost (assisted immigration) to compete with existing labor, and, despite the Alien Labor Act, Pennsylvania miners were being brought to Fernie to replace those "murdered" in a recent coal-mine disaster.

It was also claimed that the T.L.C.C. was worthless, since it gave no general assistance in time of strikes or other contingencies.²⁵⁵ It may have been fairly true that the Congress was wanting in this respect, but then it was a delegate and deliberative body; action was not its function. This was not satisfactory to many of the miners, who wanted a connection with a body which could and would aid them in times of stress. Their own organization was local, without a nation-wide or continental union like the carpenters or the metal-miners.

²⁵² Nanaimo Free Press, August 18, 1902, p. 1.

²⁵³ Nanaimo Herald, August 20, 1902, p. 2.

²⁵⁴ This assertion was not contested by the Nanaimo Herald; it was accepted as evidence that the Liberals recognized the value of these men.

²⁵⁵ Nanaimo Herald, August 17, 1902, p. 1.

Although a meeting of the M.M.L.P.A. decided to dis-affiliate, the matter was not settled immediately. A referendum vote of the members taken as to whether or not to resume affiliation with the Congress resulted in an almost even split; 260 voted for affiliation, and 264 against.²⁵⁶ The affiliation was shelved for a year.²⁵⁷

The coal miners then looked for another body with which to affiliate, and apparently found the Western Federation of Miners to their taste. The W.F.M. had just now endorsed socialism, and was also organizing the coal miners of the Crow's Nest Pass.²⁵⁸ This appeared to be what the more active unionists among the coal miners wanted, and the M.M.L.P.A., reduced in numbers, voted 128-59 in favor of affiliation with the W.F.M.²⁵⁹

The coal miners' repudiation of Ralph Smith and the T.L.C.C. was supported in another quarter. In August, the Phoenix T. & L.C. joined the W.F.M. in endorsing, nem. con., the international socialist movement and principles.²⁶⁰ It followed this up by a letter to the T.L.C.C., criticizing that body for inaction, attacking its president, Ralph Smith, and withdrawing its support from the T.L.C.C.²⁶¹

²⁵⁶ Nanaimo Herald, September 5, 1902, p. 1.

²⁵⁷ Ibid., September 28, 1902, p. 1.

²⁵⁸ Independent, April 5, 1902; D.A. No. 7, W.F.M. was formed for the Crow's Nest miners.

²⁵⁹ Nanaimo Herald, November 2, 1902, p. 1.

²⁶⁰ Independent, September 6, 1902.

²⁶¹ Ibid., October 4, 1902.

On the whole, its criticisms were much the same as those being voiced by Hawthornthwaite and Williams in Nanaimo about the same time; its main addition was that the check-off of union dues as practised in Nanaimo benefited only Smith and Dunsmuir, by keeping a submissive M.M.L.P.A. in existence as a base for Smith's union and political activities.

The Phoenix charges were investigated by a committee of the T.L.C.C., and rejected as "unjustifiable and untrue."²⁶² Ralph Smith was again nominated for the presidency, but in view of his rejection by the Nanaimo miners refused to stand.²⁶³ Thus his connection with the dominion labor movement was terminated; from being a national figure he was practically reduced to local proportions. He could no longer speak for the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada; he represented only the Nanaimo Labor Party, which in its turn seems to have represented more business and professional elements than labor interests.

Hawthornthwaite's shift to the left, paralleling that of the Miners' Union, reached its logical conclusion in October. Under the heading "Is Now a Socialist: Nanaimo's M.P.P. Joins the Reds," the Herald reported that Hawthornthwaite had made application to join the Revolutionary Socialist Party.²⁶⁴ Ralph Smith, the miner, had become the favorite of the mine-owners; Jim Hawthornthwaite, the former real-estate agent, now represented the miners.

²⁶² Independent, September 20, 1902.

²⁶³ Loc. cit.

²⁶⁴ October 14, 1902, p. 1.

Two days before Christmas, 1902, there came the first political test of the strength of socialism in the Nanaimo area. W.W.B. McInnes had been given the Cabinet post of Provincial Secretary, and was obliged to ask re-endorsation from his constituents. The socialists of Northfield decided to contest the seat, and named as their representative Parker Williams.

Williams had been born in Wales in 1873. He had worked his way from the Welsh coal mines through those of Alberta and Washington and the lumber camps of Ontario to the lumber camps and mines of British Columbia. A self-educated man, he had for years been active in union work, but did not come into prominence until his identification with the cause of socialism on Vancouver Island.

The election campaign was a short one, and Williams' platform was also short. It can be summed up in a sentence:

I have but one promise to make, namely, that if elected I will grasp every opportunity to introduce and promote legislation in the interest of the wage-earner, applying to every question the test, "will this legislation advance the interests of the worker, and aid him in the class struggle?" 265

He claimed the whole product of labor for the worker, and accused McInnes of endorsing exploitation by supporting the capitalist system.²⁶⁶

The attitude of the Nanaimo Herald in this contest

²⁶⁵ Quoted in Nanaimo Herald, December 6, 1902, p. 2.

²⁶⁶ Ibid., December 5, 1902, p. 1.

reveals very clearly the re-alignment of political forces on Vancouver Island at this time. Although it had broken with McInnes in 1900, most clearly over McInnes' support of Sloan against Smith, it was now becoming reconciled. It consistently gave McInnes a better press than Williams;²⁶⁷ the growth of socialism was uniting all other political elements, except possibly the most hardened Conservatives.

The results of the by-election were surprising to those who expected the socialist to be swamped. McInnes was elected with a solid majority, but Williams was in no danger of losing his deposit.²⁶⁸ The radical socialist idea had apparently at least as much appeal as the moderate labor appeal.

The reasons for the large socialist vote, at least in part, appeared in the Herald before voting day.²⁶⁹ The central point, apparently, was the enforced move of miners from Wellington, first to Extension and then to Ladysmith, by the closing of old mines, the opening of new ones and the establishment of a port at the last place. Many miners had built homes at Wellington, and had to choose between abandoning them and transporting them to a new site; the double move had enhanced resentment, and was throwing votes to Williams.

²⁶⁷ Ibid., early December, 1902, passim.

²⁶⁸ McInnes 263
Williams ... 155
(CPG, 1903, p. 384).

²⁶⁹ December 16, 1902, p. 1.

The early part of 1903 saw a lack of political activity in British Columbia, so far as the labor movement was concerned. In March, a lecture was given in Vancouver on the subject of socialism by a Father Haggarty,²⁷⁰ a Catholic priest who had taken up the doctrines of the Socialist Labor Party. In the same month there was considerable discussion of the possibility that Ralph Smith might become provincial leader of the Liberal Party.²⁷¹ However, he would not exert himself to attain that position, taking the attitude that "it must come unsolicited,"²⁷² and he was not chosen.

In April, one event should be noted as symptomatic of the growing radicalism of British Columbia labor. A discussion of the relative merits of industrial unionism and trade unionism had been carried on for some time in the Vancouver T. & L.C. The proponents of industrial organization won out in the Council, and attempted to convert the T.L.C.C. to their beliefs. Although they received widespread support, they were unable to carry the point through the Congress, and in April 1903 they followed the example of the M.M.L.P.A. and the Phoenix T. & L.C. by severing Vancouver's connection with the national body.²⁷³ The episode is significant for two reasons. First, it was part of the rebellion of British Columbia labor,

²⁷⁰ "VTLCM," March 5, 1903.

²⁷¹ Vancouver Province, March 1903, passim.

²⁷² Ibid., March 26, 1903, pp. 1,2.

²⁷³ Bennett, op. cit., p. 40.

engrossed with its special problems, against the relatively conservative trade unionism of Eastern Canada. Second, the issue involved -- industrial unionism -- has a close relationship to labor political attitudes; it implies a broad class outlook rather than narrow group interests, and is therefore likely to occur in conjunction with radical political ideas. Most socialistic movements have regarded industrial unionism as the economic counterpart to class political action.

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iv. In the provincial election of 1903, there was a marked decline in political laborism and an enormous increase in socialist activity. Throughout the province there appeared ten candidates professing allegiance to socialism, and not more than eight claiming the "labor" designation.²⁷⁴ The tide within the labor movement had definitely set in favor of socialism.

Government in the past legislature had been precarious. The Dunsmuir administration had been succeeded by a Prior cabinet, which had in turn given way to McBride's administration. In this unstable period, Hawthornthwaite had been able to obtain

²⁷⁴ "Three of these "labor" candidates are not dealt with here, mainly because material on them is lacking. Their relevance to the topic was not discovered until this thesis was almost completed. The Western Clarion, January 12, 1907, p. 1. referred to J.D. McNiven, M.L.A., as the "'Liberal-Labor' representative of the Trades Unionists of Victoria." "VTLCM," September 1903, p. 189 (no date recorded) notes a letter from John Kirkland, "Labor candidate at Atlin," requesting co-operation in the coming campaign. "Happie" Dunning, Vancouver, (retired metal-miner) informs me (conversation, August 1954) that a labor candidate contested Ymir in 1903; this was most likely Alfred Parr, former secretary-treasurer of D.A. No. 6, W.F.M.

some reform measures.²⁷⁵ In 1901 he had initiated an amendment to the Coal Mines Regulation Act whereby miners, in the interests of safety, were required to hold certificates of competency. In 1902 he had secured the passage of a Workmen's Compensation Act and a measure allowing workers time off to vote, and had supported Joseph Martin and Smith Curtis in putting through a Trades Union Act (arising out of the suit against the Rossland Miners' Union) protecting unions against lawsuits based upon illegal acts of their members. These measures, coupled with Hawthornthwaite's conversion to socialism, tended to make political action through the Socialist Party attractive to active unionists.

Hawthornthwaite had been especially successful in his relations with McBride, somewhat to the chagrin of the Liberal elements in Nanaimo. The chagrin was evidenced in the first remarks of the Nanaimo Herald on the coming election.²⁷⁶ It was suggested that an "unholy alliance" was in the making: that McBride was assisting Hawthornthwaite by promises of roads and the enforcement of a law against employing Chinese underground, and by directing public communications to Nanaimo through Hawthornthwaite rather than through the recognized local Conservative leaders.

The nomination of Hawthornthwaite by the Socialist Party took place on August 20. It was immediately followed by

²⁷⁵ "Class War in Local House," Western Clarion, January 12, 1907, pp. 1, 4; this article goes into some detail on labor legislation 1901-1907.

²⁷⁶ July 18 and 19, 1903, p. 1.

a meeting of the Nanaimo Labor Party.²⁷⁷ After some discussion, the Nanaimo L.P. decided that although Liberals and Conservatives might remain, all Socialists should be excluded from the proceedings. The meaning of this decision was made plain when the meeting named a committee, including Ralph Smith, to confer with the Liberal and Conservative organizations with a view to combining against the Socialists.

The Liberals accepted the idea, but the Conservatives turned it down. The reasoning of the latter cannot be definitely established, but a reasonable presumption would be that they knew any fusion nominee would be a Liberal in the legislature and opposed to the Conservative Party. Hawthornthwaite would give at least conditional support to a Conservative government, and a Conservative, if elected, would be a definite party man. They put up E. Quennell²⁷⁸ as their official candidate, thus ensuring a three-way contest in which the anti-Socialist vote would be split.

The candidate of the Labor Party was Harry Sheppard, a long-time resident of Nanaimo, but with no other especial claim upon public esteem. He had not been a public figure in any way until this nomination. As had been agreed, he was given the official blessing of the Liberals, and publicly listed among his supporters were W.W.B. McInnes, William Sloan, and Tully Boyce.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁷ Ibid., August 23, 1903, p. 1.

²⁷⁸ First name not given in available sources.

²⁷⁹ Ibid., September 10, 1903, p. 1. (Boyce seems to have had no association with the Labor Party, despite his record in union work; he seems to have preferred the Liberal Party).

In Vancouver, the T. & L.C. again took a direct hand in politics. The Vancouver Labor Party and the Provincial Progressive Party in Vancouver must have gone into oblivion since the federal by-election in January, for there is nowhere mention of them in the arrangements for the campaign. Instead, a resolution of the T. & L.C. provided

That we appoint a committee of five, to issue circulars to all the unions, calling on them to appoint delegates to a convention to draw up a platform & formulate plans to run a campaign.

The number of delegates from each union to be regulated according to membership. 280

It must be concluded that the Labor Party was re-activated as a result of the convention, which took place on June 29.²⁸¹ A later minute gave permission for the Vancouver Labor Party to use the Labor Temple auditorium for a mass meeting.²⁸²

In sharp contrast to Nanaimo labor, the Vancouver labor men kept clear of alliances with other parties. A resolution introduced by Mortimer, a socialist, "turning down reported

²⁸⁰ "VTLCM," June 4, 1903.

²⁸¹ Nothing definite can be said about the proceedings of this convention, since they were not entered in the T. & L.C. minutes and, as the Province rather acidly noted, no press report was issued. (July 7, 1903, p. 1). The same is true of other L.P. conventions in Vancouver during 1903.

