

# Saskatchewan History

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Medicine Hat, N.W.T., 29 June 1892

Dear Mitchell

I need will write you at length on the subject, so I will merely ask you whether you will join the Executive Committee as the member ~~of~~ from Saskatchewan. A great deal of nonsense has been written in the newspapers on both sides of this question, which should not affect the case at all.

I have always been anxious to keep up the District representation and went a great deal out of my way to induce Chinkskill to remain on the Committee. The School question, upon which he resigned, has not become an open question at all. The Roman Catholic section of the Board of Education as well as the Roman Catholic Press are quite satisfied and I have heard no complaints from any quarter. The time

# Saskatchewan History

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## Contents

|   |                   |    |
|---|-------------------|----|
| BIG BEAR.....   | R. S. Allen       | 1  |
| RELIGIOUS AND RACIAL INFLUENCES ON A SENATE<br>APPOINTMENT, 1931.....               | Irene H. McEwan   | 18 |
| ARCHAEOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE FORT PELLY SITE.....                                    | Gilbert C. Watson | 35 |
| BOOK REVIEWS.....   |                   | 37 |
| Swanson (ed.), <i>Historical Essays on the Prairie Provinces</i> : by J. W. Brennan |                   |    |
| Berton, <i>The Last Spike, The Great Railway, 1881-1885</i> : by T. D. Regehr       |                   |    |
| Mills, <i>Stout Hearts Stand Tall</i> : by A. R. Turner                             |                   |    |

COVER: Letter written by F. W. G. Haultain to Hillyard Mitchell of Duck Lake, June 29, 1892.



*Editor: D. H. Bocking*

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## Big Bear

**M**ISTO-HA-A-MUSQUA (more commonly known in the white world as Big Bear) was born about 1825 near Fort Carlton in one of the many Plains Cree villages scattered along the North Saskatchewan river. His early years are unrecorded, but unquestionably he was reared in the teachings and skills of plains Indian life. Big Bear's people, the Nai-ah-yah-og (or Plains Cree) were initially quite removed from the prairie in both culture and geography. When first recorded in the *Jesuit Relations* in 1640 the Cree inhabited the forests between Hudson Bay and Lake Superior, where they were wandering hunters and gatherers of wild rice.<sup>1</sup> They soon became parasitic on the white trader for clothing, tools, metal implements, guns and later, horses.

As a result of this culture contact, Cree life rapidly changed from the fringe of a Stone Age culture to a complex tribal society.<sup>2</sup> With the acquisition of the gun, for example, they were able to dispossess their neighbours to the west, and by 1750 a number of Cree bands had ventured westward to the plains, where they discovered the resources of the bison. The tribe became particularly adept at driving the bison over designated jump sites,<sup>3</sup> and an American buffalo expert, William T. Hornaday, harshly commented that the Cree also impounded the buffalo, and "slaughtered hundreds with the most fiendish glee, and leaving all but the very choicest of meat to putrify."<sup>4</sup>

By 1800, with the introduction of the horse, Indian life was drastically transformed, and the Plains Cree had emerged as a typical equestrian plains tribe, dependent on the buffalo and horse nomadism. In custom and outlook they became very different from those Cree who still dwelled in the forest, although both groups were of the same Northern Algonkian linguistic stock. For the Plains Cree, life became modified and enriched. Their effective exploitation of the buffalo, residence in skin-covered tepees, use of the horse for the hunt and transportation, their peculiar style of decorative and pictographic art, sign language, glorification of warfare, Thirst Dance (Sun Dance among most Plains tribes), and their less conspicuous features of religion and supernaturalism all combined to provide outstanding features of their culture which was uniquely confined to the plains, and not similarly combined elsewhere.<sup>5</sup>

The development and influence of Plains Cree life was retarded by smallpox epidemics in 1781-1782, and to a lesser extent in 1838. Diamond Jenness, *Indians*

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<sup>1</sup>Peter Farb, *Man's Rise to Civilization As Shown By The Indians of North America . . .*, New York, 1968, 150-151.

<sup>2</sup>See: A. D. Fisher, "Culture Conflict on the Prairies: Indian and White," *Alberta Historical Review*, Summer 1968, 24-26, 29; and C. Wissler, "The Influence of the Horse in the Development of Plains Culture," *American Anthropologist*, XVI, 1914, 1-26.

<sup>3</sup>For example: R. G. Forbis, "The Old Woman's Buffalo Jump, Alberta," *National Museum of Canada Bulletin*, No. 180, 1960; and D. J. Lehmer, "The Plains Bison Hunt—Prehistoric and Historic," *Plains Anthropologist*, VIII, 1963, No. 22.

<sup>4</sup>Quoted in William T. Hornaday, "The Extermination of the Merican Bison, with a Sketch of its Discovery and Life History," *Smithsonian Report for 1887*, 527.

<sup>5</sup>Robert M. Lowie, *Indians of the Plains*, New York, 1963, 225.



*Big Bear in captivity, 1885.*

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of Canada also states that wars and disease between 1838 and 1858 further reduced their numbers from 4,000 to less than 1,000.<sup>6</sup> Nonetheless the startling alteration of Cree culture from a forest people to a plains society in less than 100 years is remarkable, and their later demoralization, and destitution was indeed a human tragedy.

Throughout the 1860's the Indians of the Canadian plains continued their nomadic existence of buffalo hunting, and trading at the Hudson's Bay Company posts. The Cree and Blackfoot conducted a formal, almost ritualistic style of warfare, which was often broken to allow both sides to hunt and to continue unhindered their profitable trade with the whiteman. Peace was established for this purpose in 1863 so that both groups could trade at Fort Pitt, and a further cessation was arranged in the winter of 1864-1865 so that the Blackfoot could follow the buffalo north and hunt. Another truce was negotiated in the Peace Hills on the Battle River in 1867 because both the Cree and Blackfoot wished to hunt buffalo, and the Blackfoot were particularly anxious to trade that season at Edmonton. The buffalo were clearly the Plains Indians cattle, and all bands understood and respected the importance of this animal resource. The Indian was always a conscientious economist of the food supply, and although he killed to provide for the wants of his camp, he made positive efforts to control and maintain the numbers in the various buffalo herds.<sup>7</sup>

This exciting cultural and historical Cree background exerted a profound influence on the thinking of Big Bear. Prior to the 1860's he wintered with his family at Jackfish Lake, just north of Battleford, and traded at Fort Carlton. But in 1865, as a headman of a small, yet permanent band of about twelve lodges, he shifted to the Fort Pitt region. Here he became recognized as a leader of considerable ability and stature, and a man uncompromisingly wedded to the old way of life. By white standards Big Bear was a non-progressive, a traditionalist whose philosophy of life was directly opposed to the policy of the Canadian Government which "was designed to lead the Indian people by degrees to mingle with the white race in the ordinary avocations of life."<sup>8</sup> The apprehensions of this Cree leader regarding the inexorable advance of civilization, with all its destructive qualities for Plains Indian life, were accentuated by a surprising and ruthless invasion of American whites from the south. For the Indians of the Canadian plains a new dawn of civilization was to break upon them.