²⁸² "VTLCM," August 6, 1903. The committee named must have kept its own records; no full report appeared in the Council minutes. It should be noted that, for some time early in the century, references to political matters are accompanied by the information that full reports are to be found in the minutes of the Parliamentary Committee. The location or present existence of such minutes is not known.

overtures of Liberals for T.L.C. support; also any Conservative bids," was carried without opposition.²⁸³ In this, socialists and laborites were in agreement. They were both out to fight the old-line parties, not to conciliate them.

For the five seats open in Vancouver the revived Labor Party put up three candidates: Francis Williams, its 1900 candidate, A.G. Perry, a motorman, and J. Edwards, a machinist. Robert Macpherson was offered a nomination, but he declined.²⁸⁴ Edwards later withdrew from the contest for personal reasons, and was replaced by J. McLaren.²⁸⁵

Three socialists ran in Vancouver, without the backing of the T. & L.C. or the Labor Party. They represented two factions: the Socialist Labor Party nominated William Griffiths, while the British Columbia Socialist Party put up A.R. Stebbings and J.T. Mortimer. Of these, Griffiths represented the uncompromising, anti-trades-union outlook; Stebbings and Mortimer were more flexible.

In the metal-mining districts of the Interior several Socialist Party candidates appeared, but there were only two with a "labor" designation -- William Davidson in Slocan and Alfred Parr in Ymir. Davidson's candidature, at least, had definite socialist aspects. Despite the endorsement of socialism by the international convention of the W.F.M., the Socialist Party had

²⁸³ "VTLCM," June 18, 1903.

²⁸⁴ Independent, July 25, 1903.

²⁸⁵ First names of Edwards and McLaren not given in available sources.

(to follow page 187)



The metal-mining town of Sandon, British Columbia

not yet completely captured the British Columbia miners. However, in contrast to the Coast areas, in the Interior differences between the socialists and the laborites tended to be reconciled rather than fought out.

The Labor Party campaign in Slocan was initiated at a local convention of the W.F.M., held at New Denver on July 11.²⁸⁶ Silverton, New Denver, and Sandon Miners' Unions were represented, but Slocan City was missing from the deliberations. A resolution was passed that the coming election be contested under the auspices of the Provincial Progressive Party, using the platform of that party. The meeting then made provision for a nominating convention, to be held in the same town on August 1.

The method of electing delegates to the nominating convention deserves recording, since it shows some evidence of an attempt to use American political procedures in B.C. The resolution stated:

That, where such organization exists, the calling of Primaries for the nomination and election of Delegates to the proposed Convention shall be under the control of each local Labor Union.

That the basis of representation be as follows:
One Delegate for each Polling Station & an additional vote or Delegate for each forty votes or majority fraction thereof polled at such point on the occasion of the last Provincial Election.

Seventeen delegates, carrying twenty-five votes from Sandon, Three Forks, McGuigan, New Denver, Silverton, Nakusp, and Slocan attended the August 1 convention. They immediately pro-

²⁸⁶ Information on this campaign is derived from the actual minutes of meetings, reports, and correspondence, unless otherwise stated. These documents are held by T.& D.S.W.U., Trail.

ceeded to remodel the P.P.P. platform in the direction of their own, admittedly socialistic, ideas.²⁸⁷

The preamble, endorsing the recall, was adopted without change. The principle of single tax was approved, but an application of it (clause 6) was rejected. Government ownership in transportation, communication, and smelting was approved. Land speculation was condemned, and the financing of education from the revenue of public lands was recommended. Labor disputes were to be subject to arbitration, but not under compulsion. Anti-Oriental legislation was demanded. Female franchise, universal and compulsory suffrage, and the initiative and referendum were approved. On the whole, the platform as adopted was not greatly different from the labor platforms of previous years.

However, it was quite different to the original P.P.P. platform. It no longer contained most of the special appeals to non-labor interests. The bid for the farm vote (clause 6) was eliminated. The clauses on forestry (12 and 13) likewise disappeared. The liquor clause (15) went out. The demand for free transportation for public functionaries (17) was likewise omitted. The platform of the Slocan Labor Party was mainly concerned with the problems of wage-workers, and was not quite the catch-all program put forward by the Kamloops convention.

Having got the platform settled, the meeting then turned to the nomination of a candidate -- a relatively easy matter. Several persons were proposed, but the choice fell,

²⁸⁷ vide Appendix, xxix.

without much hesitation, upon William Davidson of Sandon, a miner of Scottish birth. The only Labor Party candidate in the mountain country²⁸⁸ was now in the field, using the first adaptation of the P.P.P. platform to appear in an actual election.

The election contests in the different constituencies took on different aspects, according to the local relationships between the laborites and the socialists. In Slocan there was no apparent dissension. In Vancouver a coolness existed, but it was not widely publicized; the open conflict which did appear in Vancouver was associated with the Nanaimo situation, where a state of full warfare existed between laborite and socialist.

The Nanaimo Labor Party did not advertise any platform in the newspapers in 1903. Passing reference was made to a platform, but the reports of Sheppard's meetings give little hint as to its contents. It would be fair to say, from the published reports, that he had two planks: anti-socialism, and the support of Smith and McInnes. These were the things that he stressed. He tended to ignore the Conservative candidate, Quennell; instead, he attacked the principles of socialism and extolled the legislative records of Ralph Smith and W.W.B. McInnes. He put forward little or nothing in the way of a positive program.

In Vancouver, the Labor Party's case was put forward most forcefully by Francis Williams, with some assistance from

²⁸⁸ For what it is worth, Parr is listed in CPG, 1903, p. 443 as a Liberal. The labor press on the coast did not pay him any special attention.

McLaren. Perry's contribution was not in any way notable. Williams, in fact, was much more aggressive than he had been in 1900; in one of his speeches, he took the stand for which Ralph Smith had criticized Hawthornthwaite. Characterizing all past history and present legislation as "class legislation," he laid down the challenge, "We are out for class legislation, and we are not going to be quiet until we get it."²⁸⁹ He also implicitly criticized Ralph Smith, by saying that he was surprised Smith had approved the draft compulsory arbitration act now before the House at Ottawa.²⁹⁰ McLaren's major contribution was to justify the running of Labor Party candidates upon the grounds that existing labor legislation was not properly enforced; only labor in government would enforce it.²⁹¹

The Vancouver Labor Party candidates, according to the reports of their campaign, did not go out of their way to attack the socialists; something like an armed truce prevailed between the two groups. However, Vancouver was the scene of the most violent clash of the campaign between the Laborites and the Socialist Party.

The occasion of this clash was the regular Labor Day celebration, at which prominent members of the labor movement

²⁸⁹ Independent, September 26, 1903.

²⁹⁰ Ibid., September 19, 1903. Other labor men were no doubt surprised, too, especially since the T.L.C.C. had condemned compulsory arbitration at its 1902 convention by a vote of 78-12. Ibid., September 20, 1902.

²⁹¹ Ibid., September 26, 1903.

were called upon to speak. J.C. Watters, S.P. candidate in Victoria, devoted his time to a discussion of the limitations of trades unionism -- what it could hope to accomplish, and what it could not do. He was followed by Ralph Smith, who opened his talk with the remark that he "differed from state socialism."²⁹²

War had been declared; the socialists in the audience, feeling that Smith had misrepresented Watters' position, protested loudly. When Smith went on to say that Watters had described trades unionism as "absolutely" no good, the meeting went into an uproar. Smith was not allowed to speak further, and finally left the hall with his supporters. For the first time, he had been rejected by a labor meeting at which he was present.

The clash in Vancouver seemed to have little effect on the election as a whole. Smith expressed a hope that it would discredit the socialists generally; the election results indicate that it did not. It did call forth a letter to the Nanaimo Herald from Smith's faithful henchman, J. H. Watson, to the effect that "every Socialist must be thrown out of our trades unions if we mean to uphold their integrity."²⁹³ Watson's sug-

²⁹² The account of the meeting is taken from the Nanaimo Free Press (September 8, 1903) whose political reporting was less partisan than that of the Herald. By state socialism is meant a society characterized by predominant government ownership and control, known among socialists as "state capitalism;" to it is opposed the political concept of socialism, that all the repressive aspects of the state, and finally the state itself, shall be done away with.

²⁹³ September 10, 1903, p. 2. Watson had violently attacked Smith's critics in the 1900 provincial election, and subsequently made it his business to resent all slurs upon Smith. He appears to have regarded all things official within the T. & L.C. as

gestion came too late; such a move would have split the B.C. unions in two.

Compared to the Coast campaigns, that in Slocan was dull. The heat and fury generated by a divided labor movement was missing. It was a straight two-way fight: Davidson, on a Labor ticket with socialist support, trying to take the seat desired by Hunter, a Conservative. The issues were not spectacular; in the main, the miners wanted a man in the Legislature to defend their interests whenever an issue touching them arose.

The results of the voting were disappointing to the anti-socialist Laborites. In Nanaimo, Hawthornthwaite had a good lead over both his opponents, and Sheppard ran a poor third. In Vancouver the Laborites led the Socialist candidates, but both groups ran far behind the Conservatives and the Liberals. Only in Slocan, where the labor forces were united, did the Labor Party score a victory.²⁹⁴

sacred, and irregular actions as akin to blasphemy. His present position in the movement was somewhat anomalous, since in February the Vancouver T. & L.C. had requested the T.L.C.C. and A.F. of L. to withdraw him as their organizer upon the grounds that (1) he was a government official, (2) he publicly supported an old political party, in defiance of a resolution of the 1899 T.L.C.C. convention, (3) he was a disrupter of labor unity, and (4) he had been a political partisan in the Burrard by-election. "VTLCM," February 5 and March 19, 1903.

²⁹⁴ Results in labor-contested constituencies, 1903.

Nanaimo		Vancouver
Hawthornthwaite (Soc.) ...	486	Tatlow (Cons.) ...2,660
Quennell (Cons.)	325	Garden2,464
<u>Sheppard (Lib.Lab.)</u>	<u>294</u>	Wilson.....2,416
		Bowser.....:2,304
		Macgowan.....2,300
		Martin (Lib.).....1,546

(Continued on next page)

In fact, the Socialist Party did much better than the Labor Party; Parker Williams was elected in Newcastle to keep Hawthornthwaite company, and in Greenwood Ernest Mills came within nine votes of victory. Only in Victoria and Vancouver did the socialists lose their deposits.

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v. The federal election of 1904 need not be discussed here. Socialist Party candidates contested five ridings, but their efforts properly belong to the history of socialism in British Columbia -- not the history of laborism. Only Ralph Smith in Nanaimo claimed to be in the tradition of labor political action, but he cannot be regarded as a Labor candidate. Running under the name of Liberal-Labor, the Liberal element far outweighed any laborism. He was given the official blessing of the T.L.C.C.,²⁹⁵ but did not receive the support of any labor organization within his riding. Opposed by a Conservative and a

Results in labor-contested constituencies, 1903. (Cont'd.)

Slocan		Vancouver (Cont'd.)	
<u>Davidson</u> (Lab.).....	358	Brydone-Jack	1,461
<u>Hunter</u> (Cons.)	289	Baxter	1,411
Ymir		<u>Williams</u> (Lab.)....	1,357
<u>Wright</u> (Cons.)	483	<u>Mortimer</u> (Soc.)....	1,328
<u>Parr</u> (Labor.(?)).....	323	<u>Perry</u> (Lab.).....	1,248
Atlin		<u>Turnbull</u> (Lib.)....	1,193
<u>Young</u> (Cons.).....	236	<u>McLaren</u> (Lab.)....	1,164
<u>Kirkland</u> (Lab.).....	202	<u>Stebbing</u> (Soc.)...	956
		<u>Monck</u> (Ind.).....	910
		<u>Griffiths</u> (SLP)....	284

(CPG, 1905, pp. 440-443, and Vancouver Province, October 5, 1903, p. 1).

Note: CPG is very unreliable for party affiliation in 1903 and 1907 elections.

²⁹⁵ Nanaimo Herald, September 23, 1904.

comparatively unknown Socialist, he carried Nanaimo City with difficulty and lost the mining centers of Northfield and Ladysmith to the Socialist.²⁹⁶ Smith had always made his election appeals as broad as possible -- indeed, practically universal, and he explained in this election, "I am a Liberal, I cannot be only a Trades Unionist," since the only unions in the riding were at Nanaimo, Ladysmith, and Mt. Sicker.²⁹⁷ He had so far over-stepped the bounds of laborism that even the Herald, after the election, referred to him as "the Liberal member-elect."²⁹⁸

What must be regarded as the final blow to the political laborism of this period was struck in October, 1906, right after the T.L.C.C. convention in Victoria.²⁹⁹ At the convention

... a resolution was passed that while the congress affirms the individual right of the wage earners of Canada to organize themselves, either Socialist or Independent Labor, separate from Congress, that it will be

²⁹⁶ The mining centers went as follows:

	Smith (Lib.Lab.)	Wolley (Cons.)	Fenton (Soc.)
Nanaimo	382	250	377
S. Wellington	11	6	7
Northfield	15	11	53
Ladysmith	165	140	183
Mt. Sicker	23	19	18

Ibid., November 6, 1904.

²⁹⁷ Nanaimo Free Press, October 4, 1904, p. 1.

²⁹⁸ November 4, 1904.

²⁹⁹ In September of that year the Vancouver T. & L.C. resumed its affiliation to the national body, and named delegates to the convention. "VTLCM," September 5, 1906.

for the best interest of the wage workers if they will voluntarily sever their connection with all parties not organized in the interests of the proletarian class. 300

To fill the gap thus created, Congress endeavored to create a national Labor Party on the lines of the local Labor Parties which had existed over the past several years. It recommended a platform for this proposed Canadian Labor Party,³⁰¹ set up the machinery for its organization upon a provincial basis, and then disbanded for the year.

The convention to organize the British Columbia section of the Canadian Labor Party was called for October 29. It took place in Vancouver under the authority of G.F. Gray, who had been named by the T.L.C.C. as British Columbia vice-president of the C.L.P. It included representatives of a number of unions on the Coast, as well as delegates from the W.F.M. locals in the Interior.³⁰²

The first difficulty of the meeting was over the chairmanship. In the process of nominating of a chairman, it became noticeable that none of the more influential delegates wanted that position for himself; each preferred to remain free to use the floor. At last Francis Williams was persuaded to preside over what promised to be a lively meeting.

It had been understood that voting in the convention would be held to one vote for each delegate. Now William Mc-

³⁰⁰ Vancouver World, September 18, 1906, p. 1.

³⁰¹ vide Appendix, p.xxx.

³⁰² The account of this convention is based upon full reporting in the Vancouver World, October 29, 30, 31, 1906, in the Vancouver Province, same dates, and the Western Clarion, November 3, 1906, p. 1.

Kenzie of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, seconded by F.B. Shearme of the Britannia M.U., proposed that votes should be apportioned to delegates according to the number of unionists they represented. This provoked a considerable amount of debate, but was finally passed by the narrow margin of 26-23.

The damage had been done. D.A. No. 6 of the W.F.M. had already endorsed the Socialist Party, and it had the support of the Crow's Nest Pass coal miners and of a few other unions. The necessary report on union membership showed that the W.F.M. delegates alone represented 4,063 unionists, while all the others represented only 2,610. Upon the voting strength being calculated, the metal miners were allowed a total of 81 votes as against 61 for the other delegates.

The axe was ready to fall upon the Canadian Labor Party in British Columbia, and the blow was not delayed. William Davidson, M.L.A., recently converted to socialism, introduced a resolution condemning the formation of a Labor Party and calling for support of the Socialist Party.³⁰³ He was seconded by Archie Berry of the Rossland M.U. The resolution passed by a vote of 90-12, with 42 abstentions, and with it passed the first period of labor political action in British Columbia.

³⁰³ Vide Appendix, p. xxxvi.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND REFLECTIONS

i. Of course, the capture of the Canadian Labor Party convention by the supporters of the Socialist Party did not mean the end of political laborism in British Columbia. As soon as the passage of Davidson's resolution became a practical certainty Gray, Williams and twenty of their supporters left the meeting and held a "rump" convention of their own. This group decided to continue the attempt to organize the Canadian Labor Party. It made some amendments to the platform proposed by the T.L.C.C., the most important being rejection of the "minimum Wage" and "collective ownership" clauses, and then adjourned to commence the work of organization.¹

The new Labor Party was not very successful in organizing the workers. Its main center was Victoria, where Gray lived, and by this time Victoria was much less of a workers' town than it had been in the earlier years of rapid construction and expansion. In the 1907 provincial election the four Victoria seats were contested by two Labor Party candidates and two Socialist Party nominees. In Vancouver five Socialists appeared, but only Francis Williams represented the Labor Party. In Cranbrook, Edward Kelly advanced a platform based upon that

¹ Vancouver World, October 31, 1906, p. 8.

prepared for Davidson's 1903 campaign in Slocan -- a last faint echo of the Kamloops convention of 1902. Harry Sheppard again contested Hawthornthwaite's seat in Nanaimo. None of these Laborites was elected.²

In contrast to these five Laborites, twenty-two Socialists contested the 1907 election and of them three, Hawthornthwaite, Williams, and John McInnis of Grand Forks, were successful. The Socialist Party had definitely become the political expression of discontent among the British Columbia workers.

The ascendancy of the Socialist Party never became quite complete. In 1910 the Vancouver T. & L.C. went so far as to prepare a platform of its own,³ but it did not carry it into an election campaign. The Socialist Party was also challenged by the rise of the Social Democratic Party after 1911. This party, reformist and not revolutionary, succeeded in winning over Parker Williams and in addition elected Jack Place as M.L.A. for Nanaimo. In 1917 it was absorbed into the Federated Labor Party, a creation of the British Columbia Federation of Labor.⁴ The formation of the F.L.P., together with the nation-wide campaign of the labor movement in 1917 against the introduction of conscription, marked the re-assertion of laborism as the dominant

² CPG, 1908, is useless as a guide to the 1907 election in British Columbia. It utterly confuses Labor, Socialist, and Liberal candidates, and should be used only in conjunction with contemporary newspapers.

³ "VTLCM," April 10 and May 2, 1910.

⁴ Bennett, op. cit., p. 141.

political attitude of the British Columbia workers, and the end of the major period of socialist political action. 77 No

The Socialist Party of Canada had opposed the World War in 1914,⁵ and maintained its opposition as long as the war continued. This stand caused many members and supporters to fall away, usually seeking refuge in the milder Social Democratic Party. The October, 1917 revolution in Russia inspired the more impatient members of the Socialist Party to "throw away the books" and prepare for violent action. The energies of many prominent Socialists were diverted into the formation of the syndicalist One Big Union in 1919. These men had become disillusioned with political action, but retained their faith in the necessity of transforming society.

Their energies were, on the whole, soon returned to politics. The three years 1917-18-19, Bennett says, "... represent one long continued strike in B.C., breaking out in one place now, another place next."⁶ Concessions were won by the workers, but the most important strike of the period was broken by state intervention. The Winnipeg General Strike of 1919 collapsed under police and military pressure, and sympathetic strikes in other Western cities were called off. The failure of large-scale industrial action weakened the appeal of syndicalism, and turned the ideas of many workers back to poli-

⁵ Socialist Party of Canada, Dominion Executive Committee, Manifesto to the Workers of Canada, Vancouver, August 6, 1914.

⁶ Op. cit., p. 86.

tics.⁷

The political action of the 1920's took two forms. On the one hand, the Federated Labor Party and independent labor candidates accepted the major premises of capitalist society and endeavored to obtain reforms for the workers. On the other hand, the Leninists split off from the Socialist Party and in 1921 formed the Workers' Party. This organization agitated for immediate reforms, but also strove to prepare for social revolution.

Of the two movements, the revived laborism was by far the more noticeable on the political field. It ran candidates in elections throughout the 1920's, and succeeded in getting some elected. In 1920 Tom Uphill won the Fernie seat, which he still occupies; at the same time R.H. Neelands was elected for the first of two terms from South Vancouver, and Sam Guthrie became the member for Newcastle. In 1925 A.W. Neill was elected by Comox-Alberni as an Independent Labor M.P.,⁸ and in 1930 Angus MacInnis won the South Vancouver federal seat with the support of the Liberals.⁹ → N/O

In 1920 there were three labor members of the British Columbia legislature, but in 1930 there was only one, Tom Uphill. This decline in strength demanded a re-appraisal of labor political action, and the depression of the following years added

⁷ Robert W. Prittie, "Some Aspects of the History of the Winnipeg General Sympathetic Strike, etc.," Vancouver, University of British Columbia, 1947, unpublished graduating essay, p. 51. Vide also Bennett, op. cit., pp. 89-91, for an account of the sympathetic strike in Vancouver.

⁸ Prittie, op. cit., p. 55.

⁹ Bennett, op. cit., p. 148.

weight to the demand. The Co-operative Commonwealth Federation was organized as a loose grouping of labor, farm, and socialistic elements, national in scope but with its main strength in the western provinces. In the 1933 election it contested nearly every seat in British Columbia, and saw seven of its members elected. In the following years it maintained itself as a major political force in the province, although often rent by disputes among the component groups. The radical wing of the party has been much weakened over the years by the retirement from active work of some of its leaders, and by the "mellowing" of others. The other two groups have come to dominate the party, their victory having been fairly well established at the 1951 provincial convention in Vancouver.

Part of this process may be attributed to the growth of unionist influence within the C.C.F. After the resolution of the post-war struggle between C.C.F. and L.P.P. elements for control of the Canadian Congress of Labor unions in British Columbia, the British Columbia Federation of Labor (C.C.L.) has tended to give increasing political support to the C.C.F. Prominent members of the C.C.L. unions, such as George Home, James Bury, Rae Eddie, and Tom Barnett have successfully contested seats in the interests of the C.C.F. A smaller number of T. & L.C. leaders, including Tom Alsbury, now president of the Vancouver T. & L.C., have similarly identified themselves with the C.C.F.

Although the C.C.F. has traditionally attempted to represent the interests of both labor and farm groups, the

recent growth of official labor support (and, concomitantly, of the influence of union leaders in the party) seems likely to bring about a re-orientation of C.C.F. policy within the province. The growth of the Social Credit Party, which party appears to be based mainly upon farm and small business support and has aroused the opposition of many labor leaders, may accelerate the process of turning the C.C.F. in British Columbia into an orthodox Labor Party based upon the unions. Such a development would be a major re-alignment of political forces in the province; its total effect would be extremely difficult to foresee at this time.

Bearing in mind this present tendency, a study of labor political action in the period 1879-1906 has its value. That was a time of experimentation. British Columbia labor attempted various techniques of obtaining favorable legislation. Political parties identifying themselves with the labor cause but unconnected with the unions, such as the Nationalist Party, the Nanaimo Labor Party, and the Socialist Party were not responsible to the unions and were not directly supported by the unions. Hence they tended to lose the support of the unions by merging with established parties, as did the Nationalist and Nanaimo Labor Parties, or by advocating measures not compatible with the immediate aims of trade unionism, as did the Socialist Party. Individual candidates of old-line parties, such as those endorsed by the W.F.M. in 1900, were subject to party policy and could not be relied upon for consistent action in favor of labor. The M.M.L.P.A. of Nanaimo in 1890 and the Vancouver T. & L.C. in 1900 acted directly in politics, nominating candidates

and running their campaigns. This gave the unions control of labor representatives, but also brought political issues and dissension into the unions. In Vancouver, the T. & L.C. tried the expedient of setting up a party distinct from the unions yet at the same time dependent upon the Council for its existence. This anomaly appears to have had little success; it did not remove politics from the Council,¹⁰ but it did cause a very confused situation which prevented effective action.

Another difficulty with labor political action appears to be a lack of agreement between the union officials and the members. Evidence for it is the small vote often polled by union-sponsored candidates, even in constituencies where organized labor was very strong. The union leaders might call for political action and be nominated as labor candidates, but the union members would not necessarily vote for them. This was the case with Francis Williams and Joseph Dixon in Vancouver in 1900; similar lack of support caused the defeat of Joe White in Nanaimo in 1945 and of James Bury in Vancouver Centre in 1953, (to note only two instances). Labor political action has been too often the work of a few active leaders, not representing the sentiments or desires of the unionists as a whole.

An exception must be made to the generalization. The Labor and Socialist candidates sponsored or endorsed by the Western Federation of Miners and by the coal miners' unions did enjoy the support of the majority of unionists in their areas,

¹⁰ Cf. Foley's candidature in 1902-1903; v. sup., pp. 167-169.

as shown by the large votes which they regularly polled. This is best explained by the fact that, of all the workers of British Columbia, the miners were the most proletarianized. They had been furthest divorced from the tools of production; the miners living in any one town were usually employees of one company, living under fairly uniform conditions and all having much the same economic problems. Such a situation tended to make for a homogeneity of outlook and the growth of a class spirit; the diversified economic and social pattern of Vancouver would produce a less united labor movement.

In assessing the political action of labor to-day in relation to that of half a century ago, these economic factors must be taken into account. To what degree are the workers of to-day, with the expansion of government employment and the most recent growth of big industry (for example, Alcan and Frobisher in aluminum production and Macmillan-Bloedel in wood products) becoming more uniform in their employment? To what extent are housing projects and apartments making them more uniform in their home and social life? To what extent does the current distribution of wealth lead them to feel poor or rich?¹¹ In general, how strong are the modern economic and social factors favoring the development of a sense of class unity?

To answer these questions, as well as others of a similar nature, would require the assistance of economists and sociologists. The questions cannot be answered in this study,

¹¹ Poverty and wealth being relative and not absolute terms, determined by the experience of the individual rather than by a set standard of possessions.

which deals with another topic. However, the writer feels that the events and courses of action outlined in this work are relevant to the current political situation in British Columbia, and that consideration of them will assist in understanding present developments.

One point needs to be made with reference to the relationship between this study and other writings in the general field of British Columbia labor and reform political action. An M.A. thesis has been written on the socialist movement here, and a graduating essay on the C.C.F.¹² In addition, articles on and discussions of the C.C.F. and the labor movement appear fairly frequently in the public press and other quarters. The matters dealt with here are basic to the development of British Columbia labor in its political aspects during the past half-century, and should be considered in connection with any study of that development. This thesis, then, may be regarded as in some part an attempt to complement these other writings by providing them with a background in time, against which the events they describe may be seen more clearly.