In the late 1860's a host of whiskey traders, many of them ex-soldiers from the American Civil War, poured into the Canadian plains from Montana, lusting for a quick profit through illicit trade with the Indians. These Americans quickly usurped the trading monopoly of the Hudson's Bay Company, who had abandoned the use of liquor in trade since 1860. Indeed, the Company had made great strides in attempting to preserve the Indian's sense of traditional value through a policy

<sup>6</sup>Diamond Jenness, *Indians of Canada*, Ottawa, 1932, 316-317; and Alvin M. Josephy, *The Indian Heritage of America*, New York, 1968, 70.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, 49-50; and Frank G. Roe, *The North American Buffalo: A Critical Study of the Species in Its Wild State*, Toronto, 1951, 656.

<sup>8</sup>*Canadian Sessional Papers (C.S.P.)*, 1871, No. 23.

of justice and integrity. But, the Company could not compete against “whoop-up bug juice”—a mixture containing a quart of whiskey, a pound of chewing tobacco, a handful of red pepper, a bottle of Jamaica ginger, and a quart of molasses, all diluted with water, heated to make it true firewater, and then sold by the mugful.

The whole current of trade in the Canadian West had changed. In 1870 the Blackfoot, and some Cree bands, refused to appear at the Hudson's Bay Company posts, preferring to trade with the Americans instead. As early as 1871 Lieutenant William Butler wrote that: “the Saskatchewan is without law, order or security for life or property . . .;”<sup>9</sup> and Colonel Robertson Ross reported in 1872 that: “the demoralization of the Indians and injury resulting to the country from this illicit traffic are very great.”<sup>10</sup> Orgies and killings became common, and drunken brawls frequently broke out between Blackfoot and Cree at the various trading posts. Whiskey was openly sold to the Indians at Fort Edmonton, as Americans showed a complete disdain for the sovereignty of the Canadian West. They told indignant Hudson's Bay Company employees and other officials that since there was no force in the country to prevent them “they would do just as they pleased.”<sup>11</sup>

The centre of American trading activity was Fort Whoop-Up in the Cypress Hills of southern Alberta. In addition, the whiskey men established themselves as such colorful stations as Robber's Roost, Whiskey Gap, and Slide-Out. It was indeed the ‘wild west’. An oft-quoted but probably apocryphal letter said to have been written from Whoop-Up country in 1873 contained the following news:

Dear Friend:

My partner Will Geary got to putting on airs and I shot him and he is dead—the potatoes are looking well—

Yours truly,  
Snookum Jim.<sup>12</sup>

Such was life in Whoop-Up country.

The chaos and anarchy reached a zenith in May of 1873. While encamped in the Cypress Hills, Little Soldier's band of Canadian Assiniboine and a group of American traders began to drink themselves into oblivion. One of the traders accused the Indians of stealing a horse (the animal in question was apparently grazing on a nearby hill), and a fight ensued. The firepower of the whites soon drove the warriors from the camp, and later that evening, reinforced by a more plentiful supply of alcohol, the Americans rushed the near defenceless village, violated a number of squaws, and murdered about thirty old men and women.<sup>13</sup> The traders returned to Montana and were hailed as heroes.

<sup>9</sup>Public Archives of Canada (P.A.C.), C.O. 42/698. William Butler, *Report on the North-West* 10 March 1871.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, C.O. 42/715. Robertson Ross, *Report on the North-West Provinces and Territories*, 10 December 1872.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup>Quoted in: W. G. Hardy, *From Sea Unto Sea*, New York, 1960, 288; see also, Paul Sharp, *Whoop-Up Country: The Canadian American West, 1865-1885*, Minneapolis, 1955.

<sup>13</sup>For details see: George F. G. Stanley, *The Birth of Western Canada*, Toronto, 1936; 199, 429-430.

The Cypress Hills Massacre, the reports of Butler and Ross, the urgent solicitation of Alexander Morris, the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba and the North-West Territories, and the mounting cries of protest from Hudson's Bay Company officials and concerned Canadian settlers, finally prompted Ottawa to establish a federal police force to supervise and maintain law and order in the Dominion's West. The arrival of the North West Mounted Police in Whoop-Up country in the autumn of 1874 soon rid the area of the whiskey traders, and of that sense of violence so characteristic of the American west. But the years of ruthless exploitation of the Canadian plains tribes by the whiskey traders had resulted in mental anxieties and severe sociological difficulties for the Indians. The reconciliation of the needs of a native society with the demands of the incipient beginnings of a modern civilization in the North-West became a problem of paramount importance. For the Canadian West, 1870 to 1885 was a period of transition. In 1870 the plains were covered with buffalo, and the Indian was the supreme monarch; by 1885 prosperous villages and towns stood where only a few years ago the Indian had pitched his skin tepee.<sup>14</sup> As a result of these circumstances the policy finally adopted by Canada in regard to the plains tribes was to acknowledge Indian title to the land, and to negotiate formal surrenders of specific areas. The Indians concerned were to agree to cede all proprietary claims in the region defined by the treaty, and in return would receive promises of a reserve of their choosing, financial annuities, and practical assistance to help them adapt to an agrarian economy.<sup>15</sup> Between 1871 and 1877, as part of the successful implementation of this policy, seven treaties were negotiated with the Cree, Blackfoot, Assiniboine, Saulteaux, and Ojibway living between the Lake of the Woods and the Rocky Mountains.

For the Plains Cree Treaty Six, signed by most chiefs at Fort Carlton on 23 and 28 August and at Fort Pitt on 9 September 1876, was a death blow to the continuation of their traditional existence. By ceding 121,000 acres of land, and accepting reserves and the Queen's payment, the Cree, perhaps unwittingly, had guaranteed their future status as wards of the state. Nonetheless at Fort Carlton during the previous summer, Big Bear made strenuous attempts to deter the chiefs from negotiating any treaty with the whites, and acting as spokesman for a large group of malcontent Indians, told the government representatives that:

We want none of the Queen's presents; when we set a fox trap we scatter pieces of meat all round, but when the fox gets into the trap we knock him on the head; we want no bait . . . .<sup>16</sup>

Unlike many of the other Cree band leaders, Big Bear was not prepared to hurriedly sign treaties which would mean the end of his people's independence, land, and birthright. The treaty provisions provided the Indians with annuity payments, agricultural tools, livestock, a medicine chest, and of vital significance, aid and

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*, 193.

<sup>15</sup>G. F. G. Stanley, *Louis Riel*, Toronto, 1963; 254.