In all the history of political action by labor, there is one strong criticism which may be made from the viewpoint of democratic content. The tendency was always to build up leaders

¹² Ronald Grantham, "Some Aspects of the Socialist Movement in British Columbia, 1898-1933," Vancouver, University of British Columbia, 1942, unpublished M.A. thesis.

Douglas Patterson Clark, "Some Aspects of the Development of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation in British Columbia, Vancouver, University of British Columbia, 1945, unpublished graduating essay.

who came to expect -- and if they were at all successful in politics, received -- loyalty and deference from the workers which sometimes reached nauseating proportions.¹³ From being the agents of the workers the political representatives tended to become rulers of the workers, invested with a new kind of "divine right."¹⁴ Sometimes the ruler was repudiated, as Ralph Smith was repudiated by the miners of Nanaimo, but he was usually replaced by a more congenial leader: Hawthornthwaite succeeded, for a time, to the throne of Smith. The basic criticism of parliamentary action was expressed most lucidly by Anton Pannekoek, the Dutch Marxist theoretician, when he wrote:

Le parlementarisme est la forme typique de la lutte par le moyen des chefs, où les masses elles-mêmes jouent un rôle secondaire. Sa pratique consiste dans le fait que des députés, des personnalités particulières, mènent la lutte essentielle. Ils doivent, par conséquent, éveiller dans les masses l'illusion que d'autres peuvent mener la lutte pour elles. Jadis on croyait que les chefs pourraient obtenir des réformes importantes pour les ouvriers par la voie parlementaire, ou même avait cours l'illusion que les parlementaires pourraient réaliser la révolution socialiste par des mesures législatives.... Mais toujours l'importance décisive est attribuée aux chefs. Naturellement, se sont dans cette situation les gens du métier qui dirigent la politique -- au besoin sous le déguisement démocratique des discussions et résolutions de congrès.¹⁵

Pannekoek's criticism was directed specifically at the Social Democracy of his day, and Gorter turned it against Bolshevism; it applies equally well to political laborism, and,

¹³ Cf. remarks on Ralph Smith, quoted on p.141, n.165.

¹⁴ For a discussion of the political phenomenon known as "Bonapartism," vide James Burnham, The Machiavellians, New York, John Day, 1943, pp. 152-162, 238-243.

¹⁵ Quoted in Herman Gorter, Réponse à Lénine, (1920), Librairie Ouvrière, Paris, 1930, pp. 53-54.

indeed, to almost any political organization or movement. The problem has not yet been solved. It is the opinion of the writer that the tendency toward acceptance and adulation of leaders is essentially anti-democratic, and that the failure and breakdown of consciously pro-democratic political movements can often be traced to this "leadership complex," which destroys within the organization what the organization seeks in society as a whole.

The answer to this dilemma is still a matter of dispute. The most reasonable remedy appears to involve a constant critical watchfulness over those in positions of trust, and an individual determination to make one's own decisions. The treatment may be difficult to prepare and unpleasant to apply, but nothing else seems to come near curing the malady.

In summing up, the writer wishes to draw attention to three points. First, this work has a certain direct relevance to present political developments in British Columbia and may be useful in an analysis of these developments. Second, it should not be regarded as a completely self-contained unit. Rather, it deals with one period in a continuing process, and should be considered as complementary to studies of later parts of the process. Third, it points up certain difficulties which labor political action has encountered in the past, and which have also been a source of weakness to non-labor political groups.

No ready solution for these difficulties is propounded within the limits of this topic. The prescription of remedial measures would take us out of the field of historical study and

into that of politics itself, and is therefore not warranted in a work of this type. The writer has conceived of this thesis as a recounting of past events and, where possible, analysis of those events in relation to their own environment and to present conditions. No more than that has been attempted here.

The field of history dealt with in this thesis has many complexities, and the significance of its events is often obscured by a lack of records. The writer has endeavored as far as possible to clarify its trends and indicate their importance. He hopes that his efforts will be of use to others who will work in the field of British Columbia history.

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Vancouver Trades and Labor Council, "Minutes," held by Vancouver T. & L.C., 307 West Broadway, Vancouver, B.C.

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2. Interviews

Dunning, "Happie," (Vancouver) has given the writer considerable information on the life of the metal-miners and its effect on their attitude. (September, 1954). Mr. Dunning was in Ymir in 1903 and succeeding years, and in the Rossland area around 1920. His knowledge of the miners' movement is both broad and deep.

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Phillips, Dai, (Fernie) gave the writer some useful information on coal-mining in the Crow's Nest Pass area. (December, 1953). Mr. Phillips was working in the district as early as 1902, and is very familiar with early political and social conditions there.

Phillips, Bill, (Fernie) was able to give the writer material on labor matters in the southern and south-eastern mountains (December, 1953). Mr. Phillips was at one time a very active union organizer. He was for many years associated closely with Tom Uphill's political campaigns.

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Valuable background material on one of the major issues of labor political action in this province.

II. PRINTED WORKS

1. Government Publications

British Columbia, Legislative Assembly, Journals,
Victoria, Queen's (King's) Printer, 1890-1906.

An essential reference for activities in the provincial House, including bills introduced, their disposal, and voting records of the Members. It also contains the following useful Reports of Select Committees:

1891, p. ccxli "Wellington Strike."

1891, "Attack on Funeral Procession of Ellice Roberts," p. lxxv.

1900, "Calling out Militia at Steveston," p. cxli.

British Columbia, Legislative Assembly, Sessional Papers,
Victoria, Queen's (King's) Printer, 1890-1906.

The following items were especially relevant:

1891, p. 311, "Correspondence -- Sending Militia to Wellington." (1890).

1894, Vol. I, p. 1005, "Labour Statistics."

1898, p. 963, "Correspondence Respecting Alien Labor Act 1897."

1900, p. 1005, "Correspondence respecting Fishermen's Strike at Steveston."

1900, pp. 463, 451, "Correspondence Respecting Eight Hour Law."

1900, p. 497, "Correspondence Respecting Labour Regulation Act."

1901, p. 629, "Correspondence Respecting Acts of 1900."

1903, p. J9, "Report of Commission on Coal Mines Explosions."

1903, C1, "Fernie Coal Mines Explosion."

British Columbia, Legislative Assembly, Statutes, Victoria, Queen's (King's) Printer, 1890-1906.

A necessary source for the exact content of measures passed into law.

Canada, Government, Census of Canada, Ottawa, Queen's (King's) Printer, 1881-1911.

The decennial reports of population changes, especially concerning national origins, are highly relevant to this topic.

Canada, Department of Labour, Labour Gazette, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1900-1906.

Deals with the economic and legal aspects of labor in Canada; very useful.

Canada, Department of Labour, Labour Legislation in Canada, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1945.

A historical survey of federal and provincial legislation on labor matters. A convenient factual record.

Canada, Parliament, House of Commons, Official Report of Debates, Ottawa, Queen's (King's) Printer, 1896-1906.

Vide indexes for references to the parliamentary work of Maxwell (1896-1902) and Smith (1900-1906).

2. Periodicals and Newspapers (by place of publication)

Ferguson, British Columbia

Lardeau Eagle

From 1898 to 1901 this paper was edited by "Parm" Pettipiece, and was consistently devoted to the cause of labor and socialism. A useful source of information and comment during the years noted. (Known for the first few issues as Ferguson Eagle).

Nanaimo, British Columbia

Nanaimo Free Press

Throughout the period 1886-1906 this paper devoted considerable space to labor news (1898 excepted). Its reporting was eminently fair and honest.

Nanaimo Herald

This paper was published for several years from 1899 onward. Although it specialized in labor news, its partisanship for Ralph Smith rendered its reporting unreliable. Useful when checked against the Free Press.

New Westminster, British Columbia

British Columbian

Gave little coverage to labor matters in the years consulted (1886-1894).

Rossland, British Columbia

Rossland Industrial World

The official organ of District Association No. 6, Western Federation of Miners. Endorsed by the Rossland T. & L.C. A good source for official labor policy from ca. 1898.

Sandon, British Columbia**Sandon Paystreak**

The editor, William McAdams, was a radical of independent temperament. He supported the miners, socialism, and the Provincial Progressive Party, but fearlessly criticized any apparent weaknesses in the labor movement. The Paystreak files for 1899-1902 are both useful and entertaining.

Toronto, Ontario**Citizen and Country**

A socialistic newspaper which in 1902 was moved to Vancouver and became the Canadian Socialist (c. v).

Vancouver, British Columbia**British Columbia Federationist**

Official organ of the Vancouver T. & L.C. and the B.C. Federation of Labor from 1911 onward. Relevant to this topic only for two historical articles (v. infra, "Articles.").

Budget

Appeared for a short time in 1895. Although noted by Bennett, (op. cit., p. 127), as a labor paper, perusal of its files discloses nothing of especial relevance to this topic.

Canadian Socialist

Edited by "Parm" Pettipiece in 1902. Changed name to Western Socialist. (c.v.) Quite useful in reference to the growth of socialism.

Daily News-Advertiser

Operated by Francis Carter-Cotton in the 1890's and early 1900's. In general, a good source. Conservative viewpoint.

Daily Province

A very useful source, consulted for the years 1903-1906. Conservative viewpoint.

Daily World

Fairly full labor and political reporting throughout the period 1894-1906, but a tendency toward sensationalism. Should be used with caution. Liberal in politics.

Independent

Ran from 1900 to 1905 as the organ of the Vancouver T. & L.C. An essential source for official labor policy and for labor matters in general.

People's Journal

Ran from February to June, 1893, under the editorship of G.F. Leaper, a member of the Knights of Labor. Emphasized labor matters. Useful.

Western Clarion

Successor to the Western Socialist (q.v.), and endorsed by the Vancouver T.& L.C., the W.F.M., and the American Labor Union. Socialist to the core. More interested in serious articles than in "timely" topics. A valuable source, both for ideas and for factual information.

Western Socialist

Successor to the Canadian Socialist. Merged with (Nanaimo) Clarion in 1903 to form the Western Clarion.

Victoria, British Columbia

British Columbia Workman

Published for a few months in 1899, with the endorsement of the Victoria T.& L.C. Sympathetic to socialism. Moderately useful.

Daily Colonist

A good and generally reliable source. Strong interest in politics. Consulted for important matters in the period 1879-1906.

Daily Standard

Useful for the years 1879-1886, especially to complement the Colonist.

Industrial News

Published from December 1885 to December 1886 by J.M. Duval, a member of the Knights of Labor and a candidate in the 1886 provincial election. Essential to a study of labor's part in that election.

3. Books

(a) Works of Reference

Gemmell, J.A., (ed.), The Canadian Parliamentary Companion, Ottawa, J. Durie & Son, published irregularly until 1897.

Magurn, J. Arnott, The Parliamentary Guide, Ottawa, James Hope & Sons, 1899.

Magurn, J. Arnott, The Canadian Parliamentary Guide, Ottawa, published irregularly from 1901.

These works form a series containing current information on federal and provincial elections, elected members, and, in general, the parliamentary life of the country. The series is extremely valuable for reference, but the Guide for 1905 and 1908 contains many inaccuracies in its British Columbia electoral reports.

(b) Social and Economic Theory

George, Henry, Progress and Poverty, New York, Schalkenbach Foundation, 1935.

Essential to clarification of labor political action in the period under study. The foundation of British Columbia labor's economic thought in the 1890's.

Marx, Karl, and Engels, Frederick, Manifesto of the Communist Party, Chicago, Kerr, 1915.

Contains a number of specific recommendations for action by the working class. These recommendations had a strong effect on socialistic programs.

Marx, Karl, The Civil War in France, New York, International Publishers, 1940.

In this work Marx analyzed and praised the political measures taken by the Paris Communards in 1871. The "direct democracy" principles involved in this episode influenced much of socialist thought.

(c) British Columbia History

Bartley, George, An Outline History of Typographical Union No. 226, 1887-1938, Vancouver, Typographical Union No. 226, 1938.

Basically composed of extracts from the Union "Minutes." Useful to this topic as a cross-reference.

Begg, Alexander, History of British Columbia, Toronto, Briggs, 1894.

Contains much of value in the matter of social-economic development in the province (land grants, industrial growth).

Bennett, William, Builders of British Columbia, Vancouver, 1937.

The only recent history of the British Columbia labor movement in general. A valuable guide to any detailed work in this field. Communist viewpoint.

Howay, F.W., and Scholefield, E.O.S., British Columbia, Toronto, Clarke, 1913(?) 2 vols.

An exhaustive history of the province. A useful source of economic and political backgrounds.

(d) Extra-provincial Labor and Reform

Bimba, Anthony, The History of the American Working Class, New York, International Publishers, 1936.

A convenient reference for outside influences. Communist viewpoint.

Brissenden, Paul W., The I.W.W., New York, Columbia University, 1920.

A very sympathetic study of the Industrial Workers of the World. Useful here for its references to the W.F.M.

Commons, J.R., et al., History of Labour in the United States, New York, Macmillan, 1918-35, 4 vols.