<sup>16</sup>*C.S.P.*, 1876, No. 9, Speech of Big Bear, Fort Carlton, 23 October 1875 and Alexander Morris, *The Treaties of Canada with the Indians*, Toronto, 1880; 174.

rations in the future event of "any pestilence" or "general famine."<sup>17</sup> Yet Big Bear remained stubbornly aloof and refused to sign. He hoped to arrange better terms with the Canadian government and preserve his race from complete subjugation.<sup>18</sup>

The stand of Big Bear at Fort Carlton earned him the respect and admiration of other 'uncooperative' Indians. Reinforced by the bands of two other treaty holdouts, Little Pine and Lucky Man, Big Bear trekked south to the Cypress Hills to hunt and contemplate. Because the Police were able to precede settlement in the Canadian West, they were able to maintain order, and aided by the Hudson's Bay Company, a sense of honesty and justice was established in managing Indian Affairs. But at the same time, owing to the slow development of the Canadian West, those native bands who refused to sign treaties and select a reserve, because of the vast emptiness of the North-West, were able to continue unmolested their old nomadic habits of hunting buffalo, and moving as the season or hunt demanded. The Canadian government made little or no attempt to curb the wanderings of these 'independent' bands.

In the Cypress Hills Big Bear and his followers met kindred spirits such as Piapot's Cree, and Assiniboine and Saulteaux, in all over 2,000 restless Indians. A further and alarming increase of numbers occurred in December when Sitting Bull and 1,500 hostile Sioux, fresh from the Custer fight, ducked across the border into the sanctuary of Canada, and took up residence at Wood Mountain, south-east of the Hills. The five-year visit of the Sioux in Canada was surprisingly uneventful, but the addition of these American Indians drastically accentuated the problem of feeding the tribes, a situation caused by the unbelievable extermination of the buffalo.

Prior to the 1870's an acute depletion of the mighty buffalo herds was considered unthinkable by most people. Travellers noted with awe the vast numbers of these animals. Along the North Saskatchewan in 1848 Paul Kane was astonished to see the buffalo "covering the plains as far as the eye could reach, and so numerous were they that at times they impeded our progress, filling the air with dust almost to suffocation."<sup>19</sup> In September of 1857 Captain John Palliser found the plains black with buffalo between the South Saskatchewan and Fort Carlton.<sup>20</sup> Even as late as 1874 Cecil Denny of the North West Mounted Police recorded "thousands upon thousands of buffalo, as far as the eye could see."<sup>21</sup> near the Cypress Hills; and at Buffalo Lake, Alberta in the winter of 1874-1875 Sam Steele of the Mounties also reported "vast numbers of buffalo."<sup>22</sup>

<sup>17</sup>For treaty Six (1876) see: *Copy of Treaty Six Between Her Majesty the Queen and the Plain and Wood Cree Indians and Other Tribes of Indians at Fort Carlton, Fort Pitt and Battle River with Adhesions*, Ottawa, 1964; and *Canada: Indian Treaties and Surrenders, 1680 to 1890*, Ottawa, 1905, II, 35-44.

<sup>18</sup>W. B. Fraser, "Big Bear, Indian Patriot," *Alberta Historical Review*, Spring, 1966, 5.

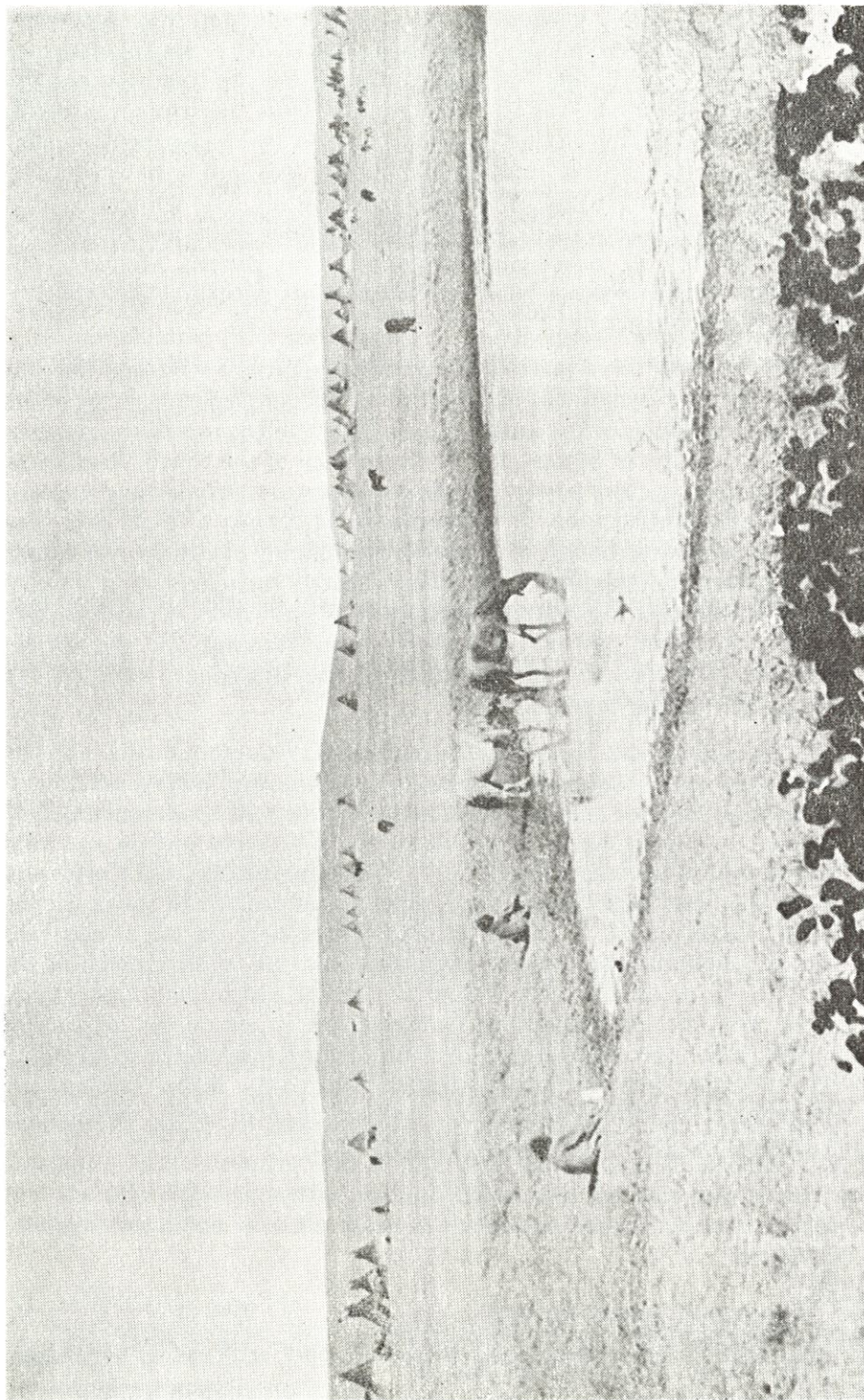
<sup>19</sup>Quoted in: Paul Kane, *Wanderings of an Artist . . .*, Toronto, 1859, 130-131.

<sup>20</sup>Roe, *op. cit.*, 362; from *Palliser Journals*, 54, 57, 84.

<sup>21</sup>Quoted in: Sir Cecil Denny, *The Law Marches West*, Toronto, 1939, 27.

<sup>22</sup>Roe, *op. cit.*, 413; from Sam Steele, *Forty Years in Canada*, 87.





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*Big Bear's Camp; Maple Creek, June 6, 1883.*

But the influx of American whiskey traders and hide hunters who encouraged Indians to hunt for trade goods and alcohol soon resulted in a damaging slaughter of the northern herd. In addition, the steady advance of civilization west and the sight of thousands of buffalo was too much for the white 'sportsman' to resist. Killing for the sake of killing and for the excitement became increasingly popular with the migrants, travellers or tourists. Buffalo Bill was said to have shot 500 buffalo in one day "just for fun".<sup>23</sup> In 1873 sixteen white hide hunters boasted that during the summer they had killed 28,000 buffalo for sport, and for robes.<sup>24</sup> By 1875 the firm of I. G. Baker and Company of Fort Benton, Montana, was shipping 40,000 buffalo robes a year out of the Fort MacLeod and Calgary regions of southern Alberta.<sup>25</sup>

This serious slaughter of the Indian's principal source of food, and the protestations of the band leaders and members of the Indian Department regarding the impending extinction of the buffalo failed to revive Ottawa to the urgency of the problem. Finally, in March of 1877 the Council of the North-West Territories took the initiative and passed a Buffalo Ordinance which declared a closed season on buffalo hunting from 15 November to 14 August of each year. The legislation also prohibited the use of pounds or the running of buffalo over banks, and the indiscriminate slaughter of the animals merely for tongues and robes.<sup>26</sup> Although this Ordinance was the first attempt at conservation, it came too late and proved unsuccessful. By 1877 the Indians were starving, and the few remaining buffalo, contrary to the provisions of the Ordinance, were quickly butchered to feed hungry families.

A further calamitous blow for the Indians of Western Canada was the adoption by the United States of a systematic programme of buffalo extermination. As early as 1867 the touring William Butler was told by American army officers along the North Platte in Nebraska to "Kill every buffalo you can; every buffalo dead is an Indian gone . . ." <sup>27</sup> Following the defeat of Custer and the flight of the Sioux into Canada the United States decided to starve Sitting Bull into surrender. In 1879 a series of prairie fires were started at different points almost simultaneously by the Americans, and the country north of the boundary line was burnt from Wood Mountain on the east to the Rocky Mountains on the west, and as far north as Qu'Appelle.<sup>28</sup> To ensure the destruction of the buffalo, over 5,000 American hunters and skinners were placed strategically in a cordon of camps from the Upper Missouri west to the Idaho dividing line, thus "rendering it impossible for scarcely a single bison to escape through the chain of sentinel camps to the Canadian North-West."<sup>29</sup>

<sup>23</sup>Roe, *op. cit.*, 401.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, 412-413.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, 474.

<sup>26</sup>Stanley, *Birth*, 222-223; Stanley, *Riel*, 255.

<sup>27</sup>Quoted in Roe, *op. cit.*, 358.

<sup>28</sup>P.A.C., C.O. 42 757. Lorne to Beach, 4 and 29 September 1879; and Dewdney to the Super. Gen., 31 Dec. 1880 in C.S.P., VIII (1881), No. 14.

<sup>29</sup>Hornaday, *loc. cit.*, 509.

The selfish actions of the Americans brought complete destitution to the plains tribes of the North-West and rendered the task of the North West Mounted Police almost impossible. In Canada the Cree, Blackfoot, Assiniboine, Saulteaux, and Sioux were all starving. "Not even a rabbit track is to be seen anywhere,"<sup>30</sup> wrote the Hudson's Bay Company factor from Fort Carlton. In a desperate search for food Canadian Indians crossed the border into the United States looking for the diminishing buffalo herds. Near Fort Assiniboine in Montana the Cree band of Chief Thunderchild was found in extreme destitution:

the men were selling their guns and every other article of value to procure food, while the women were prostituting themselves to save their children from starvation . . . The men were weak and emaciated from hunger, and the women and children sick and covered with rags and filth. The Prostitution of the squaws brought the foulest diseases into camp which they had no medical or other means of curing or checking and several deaths had already occurred from this course alone . . .<sup>31</sup>

To help relieve the situation the Canadian government now did everything possible to coax or induce the Indians to settle on their reserves, and to convince them that the days of the buffalo hunt were over. The police and government agents told band leaders that Indian survival depended on the adoption of new methods of livelihood, and they encouraged farming. In 1879 the annuity payments were made at Sounding Lake because many of the Indians wished to stay on the plains and hunt. Big Bear attended the Sounding Lake payments but when he was refused better terms he remained obstinate, and with a sizable group of followers again trekked south. However, Little Pine and Lucky Man, one of Big Bear's headmen, finally succumbed to starvation and at Fort Walsh in July they signed their Adhesion to Treaty Six and received rations.<sup>32</sup>

The increasing defections of bands and chiefs left Big Bear as "the head and soul of our Canadian Plains Indians."<sup>33</sup> This Cree leader symbolized and embodied the last free spirit of the Plains Indians. His band became a beacon for the disaffected and was joined by families from Fort Carlton, Fort Pitt, Sounding Lake and many other areas. Big Bear spent the extremely cold winter of 1879-1880 near the Big Bend of the Milk River in Montana. He had often talked with Sitting Bull at Wood Mountain about the preservation of Indian life and the advance of the whiteman. But in the Milk River region he was in frequent consultation with Louis Riel, the Métis visionary and nationalist who was equally concerned with the maintenance of a Métis existence in the Saskatchewan.<sup>34</sup> These meetings with Sitting Bull and Louis Riel convinced Big Bear that the only effective method of negotiating with the whiteman was through a Confederated union of all the tribes of the North-West. If the tribes could speak

<sup>30</sup>Quoted in Stanley, *Birth*, 224.

<sup>31</sup>Quoted from: Fort Benton Record, Montana, 7 May 1880, in Stanley, *Riel*, 256.

<sup>32</sup>See: *Copy of Treaty Six*, *op. cit.*, 14-15; Little Pine and Lucky Man Adhesions, Fort Walsh, 2 July 1879.

<sup>33</sup>*Saskatchewan Herald*, 24 March 1879.

<sup>34</sup>Stanley, *Riel*, 238.

with one united voice, reasoned the Cree patriot, perhaps better concessions of land, money, and Indian welfare could be achieved.

Throughout 1880 and much of 1881 the rumours of buffalo in the Milk River region of Montana kept several Canadian Indian bands south of the great 'Medicine line'. But Cecil Denny observed in the summer of 1881 that Plains Cree and Assiniboine who had been looking for buffalo along the Missouri River had returned to Fort Walsh in a starving and wretched condition.<sup>35</sup> By the winter of 1881-1882, 5,000 utterly destitute Canadian Indians were clustered around Fort Walsh begging for supplies, and another 4,000 were in American territory vainly searching for buffalo which were no longer there.<sup>36</sup> The bands began again to gather in the Cypress Hills in the summer of 1882 and this concentration of wild and fearless independent Indians with no desire to abandon the old adventuresome and nomadic existence, yet reduced to poverty and starvation, presented a surly and troublesome crowd for the meager forces of the North West Mounted Police to control and ration.