Dulles, Foster Rhea, Labor in America, New York, Crowell, 1949.

Sympathetic to "moderate" unionism. Should be used in conjunction with Bimba's work.

Logan, H.A., Trade Unions in Canada, Their Development and Functioning, Toronto, Macmillan, 1948.

The basic work on Canadian unionism in its various aspects.

Morton, William Lewis, The Progressive Party in Canada, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1950.

A thorough study of the Western farmer in politics, ca. 1919-1930. Could be made the basis of some interesting comparisons with the contemporary politics of labor.

Reynolds, Ll. G., The British Immigrant: His Social and Economic Adjustment to Canada, Oxford, 1935.

Has some useful information on the British immigration to this province in relation to the local labor movement.

Sharp, Paul Frederick, The Agrarian Revolt in Western Canada, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1948.

Not very relevant to this topic, except as a basis for comparing the political ideas of the prairie farmers with those of the British Columbia wage-workers.

Webb, Sidney and Beatrice, The History of Trade Unionism, London, Longmans, 1950.

The definitive study of British unionism. A good source of background material.

4. Articles

(a) Signed

Bartley, George, "The Rise of the Labor Press," British Columbia Federationist, November 9, 1917, pp. 1,2.

An excellent guide to "labor" newspapers in British Columbia, 1860-1917.

Dobie, Edith, "Some Aspects of Party History in British Columbia, 1871-1903," Pacific Historical Review, June, 1932, pp. 235-251.

Useful, in that it parallels the present topic in the field of orthodox politics.

Saywell, John T., "Labour and Socialism in British Columbia: A Survey of Historical Development before 1903," British Columbia Historical Quarterly, Archives of British Columbia, Victoria, July-October, 1951, pp. 129-150.

A very good introduction to the study of this period and field.

Saywell, John T., "The McInnes Incident in British Columbia," British Columbia Historical Quarterly, Archives of British Columbia, Victoria, July, 1950, pp. 141-166.

This article is based upon an M.A. thesis by the same author. It throws considerable light upon the 1900 provincial election, and is thus of value to the present topic.

(b) Anonymous

"Brief Historical Review," Western Clarion, January 12, 1907, pp. 1,2,3.

An excellent history of the growth of the Socialist Party in British Columbia to 1907. A very useful reference.

"Class War in Local House," Western Clarion, January 12, 1907, pp. 1, 4.

A thorough and well-documented study of labor legislation in British Columbia from 1901 to 1907; mainly centered about the work of Hawthornthwaite.

"Twenty-Five Years of B.C. Movement," British Columbia Federationist, November 18, 1911 to May 6, 1912.

This was intended to be a serial history of unionism in the province, but was discontinued as of the date last noted. The seven parts which appeared covered the years 1886-1888 in considerable detail.

ADDENDUM

F.W. Howay, W.N. Sage, and H.F. Angus, British Columbia and the United States, Toronto, Ryerson, 1942.

N.J. Ware, H.A. Logan, H.A. Innis, Labor in Canadian American Relations, Toronto, Ryerson, 1937.

These books provide valuable background material for this topic.

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WORKINGMEN'S PLATFORM (Victoria, May 1886)

1. That the principle of Representative Government aims at the greatest good of the greatest number, and whereas the legislation of the country has hitherto been principally directed by the wealthier part of the community, we believe the time has time when the toiling masses should have representatives on the floor of the House of Assembly to advocate their interests, men who understand their needs, and will labor for the industrial prosperity of the province.

2. That the public domain is the heritage of the people, and experience has proved that the aggregation of large quantities of land in the hands of corporations and individuals is inimical to the best interests of the province and the Dominion, and as the Parliament of the United Kingdom is now legislating to break up the large landed estates in Ireland, recognizing the principle that a monopoly of land is an unmitigated evil, we view with alarm the policy of the present government of the province in alienating large areas of the public domain as conducive to monopoly, detrimental to the best interests of the people, and calculated to burden coming generations with the worst sort of feudalism, -- and therefore we demand that what is left of the public land shall be reserved for actual settlement, and that all lands held for speculative purposes to be taxed to their full value.

3. That we condemn the policy of creating and fostering monopolies, as they prevent legitimate competition and enable avaricious corporations and individuals to impose an unjust burden on the people, that the acts of the House of Assembly in the special legislation of the last session to protect the legal and medical professions, the apothecaries and dentists was an arbitrary use of their powers and we demand the repeal of such special legislation.

4. That as the legitimate requirements of the Province for roads and bridges necessitates a large expenditure of public money, we condemn the extravagant use of public money in some favored districts to the injury of others and demand an impartial distribution of the public purse.

5. That as the great majority of the people of this Province have repeatedly expressed their wishes against the continued residence in this province of large numbers of Chinese, and as the present government on accepting office were pledged to abate the evil but they have utterly failed to redeem their pledges and their acts have been little more than a mockery and a farce, we demand that our representatives shall introduce and carry out such legislation as may be required to peacefully and lawfully attain this end.

6. That as the development of the mineral resources of the province constitutes its chief hope of prosperity for the future, it is the duty of the government to adopt a broad and enlightened policy to aid in the prospecting and opening up of our mineral resources, and further that it is the duty of the government to pass such measures as will effectually protect the lives of miners while engaged in their perilous avocation.

7. That as the area of agricultural land in this province is limited, it is the duty of the government to render every possible aid to the farmers in settling in this Province, to ascertain the localities best suited for settlement and assist as promptly as the state of the treasury will allow in the opening up of roads to new settlements and the facilitating to the settlers the getting to and from the markets of the province, transportation charges hitherto having been almost prohibitory.

8. That as the moral, intellectual and physical progress of the people should be the first aim and object of a government of the people, and as the toiling masses throughout the Dominion and also the neighboring republic are demanding a reduction in the hours of labor to attain that end, it is the duty of the representatives of the people to use every legitimate means to aid the mass of the people to secure their desires and bring about a closer feeling of unity between all classes of the community.

9. That the interest of law and order and the preservation of the morals of the community require a revision of the license law.

10. That with the increase of population and the consequent multiplication of dealings in real estate the old cumbersome and expensive mode of conveyance is each day becoming more onerous, and that a more simple and inexpensive mode of transferring real estate having been found to work advantageously in other British Colonies, we deem legislation to secure a similar advantage in British Columbia much needed and are of opinion that it should be introduced with all possible despatch. And we also demand that some provision be made for the more expeditious and less costly recovery of small debts as a want much felt by the business community in general.

11. Representatives being elected to give voice in the halls of the legislature to the well ascertained wishes of their electors, we think provision should be made by pledge, if not by law, for the enforcement of the resignation of any member whose line of conduct has been unquestionably shown to be distasteful and unsatisfactory to the majority of the constituents whom he represents.

(Adopted at a public meeting in Victoria May 27, 1886; printed in Industrial News, May 29).

WORKINGMEN'S CANDIDATES' ELECTION APPEAL (Nanaimo, 1886)

To the Electors of Nanaimo Electoral District:

Gentlemen, -- Having received the nomination as the Workingmen's Candidates, we come before you hoping that we will receive your support in the coming general election for members to represent your interest in the Provincial Legislature. And we trust that our principles and honesty of purpose is well known to the great majority of the people of Nanaimo City and District. We believe in and will support a law for the enforcement of the resignation of any member whose conduct is not strictly in accordance with his pledges given to his constituents, when shown to be dissatisfied and unsatisfactory to the majority of those whom he represents.

We will now present for your consideration the following principles, that we will adopt and support if given your confidence, and we do not doubt that justice will prevail in time. It is now in the interest of all who are suffering from injustice to endeavor to hasten the day when justice shall be practicable. The land of a country is nature's trust to all its people. The producers create all wealth by labor from land and waters, and all men should have a share in Nature's resources. The opposition to all laws under which public land now passes into the hands of corporations, the most of it by fraud. The forfeiture of all unearned land grants to individuals and corporations. The prohibition of the possession of land to foreigners and non-residents. The passing of a law defining the amount of land to be acquired or held by any one citizen by gift, purchase or inheritance. Protection to the workingman from competition with imported cheap labor contracts; Chinese labor and convict prison labor. The enactment of such laws as will give to Mechanics and Laborers not only a first lien on their work for their full wages, but also the legal right to collect the said wages without any cost to them whatsoever in the courts or elsewhere. The establishment of an arbitration board to settle disputes between employees and employers, and render strikes unnecessary.

Temperance -- the regulation of the Liquor traffic should be directly in the hands of the people. The establishing a Provincial University where all can receive a free education. That all jurors be paid for their time and expenses. The repeal of all professional and other monopolies that exist in our Provincial Statutes.

We are not in favor of the present government or any other government that would give away the public lands and grant monopolies of the people's rights; all important laws should be referred to the people, viz: Land, Money, Commerce, Public Improvements and Foreign Relations. The enactment of such laws

as will afford a more speedy, effectual and inexpensive remedy for employees who may have reasonable claims for damages against persons or corporations. We will use our best endeavors to encourage all honest industries and promote the interest of Capital and Labor so that they may work harmoniously to develop the resources of the Province.

The above is respectfully submitted to the Electors of
Nanaimo Electoral District. Samuel H. Myers, James
Lewis.

(Nanaimo Free Press, June 2, 1886, p. 2).

UNANIMOUS RESOLUTION OF TYPOGRAPHICAL UNION, VANCOUVER
(7 Feb., 1890)

That whereas every male of the age of 21 years who has resided in any portion of the Dominion of Canada, is a British subject and who enjoys an annual income of not less than \$350, is entitled to have his name placed on the voters' list of the Dominion and to cast a vote for the election of any candidate for the Federal House of Commons.

And whereas any male of the age of 21 years being a British subject and having resided in this Province for 12 months in a certain electoral district, not otherwise disqualified is entitled, by having his name placed on the Provincial voters list to vote for any candidate for the British Columbia House of Assembly.

And whereas it is imperative that every male person of the City of Vancouver situated as stated in the two preceding clauses should take a decided part in all future elections for the Houses named

And whereas it is also necessary for the good of the country and the working classes generally that the fittest and best men should be chosen as their representatives both at Ottawa and Victoria so that such legislation as will mostly benefit the wage-earners of the Dominion will accrue to them as a result of their united action in this matter

And whereas it is urgent that immediate steps should be taken for the adoption of a platform from which to take a line of action, or if that is not practicable at the present time for the adoption of measures whereby this and other unions now existing in Vancouver shall be able to secure the most disinterested representation, both in the said House of Commons and House of Assembly

Therefore be it resolved that this union through its appointed delegates urge upon the Trades and Labor Council of the City of Vancouver the immediate necessity of canvassing the workers under its jurisdiction and showing them that only by having their names on the several voters' lists can they ever hope to secure by a harmonious, united and decided stand the objects which the said Council has in view, namely, the elevation of the working classes, mentally, morally and physically; and that this union heartily and unanimously co-operate with the Council in its efforts to attain the ends desired.

(Minutes of Vancouver T. & L. C., February 14, 1890).

WORKINGMEN'S PLATFORM (Nanaimo, 26 May, 1890)

Believing that the first principles of Representative Government should be to accomplish the greatest good for the greatest number. To secure the workers the full enjoyment of the wealth they create, sufficient leisure in which to develop their intellectual, moral and social faculties, in a word to enable them to share in the gains and honors of advancing civilization. To secure these objects, we must have men to advance our cause on the floor of the Legislative Hall of our Province. Therefore vote only for men who will advocate the following demands:

1. that the land, the heritage of the people be reserved for actual settlers, not another acre for Corporations or speculators, and all land so held at present to be taxed to its full rental value.
2. The adoption of measures providing for the health and safety of those engaged in mining, manufacturing and building industries, and for the indemnification of those engaged therein for injuries received through lack of necessary safeguards.
3. The enactment of laws providing for arbitration between employer and employes, and to enforce the decision of the arbitrators.
4. The adoption of a Mechanics Lien Law giving to Mechanics and Laborers a first lien upon the product of their labor to the extent of their full wages.
5. That a clause be inserted in all Charters granted by the Provincial Government, prohibiting the employment of Chinese.
6. The repeal of the unjust laws passed at the last session giving vast tracts of land and royalties on minerals therein to railroad corporations.
7. That we condemn the policy of creating and fostering monopolies, as they tend to prevent legitimate competition, leaving it possible for the few to accumulate vast fortunes at the expense of the many.
8. That we consider the present system of taxation to be unjust, therefore we demand that a graduated income tax be levied.
9. That we do all in our power to further the advancement of the short hours movement.

10. In the interests of Education we consider that the control of the Schools should be left in the hands of the local Board, the Government merely exercising a general supervision over them.

(prepared by The Workingmen's Campaign Committee; published in the Nanaimo Free Press with separate endorsements by Keith and Forster May 27 and May 31, 1890).