Big Bear passed the summer and autumn of 1882 in the Hills. Many of the other bands, although they had not selected a reserve were nonetheless treaty Indians and thus eligible to collect the government rations. But Big Bear's band was entitled to nothing. Unable to face another bitter winter, and concerned for the needs of his people Big Bear trudged to Fort Walsh in December and reluctantly signed his Adhesion to Treaty Six.<sup>37</sup>

The capitulation of Big Bear was caused by starvation through the loss of the buffalo, the mainstay of Plains Indian life. In 1870 the northern herd numbered in the millions, but the ruthless slaughter of these animals quickly reduced their size. By the autumn of 1883 one old buffalo bull was seen near Souris in western Manitoba. H. W. O. Boger saw the animal in daylight as it crossed his farm. It was trotting and went off Northwest . . . This was the last seen in the region. It was reported in all the newspapers.<sup>38</sup> The Game Report for 1888 recorded 6 buffalo still in existence—2 old bulls in the Wood Mountain district, and 3 cows and a bull between the Red Deer and Battle rivers.<sup>39</sup> From millions to this in less than two decades. The Plains Indian did not stand a chance.

William Hornaday, the American buffalo expert, offered a conclusion:

If ever a thoughtless people were punished for their reckless improvidence, the Indians and half-breeds of the North-West Territories are now paying (1887) the penalty for the wasteful slaughter of the buffalo a few short years ago . . . one can scarcely repress the feeling of grim satisfaction that arises when we also read that many of the ex-slaughterers are almost starving for the millions of pounds of fat and juicy buffalo

<sup>35</sup>Denny, *op. cit.*, 127, 262ff.

<sup>36</sup>C.S.P., 1882, No. 6, Dewdney to Sup. Gen., 1 January 1882.

<sup>37</sup>*Canada: Indian Annuities, 1882, 55-56; P.A.C., Record Group 10, Western (Black File) Series: Indian Affairs, Indian Dept. file 29506-3; Copy of Treaty Six, op. cit., 16; Big Bear Adhesion, Fort Walsh, 8 Dec. 1882.*

<sup>38</sup>Roe, *op. cit.*, 485.

<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.*, 487.



*Annuity time, Fort Pitt, 1884. Big Bear is third from the left.*

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meat they wasted . . . People who are so utterly senseless as to wantonly destroy their own sources of food, as the Indians have done, certainly deserve to starve.<sup>40</sup>

It is utterly incredible that a man of Hornaday's reputation and alleged knowledge could dismiss or ignore the American whiskey traders and hide hunters who descended upon the Canadian West in the 1870's and encouraged, indeed conditioned the Indians into acquiring hides for trade. Trade and sport among the Whites resulted in thousands of buffalo being slaughtered and although the Indian contributed to the extinction by killing for trade and for domestic needs, the ruthlessness of the commercial slaughter for hides, tongues, or sport far outweighed the Indian effort.<sup>41</sup>

With the disappearance of the buffalo forever, and with his Adhesion to Treaty Six, Big Bear led his band to Maple Creek, Saskatchewan where they spent the summer of 1883, devouring government rations and steadily avoiding selecting a reserve. Finally, and only after Indian Commissioner Dewdney promised to provide the Cree leader with a cabin, two horses, a buckboard and harness, a chest of tea, fifty pounds of sugar, twenty-five pounds of tobacco, a shotgun and ammunition, and a suit of clothes, did Big Bear consent to move north and select a reserve.<sup>42</sup> At Fort Pitt in October the 358 members of his band received their annuity payments for that year.<sup>43</sup> But Indian Agent Thomas Quinn reported that "Big Bear does not want to take a reserve this winter," and as a result of this action and as directed, rations would be withheld.<sup>44</sup>

The vacillation of this Cree chief was understandable. He had lived through the demoralization by the whiskey traders and the extermination of the buffalo which had destroyed the last vestige of his traditional lifestyle and reduced his people to poverty and starvation. Then he witnessed the beginnings of white settlement and the initiation of an industrial civilization on the plains. He watched desperate and starving chiefs sign treaties, select isolated reserves, and unsuccessfully attempt to adapt to an agrarian economy. He had no desire to meekly submit to these conditions, and hoping to force better concessions from the Government before his race became an insignificant minority on the plains, Big Bear remained stubbornly aloof and spent the winter of 1883-1884 at Fort Pitt.

But any hopes for Indian improvement were shattered as a result of the North-West tour of Lawrence Vankoughnet, the Deputy Minister of Indian Affairs, in 1883. After inspecting a number of reserves Vankoughnet was convinced that Indian expenditures should be reduced. Thus, and as part of a decline in the national economy, Indian expenses were cut for 1883, 1884 and 1885. The gross reduction in the amount spent upon Indian provisions, annuities,

<sup>40</sup>Hornaday, *loc. cit.*, 526-527; 480-481.

<sup>41</sup>Another minor cause of buffalo extermination was disease. In the upper North Saskatchewan foothills for example, a germ (Hemorrhagic Septicaemia), which flourishes in unclean areas polluted the drinking places, and a number of buffalo died. See: Roe, *op. cit.*, Appendix J.

<sup>42</sup>*Black File*, Vol. 309. Memo of Indian Commissioner, Maple Creek, 12 June 1883.

<sup>43</sup>*Indian Annuities* 1883, 78-79; Big Bear's band paid at Fort Pitt, 2 October 1883.

<sup>44</sup>*Black File*, Vol. 10042, Rae to Dewdney, Battleford, 10 November 1883.

education and farm instruction in 1884 alone, for example, was \$111,649.<sup>45</sup> For the Indians the application of this policy only increased the distress and hardship which the tribes were experiencing. The government's policy of semi-starvation was unanimously condemned in the North-West. Indian Agent Rae at Fort Carlton reported that the Cree were "badly off," but the Assiniboine were "mere skeletons;"<sup>46</sup> and the influential Cecil Denny, now an Agent for the Blackfoot, was so infuriated that he tendered his resignation.

The frustration and mounting Indian resentment against the whiteman encouraged Big Bear in the spring of 1884 to travel to several reserves and plead for unity. In June all the disaffected Indians of the North Saskatchewan assembled at the Poundmaker reserve to discuss relations with the Canadian government and to make plans for a possible Confederation. The excuse offered by the Indians for this large council was the holding of the annual Thirst Dance. The meeting was unfortunately disrupted owing to the arrival of the North West Mounted Police who were called following the assault on farm instructor Craig by a young man of Lucky Man's band who was refused flour. In attempting to arrest the young brave Superintendent Crozier and his detachment were surrounded and jostled by "intensely excited" Indians. Big Bear rushed forward shouting for peace, but his efforts failed to restore order.<sup>47</sup> With their prisoner the police column managed to reach the Agency buildings, but only after throwing provisions of beef and flour to the howling Indians did the noise and angry clamour subside.<sup>48</sup>

The reaction of Big Bear at Poundmaker's clearly indicated that he did not want an Indian uprising. His talks with Sitting Bull and personal awareness forced him to realize that overt resistance to the whiteman would be entirely futile. Rather he hoped for a large Indian Confederation which would be capable of achieving concessions by a potential threat rather than by actual hostilities.<sup>49</sup>

Following the Craig incident Big Bear invited Crozier and Agent Rae to the reserve and expressed his regret for the incident. But at the same time the Cree chief made it clear that he had no thought of abandoning the idea of a united Indian council. Indeed, towards the end of July Big Bear and other chiefs visited Louis Riel at Duck Lake. The rhetoric of this Métis leader encouraged the chiefs to renew their efforts at achieving Indian unity. A large council was subsequently arranged at Fort Carlton and between 31 July and 6 August 1884 chiefs from all over the Saskatchewan voiced their complaints against the Canadian government. Big Bear delivered a scathing denunciation of the lack of good faith of the whites and urged united Indian action. He said in part:

. . . As I see that they are not going to be honest I am afraid to take a reserve. They have given me to choose between several small reserves

<sup>45</sup>Canada, *House of Commons, Debates*, 1885, 3143.

<sup>46</sup>*Black File*, Ind. Dept. file 5307. Rae to Hayter Reed, Asst. Ind. Commissioner, Battleford, 17 January 1883.

<sup>47</sup>*C.S.P.*, 1885, No. 153, Crozier to Irvine, Battleford, 25 June 1884.

<sup>48</sup>*Ibid.*; *Black File*, Vol. 309, Report of 24 July 1884.

<sup>49</sup>See: Stanley, *Birth*, 285-288.

but I feel sad to abandon the liberty of my own land when they come to me and offer me small plots to stay there and in return not to get half of what they have promised me . . .<sup>50</sup>

The Duck Lake and Fort Carlton conferences, and his open defiance in resisting a reserve, enhanced the reputation of Big Bear and his band among the discontented Indians of the North-West. In the autumn he met again with Riel at Prince Albert and then returned to Fort Pitt where his followers, now inflated to 494, received annuity payments. He decided to winter at Frog Lake and Inspector Dickens reported in January that the band was "drawing logs and cutting wood," and would receive rations as a result of this work.<sup>51</sup> During the winter of 1884-1885 Big Bear finally consented to take a reserve in the spring, but he wanted all the Indians to have a reserve at Red Deer, "so that they could be together."<sup>52</sup>

The peaceful ambitions of this Cree chief had caused dissent in his band and throughout the winter the influence and authority of Big Bear steadily diminished. His leadership was replaced by warlike agitators such as Wandering Spirit, Lone Man, Little Poplar, Four-Sky-Thunder, Miserable Man, and even his son Imasees, who were prepared to fight to accomplish a restitution of Indian grievances. The news from Duck Lake exhilarated this hostile faction and convinced them that hope remained, for on 26 March 1885 the Métis had defeated the establishment—the North West Mounted Police. William B. Cameron, the Hudson's Bay Company clerk at Frog Lake, noticed that Big Bear's band and the neighbouring Wood Cree were in council and making proposals of some kind. As he walked home he "had a premonition of evil days at hand and I felt uneasy and depressed."<sup>53</sup>

Among the Plains Cree, April (Aiki Picim) was the month of the frog, and on the morning of 2 April the Indians at the Frog Lake Settlement were unusually aggressive, and demanded that Cameron give them supplies and ammunition. Big Bear, who had just returned from an extended hunting trip, appeared melancholy and spoke sadly and quietly to Cameron and Quinn before proceeding to the house of Mrs. Simpson for his favourite pea soup. About 10:15 a.m. after a considerable amount of moving about, orders, threats and seeming indecision, Wandering Spirit, after a verbal confrontation with Quinn, shot the Agent, and his act signalled the beginning of a massacre of all the whites in the settlement. Big Bear rushed out of Mrs. Simpson's house shouting Tesqua! (Stop!), but the years of hardship, resentment and smouldering hatred for the whiteman unleashed a Cree fury for blood which knew no restraint. Nine whitemen were murdered but Cameron was spared because he was a Hudson's Bay Company man—a friend of the Indian.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>50</sup>Quoted in: *Ibid.*, 290. Supposed speech of Big Bear, Fort Carlton, 31 July 1884; and, *Black File*, Vol. 309, Rae to Dewdney, Prince Albert, 29 July 1884.

<sup>51</sup>*Black File*, Vol. 309. Dickens to Officer commanding at Battleford, Fort Pitt, 12 January 1885.

<sup>52</sup>*Ibid.*, Report of Agent Bygr, Blackfoot Crossing, 25 February 1885.

<sup>53</sup>Quoted in: William B. Cameron, *The War Trail of Big Bear*. London, 1926, 48.

<sup>54</sup>*Ibid.*, 72, 75; Stanley, *Birth*, 339.



Following the massacre the jubilant Cree returned to their camp with Cameron and two white women from the settlement and celebrated their victory by feasting, dancing and slaughtering cattle from horseback, as reminiscent of past glorious buffalo days. Big Bear told the prisoners that he was "sorry" for what happened, and had cried over it, but that he had many bad men in his band and had no control over them. He informed Cameron that he was not a bad Indian and not a noisy drunk but "used to sit quietly and sing."<sup>55</sup> Although he remained the nominal leader and his name brought fear to all white civilians who heard it during the course of the North-West Rebellion, the real direction of leadership had shifted to Wandering Spirit.

During the ten days following the news of the Frog Lake Massacre the civil and military inhabitants of nearby Fort Pitt remained in constant fear of being attacked. Finally, on 13 April Big Bear and 250 warriors appeared before the fort and demanded surrender. Dickens refused, but acceded to their request for tea, tobacco, clothing, kettles and a blanket for Big Bear who complained that "he was very cold."<sup>56</sup> W. J. McLean, the Hudson's Bay Company trader at the post, agreed to go and parley with the Cree. The Indians promised McLean that unless the civilians surrendered and the police left, they would attack the fort. Dickens was prepared to fight, but the twenty-eight civilians decided to accept the Indian offer and prevent further blood-shed. Big Bear implored the commandant by way of letter to evacuate Fort Pitt: "Try and get away before the afternoon as the younger men are all wild and hard to keep in hand."<sup>57</sup> Accordingly the police detachment quickly evacuated the post and floated down the North Saskatchewan to Battleford on a leaky scow. The civilians warily trudged to the camp of Big Bear and eventually spent two months in captivity. The Indians concluded by gleefully pillaging and burning the empty fort.

In spite of the successes at Duck Lake, Frog Lake and Fort Pitt, a general uprising of the Indians of the Canadian plains failed to materialize. Although there were rumblings of discontent throughout the Saskatchewan, fear, potential danger and even some minor thievery, only a few Cree bands actually left their reserves in open support of the Métis. Of vital significance was the maintenance of a pacifistic policy by Crowfoot and the Blackfoot Confederacy to the South. In addition, the speedy arrival of troops from the East via the nearly completed Canadian Pacific Railway aided in discouraging any spreading of rebellion. The early surrenders of Riel and Poundmaker on 15 May and 26 May of 1885 left only the isolated and now somewhat bewildered band of Big Bear with which to contend.