PLATFORM of the NATIONALIST PARTY

1. We demand for the producers and wage-earners the full product of their labor.
2. That population be the only basis of legislative representation.
3. That all obstacles to free representation be removed, and no property or financial qualification whatever be required of candidates for any election.
4. That all members of the Legislature be compelled to resign their seats at the request of a two-thirds majority of their constituents.
5. That all citizens, irrespective of sex, over the age of 21 years, be enfranchised, and that no other qualification be required for any election, municipal, Provincial, or Federal.
6. That all election days be declared legal holidays.
7. That the legislative system known as the initiative and referendum be adopted.
8. That the poll tax and personal property tax be abolished, and that all revenue for public purposes be derived by a tax on land values.
9. That the Provincial Government provide immediate relief for the unemployed, by opening up and operating coal and other mines, by clearing and cultivating the Provincial lands, and producing therefrom many of the necessities of life now imported.
10. That no subsidy of land or money be granted to any individual, company or corporation for any purpose whatever.
11. That all railways, waterways, telegraphs and telephone systems be made national property, and that all water, light and tramway services be controlled by municipalities, and that no existing franchise be renewed.
12. That all banks be nationalized and that the Government issue and control the medium of exchange.
13. That all education, elementary and advanced, with necessary books, be free.

14. That eight hours shall constitute a legal work-day.
15. That the contract system on public works be abolished.
16. That the importation of labor under contract be prohibited.

(from The Daily World, Vancouver, 14 May 1894).

JOINT LABOR-NATIONALIST CIVIC PLATFORM

(as adopted by Vancouver T.&L.C.,
6 Dec. 1895)

- No 1**
That any voter shall be eligible for election to the Office of Mayor or Alderman
- No 2**
That the ward system be abolished
- No 3**
That the system of direct legislation by the people known as the initiative and referendum be adopted
- No 4**
That the contract system on all municipal works be abolished
- No 5**
That eight hours shall constitute a days labor on all municipal work
- No 6**
That the principle of exemption of improvements from taxation be adhered to and any deficit caused thereby be made a direct charge on land values
- No 7**
That all gas and electric light plants telephones ferries waterworks and street Railway lines within the bounds of the City be owned and operated by the Municipality
- No 8**
That the assessors list and an official statement of revenue and expenditure for the City be published annually in detail
- No 9**
That the City Council shall establish and maintain a Mechanics Institute in conjunction with the free Public Library
- No 10**
That steps should at once be taken to have a portion of Stanley Park cleared and made suitable for a free public recreation ground

To School Trustees

- No 1**
That school books and all necessary supplies be free
- No 2**
That an officer whose duty it shall be to insure the attendance of pupils shall be appointed

(from Minutes of the Vancouver T.&L.C., above date)

NANAIMO WORKINGMAN'S PLATFORM, 1894

To the Electors of the Electoral Districts of Nanaimo:

Gentlemen:- the following platform has been adopted by the Nanaimo Reform Club, the Miners' and Mine-Laborers' Protective Association, and the various Trades Unions of the City of Nanaimo, and all candidates brought out under their auspices will be pledged to support it. Vote for the men who advocate these measures:

- 1. That all women, resident within the Province and being British subjects of the full age of twenty-one years, be entitled to vote at the Provincial elections upon the same terms and conditions that men are so entitled.**
- 2. That the Government negotiate with the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railroad Company for the purchase on fair and equitable terms of all lands at present owned by the said company in Vancouver Island together with the mineral and other rights therein and that the said lands be then opened up for settlement.**
- 3. That the Government negotiate for the purchase of the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railroad and in the event of a purchase being effected that the Government do extend the said railroad as far as Comox District and do assume control and operate the said railroad or lease the same on reasonable terms for periods not exceeding fifty years.**
- 4. That henceforth not another acre of land be granted as a bonus to any railroad or other corporation without first submitting the question to a direct vote of the electors.**
- 5. That henceforth no land be granted to any person or corporation whatsoever, free from taxation.**
- 6. That all unoccupied lands, not within the boundaries of a municipality, be taxed to their full rental value.**
- 7. That the tax on mortgages be repealed.**
- 8. That eight hours be adopted as the time limit of a day's work under all Government and municipal contracts and that working overtime on such contracts be prohibited except in case of emergency.**
- 9. That no person of the Chinese or Japanese race be employed under any Government or municipal contract, directly or indirectly.**

10. That a clause be inserted in all charters granted by the Government prohibiting the employment of any person of the Chinese or Japanese race in any capacity for any of the purposes for which the charter be granted.

11. That no person be allowed to be employed in any coal mine in any capacity whatever underground without first passing a satisfactory examination as to the duties of his position and the precautions required against the dangers incidental to working in a mine.

12. That the Government see to the stricter enforcement of the liquor laws and especially in regard to the selling of intoxicants to persons under the age of sixteen and to inebriates and in regard to the Sunday Closing clause of the Liquor License Regulation Act, 1891.

13. That the Government have full control of educational matters and schools and do erect and maintain school houses and do pay the salaries of teachers and other officials connected therewith.

14. That the law requiring a \$200 deposit to be made by a candidate for the Legislature be repealed.

15. That a law be enacted prohibiting the importation of foreign labor under contract.

In all matters not touched upon in this Platform our candidates will be pledged to take an independent stand in the interests of their constituents, at all times giving preference however to that party which will assist in carrying this platform into effect.

(from Nanaimo Free Press, 7 Mar. 1894, p. 1).

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR PLATFORM

1. Compulsory education.
2. Direct legislation, through the initiative and the referendum.
3. A legal work day of not more than eight hours.
4. Sanitary inspection of workshop, mine and home.
5. Liability of employers for injury to health, body or life.
6. The abolition of the contract system in all public works.
7. The abolition of the sweating system.
8. The municipal ownership of street cars, waterworks, gas and electric plants for the public distribution of light, heat and power.
9. The nationalization of the telephone, telegraph, railroads and mines.
10. The abolition of the monopoly system of landholding and substitution therefor a title of occupancy and use only.
11. Repeal of conspiracy and penal laws affecting seamen and other workmen incorporated in the federal and state laws of the United States.
12. The abolition of the monopoly privilege of issuing money and substituting therefor a system of direct issuance to and by the people.

(adopted by A.F. of L., 1894-95).

(from The Independent, April 28, 1900, p. 4).

**LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM OF THE TRADES AND LABOR CONGRESS OF
CANADA (adopted in Winnipeg, 1898)**

1. Free compulsory education.
2. Legal working day of eight hours and six days a week.
3. Government inspection of all industries.
4. The abolition of the contract system on all public works.
5. A minimum living wage, based on local conditions.
6. Public ownership of all franchises, such as railways, telegraphs, waterworks, lighting, etc.
7. Tax reform, by lessening taxation on industry and increasing it on land values.
8. Abolition of the Dominion senate.
9. Exclusion of Chinese.
10. The union label on all manufactured goods, where practicable, on all government supplies.
11. Abolition of child labor by children under 14 years of age; and of female labor in all branches of industrial life, such as mines, workshops, factories, etc. }
12. Abolition of property qualification for all public offices.
13. Compulsory arbitration of all labor disputes.
14. Proportional representation and the cumulative vote.
15. Prohibition of prison labor in competition with free labor.

(from The Independent, April 14, 1900, p. 3).

UNITED LABOR PLATFORM, 1900

1. We demand of the Provincial Legislature the enforcement of the eight-hour law, and its application to all branches of manual labor.
2. Legal recognition by incorporation of labor unions, and the extension to them of the same rights enjoyed by other corporate bodies.
3. To provide for adjustment of wage disputes by arbitration on plans similar to those now in force in New Zealand.
4. To provide for the settlement of public questions by direct vote under the initiative and referendum.
5. Government ownership of all railway, telegraph and telephone lines to be constructed, and the acquiring of those already in use as soon as practicable; and to prevent extortion as far as possible by the control of all railways, telephone and telegraph lines for public use and to fix a reasonable maximum rate which they may charge for service.
6. An act to prevent the employment of Chinese in any mines, factories and public works within the Province.
7. An act to provide safeguards to life and health, and to provide an efficient mine inspection system to procure these results.
8. An act to establish county or local government throughout the Province; all officers of such, both judicial and executive, to be elected by the popular vote of their respective localities.

(from the Nanaimo Herald, March 27, 1900, p. 2).

(The Herald commented that this platform had been endorsed by a majority of the labor organizations of the Province, and was being considered by the balance of them. Loc. cit.).

CAMPAIGN PROGRAM OF THE VICTORIA TRADES AND LABOR COUNCIL
(adopted April 1900)

1. The abolition of the \$200 deposit for candidates for the legislature.
2. The re-enactment of the disallowed Labor Regulation Act, 1898, and also all the statutes of 1899, containing anti-Mongolian clauses if disallowed as proposed by the Dominion Government.
3. To take a firm stand in every other possible way with a view to discouraging the spread of Oriental cheap labor in this Province.
4. To provide for official inspection of all buildings, machinery and works with a view to compelling the adoption of proper safeguards to life and health.
5. The re-enactment of the law of 1894 providing for a bureau of labor statistics and of councils of conciliation and arbitration.
6. The retaining of the resources of the Province as an asset for the people, and taking effective measures to prevent the alienation of the public domain, except to actual settlers or actual bona fide business, or industrial purposes, putting an end to the practice of speculating in connection with the same.
7. Government ownership of all railway, telegraph and telephone lines to be constructed, and acquiring of those already in use as soon as practicable; and to prevent extortion as far as possible by the control of all railway, telegraph and telephone lines for public use and to fix a reasonable maximum rate which they may charge for service.
8. The enactment of a practicable and applicable compensation act.
9. All government contracts shall contain such conditions as will prevent abuses which may arise from the sub-letting of such contracts, and that every effort shall be made to secure the payment of such wages as are generally accepted as current in each trade for competent workmen in the district where the work is carried out.
10. Legal recognition by incorporation of labor unions and the extension to them of the same rights enjoyed by other corporate bodies.
11. The legalization of an Eight-Hour day.

(from The Independent, April 28, 1900, p.6).

LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM OF THE VANCOUVER TRADES AND LABOUR COUNCIL
(adopted 4 May, 1900)

1. That upon a petition being presented to the Government asking for the repeal of the existing Law or the enacting of a new law, the Government shall be compelled to take a plebiscite and repeal or enact as the majority voting may decide. The petition to be signed by a number equal to 10 per cent. of the vote cast at the previous election.

2. That eight hours shall constitute a day's work.

3. That the contract system on all public works be abolished and a minimum wage based on local conditions be paid.

4. That no more public land be alienated by deed or Crown grant to corporations or individuals, but that it be leased in perpetuity subject only to a fair rental value.

5. That all taxes on industry and the proceeds of industry be gradually abolished, and the revenue of the municipal and Provincial governments be derived by a tax on land values.

6. Free compulsory education; free educational materials, and free maintenance when necessary.

7. Government inspection of all industries.

8. Public ownership of all franchises, such as railways, telegraphs, telephones and all industries that partake of the nature of a monopoly.

9. The Union Label on all manufactured goods supplied the Government, where practicable.

10. Abolition of property qualifications for all public offices, and no money deposit to be required when the candidate's nomination is endorsed by 100 electors in cities and 50 electors in rural districts.

12. Liability of employers for injury to health, body or life.

13. That a clause be inserted in all charters granted by the Government, making it necessary that a minimum wage of \$2.50 a day be paid.

(from The Independent, May 5, 1900, p. 1).

14. The total abolition of Chinese and Japanese immigration.

(added at T.&L.C. meeting, May 18, 1900, to make clear the purpose of clause #3).

(The Independent, May 19, 1900).

NANAIMO LABOR PARTY PLATFORM, 1900

1. The exclusion from British Columbia of all Mongolian coolie laborers.
2. The establishment of a Labor Bureau, under the direction of a minister of the Crown whose duty it shall be, among other things, to collect labor statistics, and to act as a mediator between employers and workmen in all cases of actual or threatened strikes with power to call and examine witnesses and compel disclosure of all material facts in connection with such disputes.
3. The abolition of the deposit required from candidates for election to the Legislature.
4. The recognition of the principle that eight hours shall constitute a legal day's work.
5. The maintenance of the eight-hour law as enacted by the Semlin administration.
6. That \$2.50 per day be the minimum wage for unskilled labor throughout the Province, on Government roads and works.
7. Provision for the payment of fair wages on any works to which Government subsidies or aid is given, or under any contract with the Government.
8. The appointment of road foreman for the different districts by the vote of the rate-payers of the districts, such vote to be by secret ballot, so as to take the appointment of these officials out of the domain of politics.
9. On the report of a mining engineer that any quartz prospect is of sufficient apparent value to warrant development, the Government to advance on request a sufficient sum to the discoverer or owner, on the security of the claim at a low rate of interest so as to enable such discoverer or owner to develop the claim to a moderate extent. The amount advanced to be proportionate to the work done.
10. The amendment of the Metalliferous Mines, and the Coal Mines Regulation Act.
 - a. To provide for the exclusion from the mines of all Mongolians.
 - b. To recognize the absolute importance of all underground managers of coal mines holding certificates of competency.
 - c. To enable owners of adjoining coal mines to apply to the inspector for information as to the actual position of the workings of adjoining mines, as at present provided for in the Metalliferous Mines Act, as a safeguard against accident in abandoned workings.

11. The condemnation of the principle of Ministers of the Crown taking and holding office without an immediate appeal to their constituents for their endorsement as Cabinet Ministers.
12.
 - a. Legislation to give relief to the settlers within the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway Belt, with regard to the coal and mineral rights claimed by them.
 - b. Taxation of all lands within the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway Belt belonging to the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway Company and any lands similarly held by any other Corporation or Railway Company.
 - c. The necessity of affording facilities to Free Miners to prospect and mine for precious metals within the Island Railway Belt, or any other lands similarly held, without interference from the owners of such land; and affording to such Free Miners and Prospectors a cheap and speedy method of acquiring the necessary lands and rights of way for the working of their mines.
13. Re-distribution of the constituencies on an equitable basis.
14. The establishment of Technical Schools for metalliferous miners in connection with smelters at different points in the Province.
15. Government ownership of all Telegraph systems, and Railways where practicable, by construction or purchase.
16. Construction of permanent roads through the Province from boundary to boundary for settlement, prospecting and trade purposes.
17. To draw the attention of capitalists and investors to British Columbia as a desirable centre for profitable mining operations, by suitable advertisement and by the appointment of special agents at London and New York.
18. To encourage the establishment at suitable points in British Columbia:
 - a. Steel and Iron Works.
 - b. Ship Building Yards.
 - c. Additional Smelters.
19. That the dimensions of place claims be increased from 100 feet square to 300 feet square.

(from the Nanaimo Herald, May 4, 1900, p. 1).

THE UNITED SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1900.

MANIFESTO

In submitting this platform and demands to you, workingmen of Vancouver, we point to the fact that every nominee has signed his own resignation, blank date. This enables the United Socialist Labor Party to withdraw any of its candidates if elected as soon as they do not live and act according to the tactics and principles of the United Socialist Labor Party.

The continuous war between capital and labor is fiercer every year. We call upon you, workingmen of Vancouver, to side with the representatives of the class-conscious proletariat of the world and this city and elect them to office, for they will work in your interest, whatever may happen, and against the interest of your oppressors, the capitalist class. In concluding we remind you of the fact that it is better to vote for the thing you want and not get it than to vote for something you do not want and get it. Vote for principles upheld by the right men.

PLATFORM

The United Socialist Labor Party of British Columbia re-asserts the inalienable rights of all men to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

We hold that the purpose of Government is to secure every citizen in the enjoyment of this right; but in the light of our social conditions, we hold, furthermore, that no such right can be exercised under a system of economic inequality, essentially destructive of life, of liberty and of happiness.

We hold that the true theory of politics is that the machinery of Government must be owned and controlled by the whole people; but in the light of our industrial development we hold, furthermore, that the true theory of economics is that the machinery of production must likewise belong to the people in common.

To the obvious fact that a despotic system of economics is the direct opposite of our democratic system of politics, can plainly be traced the existence of a privileged class, the corruption of Government by that class, the alienation of public property, public franchises and public functions to that class, and the abject dependence of even the mightiest nations upon that class.

Again, through the perversion of democracy to the ends of plutocracy, labor is robbed of the wealth which it alone produces, is denied the means of self-employment, and by frequent compulsory idleness in a system of wage-slavery, is even deprived of the necessities of life.

Human power and natural forces are thus wasted, that the plutocracy may rule.

Ignorance and misery, with all their concomitant evils are perpetuated that the people may be kept in bondage.

Science and invention are diverted from their humane purpose to the enslavement of women and children.

Against such a system, the United Socialist Labor Party enters its protest, and reiterates its fundamental declaration that private property in the natural sources of production and in the instruments of labor is the obvious cause of all economic servitude and political dependence.

The time is fast coming when, in the natural course of social evolution, this system, through the destructive action of its failures and crises on the one hand, and the constructive tendencies of its trusts and other capitalistic combinations on the other hand shall have worked out its own downfall.

We therefore call upon the wage honest citizens (sic), to organize under the banner of the United Socialist Labor Party into a class-conscious body, aware of its rights and determined to conquer them by taking possession of the public powers; so that, held together by an indomitable spirit of solidarity under the most trying conditions of the present class struggle we may put a summary end to that barbarous struggle by the abolition of classes, the restoration of the land and of all the means of production, transportation and distribution to the people as a collective body, and the substitution of the Co-Operative Commonwealth for the present state of planless production, industrial war and social disorder; a commonwealth in which every worker shall have the free exercise and full benefit of his faculties, multiplied by all the modern factors of civilization.

RESOLUTIONS

With a view to immediate improvement in the condition of labor we present the following demands:

1. Reduction of the hours of labor in proportion to the progress of production.
2. The Dominion to obtain possession of the mines, railroads, canals, telegraphs, telephones and all other means of public transportation and communication; the employees to operate the same co-operatively under the control of the Federal government and to elect their own superintendent and foreman, and that no employee shall be discharged for political reasons.
3. The Provinces and municipalities to obtain possession of the local railroads, ferries, water works, gas works, electric plants and all industries requiring Provincial and municipal franchise; the employees to operate the same co-operatively under control of the Provincial and Municipal administrations and to elect their own superintendents and foremen, and that no employee shall be discharged for political reasons.
4. The public lands to be declared inalienable. Revocation of all land grants to corporations or individuals, where the conditions of the grant have not been complied with.

5. The Dominion to have the exclusive right to issue money.
6. Federal legislation providing for the scientific management of forests and waterways, and prohibiting the waste of the natural resources of the country.
7. Inventions to be free to all; the inventors to be remunerated by the nation.
8. Progressive income tax and tax on inheritances; the smaller incomes to be exempt.
9. School education of all children under fourteen years of age to be compulsory, free and accessible to all by public assistance in meals, clothing, books, etc., where necessary.
10. Repeal of all pauper, tramp, conspiracy and sumptuary laws. Unabridged right of combination.
11. Prohibition of the employment of children under fourteen years of age, prohibition of the employment of women and young persons in occupations detrimental to health or morality. Abolition of the convict labor contract system.
12. Employment of the unemployed by the public authorities (county, city, provincial and national).
13. All wages to be paid in lawful money of the Dominion of Canada. Equalization of women's wages with those of men where equal services are performed.
14. Laws for the protection of life and limb in all occupations, and an efficient employer's liability law.
15. The people to have the right to propose laws and to vote upon all measures of importance, according to the initiative and referendum principle.
16. Abolition of the veto power of the Executive (national, provincial and municipal) wherever it exists.
17. Abolition of the Senate and all upper legislative chambers.
18. Municipal self-government, the abolition of the system of money deposits and property qualification for candidates for parliamentary and municipal legislatures.
19. Direct vote and secret ballot in all elections. Universal and equal right of suffrage. Election days to be legal holidays. The principle of proportional representation to be introduced.
20. All public officers to be subject to recall by their respective constituencies.
21. Uniform civil and criminal law throughout the Dominion. Administration of justice to be free of charge. Abolition of corporal and capital punishment.

(from the Independent, May 26, 1900, p. 3).

VANCOUVER LABOR PARTY PLATFORM, 1900

1. That the distribution of parliamentary representation throughout the Dominion be established and maintained on a uniformly equitable basis.
2. Government ownership of all public services which are by their nature monopolies.
3. That all revenues for public purposes be derived from a tax on land values.
4. That the government issue and control the medium of exchange.
5. Government works to be done by day labor, and that eight hours shall constitute a day's work.
6. Abolition of all assisted immigration; the abolition of Asiatic immigration, and the regulation of all immigration by an educational test as to their fitness, and the abolition of all special inducements and privileges to foreign immigrants to settle in the Dominion.
7. The abolition of the Senate, and the introduction of direct legislation.

(from the Independent, September 29, 1900, p.1).

(Campaign platform of Rev. G.R. Maxwell as Liberal-Labor candidate).

PLATFORM OF THE INDEPENDENT LABOR PARTY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
(Rossland, 1900 (?))
(Dominion election)

1. Free compulsory education.
2. Legal working day of eight hours.
3. Government inspection of all industries.
4. Abolition of contract system on all public works.
5. Public ownership of all franchises.
6. Prohibition of Asiatic immigration and the regulation of all immigration by an educational test as to an immigrant's fitness, and the abolition of all special inducements and privileges to foreign immigrants to settle in the Dominion.
7. Abolition of child labor under 12.
8. Abolition of the \$250 deposit required of all candidates for the Dominion house.
9. Compulsory arbitration of all labor disputes.
10. Prohibition of prison labor in competition with free labor.
11. All election days to be made public holidays.
12. Abolition of Dominion senate.

Vote for CHRIS. FOLEY, the Independent Labor Party Candidate.

(original sheet in U.B.C. Library)

PROVINCIAL LABOR CONVENTION, KAMLOOPS, B.C., 1902.

(from Official Minutes of Proceedings).

Monday, April 14th.

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DELEGATES

Socialist League, No. 42 -- Wm. Ebbs. *see*
 District Lodge No. 6 Western Federation of Miners -- Chris. Foley
 Slocan Miners Union -- H.L. Fife.
 Phoenix Miners Union No. 8 -- W. Rogers.
 Vancouver Trades and Labor Council -- T.H. Cross.
 Vancouver Labor Party -- G. Bartley.
 Council of Railroad Trainmen, Kamloops -- A. McDonald & D. Stevens.
 Rossland Trades and Labor Council, No. 6 -- J. McLaren.
 Western Federation of Miners and Independent Labor Party, Rossland
 -- T. Brownlee.
 Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen, Kamloops -- W. Hume.
 Ymir Miners Union -- A. Parr. *see*
 Slocan Miners Union, No. 62 -- J.A. Baker. *see*
 Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, Kamloops -- Thos. Clouston.
 Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen, Kamloops -- C.J. Bourne.
 Phoenix Trades and Labor Council -- C.H. Cowan.
 Vancouver Fishermen's Union -- Sydney Harris.
 Sandon Miners Union, No. 8 -- W. Davison. (sic) *see*
 Kamloops Trades and Labor Council -- J.H. Vautin and G. Bunbury.
 Greenwood Carpenters Union and Greenwood Socialist Club --
 C.W. Stack. *see*
 Slocan Miners Union -- Jos. Purviance. *see*
 Nanaimo Socialist Party -- E.T. Kingsley. *see*
 Slocan Socialist Party -- J.M. McGregor. *see*
 Nelson Miners Union, No. 96 -- James Wilks and C. McKay.
 Kamloops Miners Union -- J. Graham.
 Vancouver Trades and Labor Council -- R. McPherson.
 Victoria Trades and Labor Council -- J.D. McNiven.
 Vancouver Typographical Union -- R. Todd.
 New Westminster Typographical Union -- D. Jameson.
 Cigar Makers Union, Kamloops -- F. Caseman.
 New Denver Miners Union -- C.H. Richardson.
 Nanaimo Trades and Labor Council -- H. Buckle.
 Vancouver Boilermakers -- J.H. Watson
 International Association of Machinists, Revelstoke -- W. Neild.
 Greenwood Miners Union -- Geo. Dougherty and M. Kane.
 Nelson Carpenters Union -- A. Lockey. *see*
 Lardeau Miners Union, Ferguson -- A. Gordon. *see*
 Sandon Socialist League -- W. McAdam. (sic) *see*
 Sandon Miners Union -- J.H. Thomson, T. McRoske, and
 Alex. McDonald.
 Brotherhood Railway Trackmen, Ashcroft -- T. Phillips.

Whitewater Miners Union -- J.B. Burke.
 Kaslo Miners Union -- G.T. Kane.
 Brotherhood Railway Trackmen, Revenstoke - T. Gillespie.
 Silvertown Miners Union -- J. Tyree.
 Rossland Miners Union -- R. Bulmer and F.E. Woodside.
 Phoenix Miners Union -- T. Buckton. *Soc*
 Rossland Carpenters Union -- T. Beamish.
 Ferguson Socialist Party -- Alex. Cummins. *Etc.*
 Ymir Miners Union -- A. McDougal.
 Fernie Miners Union -- C.M. O'Brien. *Etc.*
 Nelson Trades and Labor Assembly - E. Kirby.
 Nelson Labor Party -- Jas. Jones.
 Vancouver Socialist Party -- E. Burns *Soc.*
 Kamloops Federal Union -- J. McGee.
 Kamloops Single Tax -- A. Thomson.
 Nelson Cooks and Waiters -- H.A.M. Fortier.
 Order Railroad Telegraphers, Kamloops -- Ed. Goulet.

....

J.A. Baker elected President of Convention, over Wilks and Foley.

....

Before proceeding with the election of a Vice-President, a motion was presented, and seconded, that no candidate for permanent office be eligible unless he be a British subject and a voter,

An amendment was moved and seconded that all delegates not British subjects be excluded from the privileges of participating in this Convention.

Amendment lost, motion carried.

....

Wilks elected vice-president over Macpherson.

....

Cross elected secretary by acclamation.

....

etc.

(Inland Sentinel Print; New Westminster Typo. Label).

PLATFORM OF THE PROVINCIAL PROGRESSIVE PARTY

PREAMBLE

That this Provincial Progressive Party lays it down as a first principle that they will nominate, endorse, or support only such men as will place their signed undated resignation in the hands of the convention which nominates or endorses them; that this resignation be sworn to; that this resignation may be handed in to the Lieutenant Governor in Council whenever a majority of the convention shall consider such action advisable.