Since the Fort Pitt affair Miserable Man and others, contrary to the wishes of Big Bear had tried to link with Poundmaker, but the aggressive, eager, and war-like Plains Cree section had increasingly alienated their recent allies, the now sullen and apathetic Wood Cree who had never been too excited about the

<sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*, 75; and, Theresa Gowanlock, *Two Months in the Camp of Big Bear*, Parkdale, 1885, 29

<sup>56</sup>Stanley, *Birth.*, 341.

<sup>57</sup>Cameron, *op. cit.*, 111-112.

prospect of rebellion. Relations between the two bands had become so strained that they no longer camped together but in separate groups. The news of the capitulation of Riel and Poundmaker only heightened the animosity. In consequence, at Frenchman's Butte, twelve miles east of Fort Pitt, a Thirst Dance was arranged in order to restore unity of spirit and harmony between the Plains and Wood Cree. But the dance was interrupted by the column of Brigadier General 'Tom' Strange which had marched from Calgary, and then Edmonton in pursuit of the 'rebel' Indians.

Although the Cree were surprised, they quickly took up a position in a line of recently constructed rifle-pits along the north bank of Red Deer Creek. Wandering Spirit demonstrated a reckless bravery by exposing himself to the fire of the whites, and his efforts inspired the Plains Cree who shouted "Astom Schmognus, Asum Pugumawa" (Come on whiteman and fight).<sup>58</sup> Little Poplar induced the Wood Cree to support their brothers and they consented. The combined Cree force, although suffering somewhat from the bursts of the artillery shells, checked the frontal assault of Strange. Fearful of "committing a Custer" the commander of this Alberta Field Force withdrew and allowed Big Bear to escape north.<sup>59</sup>

But the mounted scouts of Major Sam Steele were despatched in pursuit and after a relentless chase through wooded and muskeg-riddled country a skirmish was fought near Loon Lake on 4 June. Little Poplar and Lone Man were prominent in this engagement, and when the whites again retired the Indians continued their now aimless wanderings. After the Steele fight the camp disintegrated, with Wandering Spirit and the Wood Cree continuing north in the direction of Cold Lake, and the plains band turning east. Wandering Spirit eventually capitulated later in June at Fort Pitt and Four-Sky-Thunder, Miserable Man and others surrendered at Battleford. Big Bear led his youngest son, Horse Child, and a councillor, unobserved to Fort Carlton where on 2 July the proud and stoic old chief gave himself up to Sergeant Smart of the North West Mounted Police.<sup>60</sup>

The surrenders were followed by the trial of the principal Indian leaders for their part in the Rebellion. They were not punished with vindictive severity. Big Bear's band, for example, was deprived of their annuities for 1885 and 1886 and then merged with several other Cree bands, thus destroying the main nucleus of Indian agitation.<sup>61</sup> Wandering Spirit and Miserable Man were condemned to death by hanging for the murders at Frog Lake. Four-Sky-Thunder was given fourteen years (commuted to six) for burning the Roman Catholic Church at Frog Lake. Lone Man was not caught until January of 1886, when he was recognized while walking the streets of Edmonton. He was sentenced to six years in

<sup>58</sup>Quoted in: Joseph Hicks, "With Hatten's Scouts in Pursuit of Big Bear," *Alberta Historical Review*, Summer, 1970, 17.

<sup>59</sup>For the Battle of Frenchman's Butte, 28 May 1885, see: Stanley, *Birth*, 374; Cameron, *op. cit.*, 189-193.

<sup>60</sup>Cameron, *op. cit.*, 221.

<sup>61</sup>Stanley, *Birth*, 379; *Indian Annuities 1885 and 1886*, 277-281; 251-255.

the Manitoba Penitentiary. Imasees, Little Poplar, Lucky Man and other fugitives escaped to Montana. In 1886 Little Poplar was shot and killed; and in 1896, after negotiations with the United States, Imasees and Lucky Man were allowed to return to Canada and settle on their old reserves.

Big Bear was charged with treason-felony and sentenced to three years at Stony Mountain Penitentiary. While serving his term he capitulated completely to the white world by accepting baptism into the Roman Catholic Church. Spiritually crushed at the irretrievable loss of a traditional life-style of buffalo and freedom, and disillusioned because of his inability to achieve a united Confederation for his people, the old chief lost the will to live. He was returned to the Little Pine reserve in 1887, but Agent Williams reported that although sick he "refused medical aid."<sup>62</sup> In the winter of 1887-1888 he died quietly. Like Pontiac, Joseph Brant, Tecumseh, Crowfoot, Poundmaker and others, Big Bear was placed by Providence among the riches of the new world only to enjoy them for a season, he was merely to wait until others came.

R. S. Allen

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<sup>62</sup> *Black File*, Vol. 309. Williams to Dewdney, Battleford, 25 January 1888.

## Religious and Racial Influences on a Senate Appointment, 1931

THE FEAR OF religious and racial controversy in Canada has long haunted our political leaders and R. B. Bennett was no exception. In 1930, Bennett could find in Canadian history numerous examples where such religious and racial eruptions had threatened the very existence of one or other of Canada's federal political parties. Several provincial governments, too, had their share of such problems, and, more often than not, the religious or racial controversies which had their origins within provincial boundaries spilled out onto the national scene, causing difficulties for the federal party most vitally concerned. Two of the more familiar controversies which had such an impact on the federal scene were the Manitoba School question in the 1890's and the Ontario School crisis in the years following the 1912 enactment of Regulation 17.

Unfortunately R. B. Bennett was to encounter a somewhat similar religious and racial controversy originating in Saskatchewan. Once again, school legislation which was considered to be anti-Catholic and anti-French was the major culprit, and this in turn contributed immeasurably to a prolonged and bitter debate over the first Senate appointment to be made in Saskatchewan by the Bennett government. Significantly, at no time in the early stages of the religious-racial controversy in Saskatchewan did Bennett see it as anything but a religious problem. It was not until after the Anderson government had amended the School Act for a second time, in late February, 1931, that it was brought forcefully to the Prime Minister's attention that what had developed in Saskatchewan was not only a religious but also a racial struggle, which could seriously endanger the very existence of his government. Then, and only then, did he begin to consider the appointment of a French Canadian to the Senate as a means of countering the violent French Canadian reaction to the school legislation.

In Saskatchewan over a number of years, certain elements within the Conservative party had been identified frequently with a strong anti-foreign and anti-Catholic attitude. In the late 1920's when it made its appearance in the province, the Ku Klux Klan fostered and exploited this feeling. The Klan found a receptive audience when they attacked the growing sectarianism in the public school system. For many Conservatives resentment against the influence of the Roman Catholic Church developed into antagonism against individual adherents of that church, and it was not long before life-long Catholic Conservatives began to feel unwelcome in the party.

The Ku Klux Klan had made its first Canadian appearance in Toronto in 1925, but it was not until 1927 that it made any inroads into Saskatchewan. That summer two Klansmen, Scott and Emmons, criss-crossed the province selling memberships and stirring up interest in the Klan, only to disappear across the American border in the fall, taking all the membership fees with them. The following year, after this rather dubious beginning, the Klan was re-organized in

the province under Dr. J. H. Hawkins and J. J. Maloney, a one-time Jesuit seminarian, and in the summer of 1928 it achieved its greatest prominence, its organizers claiming to have seventy thousand members. While it is likely that this figure is greatly exaggerated, the Klan did raise nearly fifty thousand dollars from membership fees and other donations. The Klan disappeared as a force almost as quickly as it had risen, and by the fall of 1929 its momentum was spent<sup>1</sup> but the animosity and bitterness which it had fostered lingered on.