PLATFORM

1. That we gradually abolish all taxes on the producer and the products of the producer, shifting them on land values.
2. Government ownership of railways and means of communication.
3. That the Government establish and operate smelters and refineries to treat all kinds of minerals.
4. That the franchise be extended to women.
5. The abolition of property qualifications for all public offices.
6. Farm improvements, implements, and stock not to be taxed, and wild lands to be assessed at the price asked for them by speculative holders.
7. No land or cash subsidies. Lands to be held by the actual settlers.
8. Ten per cent. of all public lands to be immediately set aside for educational purposes, and the education of all children, up to the age of 16 years, to be free, secular, and compulsory. Text books, meals and clothing to be supplied out of the public funds when necessary.
9. Compulsory arbitration of labor disputes.
10. Restriction of Oriental immigration by a law on the lines of the Natal Act; and if said law be disallowed it be repeatedly re-enacted until the end sought is obtained.
11. That to protect us from Asiatics already in the province the Government insert a clause in all private Acts to this effect; "This act shall be null and void if the company fails to enter into an agreement with the government as to conditions of construction and operation," and that the house pass a resolution instructing the Government to prohibit the employment of Asiatics on all franchises granted by the Provincial House.

12. Conservation of our forest riches. Pulp land leases to contain a provision for reforestation, so as to produce a perennial revenue, and make pulp manufacturing a growing and permanent industry.

13. That the Act compelling the scaling of logs by the Government be enforced.

14. Absolute reservation from sale or lease of a certain part of every known coal area, so that state owned mines, if necessary, may be easily possible in the future. All coal leases or grants hereafter made to contain a provision enabling the Government to fix the price of coal loaded on cars or vessels for shipment to B.C. consumers.

15. Municipalization and public control of the liquor traffic.

16. The right to a referendum where a valuable subsidy or franchise is to be carried.

17. That all transportation companies be compelled to give free transportation to members of the Legislative Assembly and supreme Court and County Court judges.

18. Election day to be a public holiday. Provision made that every employee shall be free from service at least four consecutive hours during polling time.

From Provincial Labor Convention, Proceedings, April 15 and 16, 1902, Kamloops, B.C. Inland Sentinel Print.

(pasted in T.&L.C. Minutes, 1902-08, pp. 600-601).

AMENDMENTS TO PROVINCIAL PROGRESSIVE PLATFORM

made at New Denver Convention, 1 Aug.1903.

sponsored by Western Federation of Miners locals.
in Slocan Constituency.

Preamble --- adopted.

Plank 1 ---- adopted.

Plank 2 ---- combined with plank 3 to read:
Government ownership of railroads, means of communication and establishment and operation by the Government of Smelters and Refineries to treat all kinds of minerals.

Plank 4 ---- adopted.

Plank 5 ---- adopted.

Plank 6 ---- stricken out.

Plank 7 ---- amalgamated with plank 8 and adopted.

Plank 9 ----word "Compulsory" deleted; adopted.

10 ---- amalgamated with plank 11 and adopted.

12 ---- stricken out.

13 ---- stricken out.

14 ---- amended to read:
Absolute reservation from sale or lease of a certain part of every known coal and oil area, so that state owned mines and wells, if necessary, may be easily possible in the future. All coal leases or grants hereafter made to contain a provision enabling the Government to fix the price of coal loaded on cars or vessels for shipment to B.C. consumers.

15 ---- stricken out.

16 ---- stricken out; replaced by:
To provide for a settlement of public questions by direct vote under the Initiative and Referendum.

17 ---- stricken out.

18 ---- amended by the addition of :
... and further that the exercise of the Franchise be made compulsory.

(from Minutes of the above Convention; in possession of T.&D.S.W.U.)

SOCIALIST PARTY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

"IMMEDIATE DEMANDS" ca. 1902

1. Direct legislation.
2. Proportional representation.
3. Abolition of property qualification for voters and candidates in municipal election.
4. Abolition of system of cash deposits for candidates at provincial elections.
5. Adult suffrage.
6. A minimum wage law, fixing wages at not less than \$2 per day for adults.
7. Reduction of hours of labor in all trades to forty-four hours per week.
8. All coal mines to be owned and operated by the province, in the interests of the people.
9. Graduated land tax, similar to New Zealand law.
10. Free medical attendance to all needing such.
11. Scientific and practical management of fisheries, forests, and waterways, in the interests of the province.
12. Employment of unemployed labor on useful productive work.
13. Extension of powers of municipalities.
14. The education of children under 14 years of age to be free, secular, and compulsory. Text books, meals and clothing to be supplied to children out of public funds when necessary.
15. Municipalization and public control of the liquor traffic.
16. Abolition of poll and personal property tax.
17. No more bonusing private individuals or corporations, with land grants or cash subsidies.

(from Western Clarion, January 12, 1907, p. 2).

SOCIALIST PARTY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1902.**PLATFORM**

We, the SOCIALIST PARTY of B.C., in convention assembled, affirm our allegiance to and support the principles of the international revolutionary working class.

Labor produces all wealth and to labor it should justly belong. To the owner of the means of wealth production belongs the product of labor. The capitalist system is based upon private or capitalist ownership of the means of wealth production, therefore all the products of labor belongs to the capitalist. The capitalist is master; the workingman is slave.

So long as the capitalist remains in possession of the reins of government all the powers of the state will be used to protect and defend their property rights in the means of wealth production and their control of the product of labor.

The capitalist system gives to the capitalist an ever swelling stream of profits; and to the worker an ever increasing measure of misery and degradation.

The interests of the working class lies in the direction of getting itself free from capitalist exploitation by the abolition of the wage system. To accomplish this necessitates the transformation of capitalist property in the means of wealth production into collective or working class property.

The irrepressible conflict of interests between the capitalist and the worker is rapidly culminating in a struggle for possession of the powers of government, the capitalist to hold; the worker to secure it by political action. This is the class struggle.

Therefore we call upon all wage earners to organize under the banner of the Socialist Party of B.C., with the object of conquering the public powers for the purpose of setting up and enforcing the economic program of the working class, as follows:

1. The transformation as rapidly as possible of capitalist property in the means of wealth production (Natural resources, factories, mills, railways, etc.) into the collective property of the working class.

2. Thorough and democratic organization and management of industry by the workers.

3. The establishment as speedily as possible of production for use in lieu of production for profit.

4. The Socialist Party, when in office, shall always and everywhere, until the present system is utterly abolished make

the answer to this question its guiding rule of conduct; Will this legislation advance the interests of the working class and aid the workers in their class struggle against capitalism? If it does the Socialist Party is for it; if it does not, the Socialist Party is absolutely opposed to it.

5. In accordance with this principle the Socialist Party pledges itself to conduct all the public affairs placed in its hands in such a manner as to promote the interests of the working class alone.

(from the Western Clarion, June 4, 1903, p.3).

MANIFESTO TO THE WORKING CLASS (1903)

Among the more urgent legislation needing consideration would be

First -- Measures for the shortening of the hours of labor and the improvement of the sanitary conditions under which men and women toil in mind, workshop, and factory.

Second -- Laws providing better facilities for the education of the young along the lines of manual training and physical development, and making increased provision for the rational recreation of the people.

Third -- The formulation of a scheme to provide useful remunerative work for the unemployed.

Fourth -- A system of old-age pensions for the benefit of every person needing such who is over sixty years of age.

Fifth -- The additional revenue needed to finance these improvements to be raised by increase of taxation on large incomes, valuable franchises, and lands held for speculative purposes.

("Immediate demands" put forward by A.R. Stebbings and Ernest Burns, Socialist Party candidates in Vancouver).

(from the Western Clarion, August 21, 1903, p. 1).

TRADES AND LABOR CONGRESS OF CANADA

RESOLUTION IN FAVOR OF A CANADIAN LABOR PARTY, 1906

1. That this Congress endorse the idea of sending representatives of labor to parliament and to the local legislatures for the direct purpose of conserving the interests of the working people of this country.
2. That such action as may be necessary to attain this object shall be independent of this Congress.
3. That the platform of principles of this Congress be recommended as (the) platform to be adopted by those engaged in this independent effort.
4. That immediately upon the adjournment of this convention the provincial executives of this Congress take the preliminary steps to summon a convention of the trade unionists of their respective provinces, and those in sympathy with organized labor, for the purpose of forming the necessary association to carry on thereafter the work of electing labor men.
5. That upon such conventions being summoned and convened the functions of the provincial executives in this regard shall cease.

(from the Western Clarion, October 6, 1906, p. 1).

CANADIAN LABOR PARTY PLATFORM, 1906

1. Free compulsory education.
2. A legal eight-hour day, six days to a week.
3. Government inspection of all industries.
4. Abolition of the contract system on all public works.
5. A minimum living wage, based on local conditions.
6. Public ownership of all franchises such as railways, telegraphs, waterworks, etc.
7. Taxation reform, lessening the impost on industries and increasing the burden on land values.
8. Abolition of the Dominion senate.
9. Chinese exclusion.
10. Union label on all manufactures and all governmental and municipal supplies.
11. Abolition of child and female labor in mines, workshops, factories, etc.
12. Abolition of property qualifications for public office.
13. Voluntary arbitration of labor disputes.
14. Proportional representation with grouped constituencies and abolition of municipal wards.
15. Direct legislation through the initiative and referendum.
16. Prohibition of prison labor in competition with free labor.

(Drawn up at T.L.C.C. convention, Victoria, 1906).

(from the Vancouver World, September 22, 1906, p.1).

"SOCIALIST PARTY" RESOLUTION
passed at
CANADIAN LABOR PARTY CONVENTION, 1906

Whereas:- No political party can correctly express the labor movement unless it stands for the abolition of capitalist exploitation, and the wage system under which it is effected; and

Whereas: a Labor Party is already in existence which does stand for that change, and which has received the most emphatic endorsation possible from the different labor organizations throughout the province, inasmuch as, nearly every labor organization in the province has written to the representatives of that party in the local Legislature requesting them to take up their grievances, and endeavor to get legislation passed for the betterment of their conditions, thus showing their confidence in the said party as a labor party.

Therefore be it resolved:

That in the opinion of this convention it is unwise to organize another Labor Party, as it would cause confusion among the working class, thus dividing their vote, and rendering it ineffective; and be it further resolved,

That we recommend to the working class throughout this province, the careful study and investigation of the principles and platform of the Socialist Party of Canada, and

That we further recommend the earnest study of the principles and programme of Socialism as we believe that in the accomplishment of its aims, lies the only true and permanent solution of the labor problem.

(from the Western Clarion, November 3, 1906, p.1).

PLATFORM OF THOS E. KELLY, LABOR PARTY**(Cranbrook, 3 Jan. 1907)**

1. Government ownership of Railroads, means of communication and operation by the Government of Smelters and Refineries to treat all kinds of minerals.

2. The abolition of all property qualifications for all Public offices.

3. No land or cash subsidies. Lands to be held by actual settlers, and further that TEN per cent of all lands be immediately set aside for educational purposes and the education of all children up to the age of sixteen years to be free and compulsory. Text books and clothing to be supplied out of the Public funds when necessary.

4. Absolute reservation from sale or lease of a certain part of every known coal or oil area, so that state owned mines or wells may be easily possible in the future.

5. To provide for the settlement of Public questions by direct vote under the Initiative and referendum.

6. Amendments to Elections Act providing that no election will be called without giving the electors an opportunity to register in time to secure their votes.

7. Truck Act enforcements, to compel all employers of labour to pay employees in current coin of the Dominion, at place of employment when they quit or are discharged.

8. Eight hour day for all classes of labour.

9. Graduated Land Tax.

10. Exclusion of Asiatic Labour.

11. Old Age Pensions for workingmen.

(Original in possession of T.&D.S.W.U., Trail, B.C.)
(Note: this leaflet bears the label of the I.W.W.,
and was produced by Moyie Leader Print).

MEANINGS OF ABBREVIATIONS

I. In Text:

A.F. of L.	American Federation of Labor
C.C.F.	Co-operative Commonwealth Federation
C.I.O.	Congress of Industrial Organizations
C.L.P.	Canadian Labor Party
C.P.R.	Canadian Pacific Railway
D.A.	District Association
I.W.W.	Industrial Workers of the World
K. of L.	Knights of Labor
L.P.	Labor Party
M.M.L.P.A.	Miners' and Mine Laborers' Protective Association
M.U.	Miners' Union
O.B.U.	One Big Union
P.P.P.	Provincial Progressive Party
S.L.P.	Socialist Labor Party
S.P.	Socialist Party
T. & L.C.	Trades and Labor Council
T.L.C.C.	Trades and Labor Congress of Canada
U.B.W.A.	United Brewery Workers of America
U.M.W.A.	United Mine Workers of America
U.S.L.P.	United Socialist Labor Party
W.F.M.	Western Federation of Miners

II. In footnotes:

CPC	Canadian Parliamentary Companion
CPG	Canadian Parliamentary Guide
T. & D.S.W.U.	Trail and District Smelter Workers' Union
VTLCM	Vancouver Trades and Labor Council "Minutes"