Many prominent members of the Conservative Party in Saskatchewan were known to be sympathetic to the aims of the Klan, although only one leading member, Dr. W. D. Cowan, admitted to being a member.<sup>2</sup> It was at the Conservative party convention in Saskatoon in March, 1928, that, in the minds of many, the fortunes of the Klan and the Conservative party became intertwined.

This convention, attended by three hundred and fifty delegates, was considered by most of those in attendance to be a highly successful affair, particularly for a party which had not been in power since the formation of the province twenty-three years before. A personal contribution of one thousand dollars from the federal party leader, R. B. Bennett, had helped to ease the financial burden of the convention, and enthusiasm for the party and its policies was manifest in all quarters.<sup>3</sup> Many of the delegates were members of the Klan and, indeed, a Klan convention was held in Saskatoon at the same time as the Conservative convention, enabling many delegates to attend both meetings. Although the Klan purported to have no political affiliations, Klan literature was available both at the door and within the convention hall where the Conservative delegates were meeting. The availability of this literature was not authorized by Dr. J. T. M. Anderson, the provincial party leader, nor by the convention organizer, F. R. MacMillan, but neither man apparently made any move to stop its distribution until the supply of literature was all but exhausted.<sup>4</sup>

There were only three Catholic delegates at the convention, but all three men were prominent party workers who were well known to most of the other delegates. They were Joseph Foley from North Battleford, J. J. Leddy from Saskatoon, and A. G. MacKinnon from Regina. The latter two, in particular, left the convention with great bitterness in their hearts.

Leddy had been nominated as a member of the Advisory Council, but was subsequently asked by the chairman of the nominating committee to withdraw his name, being told by the latter that it was considered "inexpedient that any Catholic should hold office in this organization."<sup>5</sup> Leddy refused to withdraw and,

<sup>1</sup>Patrick Kyba, "Ku Klux Klan," in *Politics in Saskatchewan*, Toronto, Longmans, 1968, pp. 108-11.

<sup>2</sup>Public Archives of Canada, R. B. Bennett Papers, (unless otherwise indicated all subsequent quotations are from the Bennett Papers). M. A. MacPherson to Bennett, April 7, 1928; J. F. Bryant to Bennett, May 31, 1928, pp. 24994-25001.

<sup>3</sup>Bennett to F. R. MacMillan, February 9, 1928, p. 24897.

<sup>4</sup>J. Harvey Hearn to Bennett, March 28, 1928, p. 24987. J. J. Leddy to Bennett, March 28, 1928, p. 24992. A. G. MacKinnon to Bennett, March 28, 1928, p. 25003.

<sup>5</sup>Hearn to Bennett, March 28, 1928, p. 24987.

in an unprecedented move, the Chairman re-opened nominations, and in the election which was then held, Leddy was soundly defeated.

A. G. MacKinnon had been nominated for an executive position in another committee, but when the list of nominees was read out, his name was missing and the name of another delegate inserted in its place. It was later reported that the Chairman of the meeting "thought" he had read out MacKinnon's name, although a second report stated that his name was omitted due to a simple clerical error when the list of nominees was being typed. However it was done, there was little doubt in anyone's mind that MacKinnon was eliminated from the committee because he was a Catholic, and not, as was claimed, because of the accidental omission of his name. The result of it all, however, was that not one Roman Catholic was appointed to any of the fifty-seven executive or committee positions filled at the 1928 convention, and it was this fact, more than personal disappointment, which aroused the ire of both Leddy and MacKinnon. Leddy, in particular, recognized the political dangers inherent in the Conservative party being branded as anti-Catholic, and he was not alone in this fear. M. A. MacPherson, a prominent Regina lawyer and one of four Conservative members in the provincial legislature, wrote to Mr. Bennett after the convention and expressed a deep concern that the up-coming provincial election would develop into a religious, rather than a political, struggle.<sup>6</sup>

It was only after many reports of the convention had reached him in Ottawa that Mr. Bennett became aware of the depth of the anti-Catholic feeling amongst so many of his party workers in Saskatchewan. He expressed his concern to Dr. Anderson, but the latter denied any responsibility whatever for the developing religious controversy, stating firmly that he had always taken the stand "that we should not discuss religion in any shape or form." Anderson laid the blame for whatever animosity had developed squarely at the feet of Premier Gardiner and Dr. Uhrich, the Minister of Public Health, who had made a vicious and "entirely unwarranted" attack on the Ku Klux Klan on the floor of the legislature.<sup>7</sup> James Bryant, President of the Conservative Association of Regina and a popular platform speaker, also denied the seriousness of the situation, pointing out instead that the Conservative Party need not worry about alienating the Roman Catholics because it did not get their votes in any event.<sup>8</sup> This was hardly the type of reassurance the federal leader was seeking, and, referring to the fact that no Roman Catholic had been elected to office at the convention, Bennett was moved to remark that their exclusion "could not have been wholly accidental."<sup>9</sup>

Mr. Bennett realized, only too clearly, that a religious controversy in Saskatchewan, if allowed to get out of hand, could spell doom for the Conservative

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<sup>6</sup>Hearn to Bennett, March 28, 1928, p. 24987. Leddy to Bennett, March 28, 1928, p. 24992. MacPherson to Bennett, April 7, 1928, pp. 24994-25001.

<sup>7</sup>J. T. M. Anderson to Bennett, April 13, 1928, p. 25022. Anderson to Bennett, May 4, 1928, p. 25049.

<sup>8</sup>Bryant to Bennett, April 11, 1928, p. 25014.

<sup>9</sup>Bennett to Anderson, May 8, 1928, p. 25051.

party federally. "It would be," he wrote, "nothing short of a national calamity if a religious quarrel were to develop in the province of Saskatchewan. . . ." <sup>10</sup> "Nothing could be more injurious to this country than that religious differences should become the line of division between political parties." <sup>11</sup>

It did not ease Bennett's mind any when, two months after the convention the Gardiner government brought Hugh "Pat" Emmons back to Regina to face charges arising from his disappearance with the Klan funds the previous year. In one of his affidavits, Emmons attempted to connect Anderson with the Klan, stating that Anderson had made attempts, although admittedly unsuccessful ones, to see him in Moose Jaw the previous year. The intimation was that Anderson was a member, or a potential member, of the Klan, and even Bryant, who had acted for the Klan in a legal case, admitted that the charges, if true, would place the Conservative party in a very awkward position. <sup>12</sup> Anderson, of course, denied having any connection whatsoever with the Klan, and when none of Emmon's charges were substantiated, the whole affair was considered by many people to have been an attempt on the part of the Liberal government to "smear" Anderson. Nevertheless, Mr. Bennett felt it necessary to point out to Anderson that it would require "very great effort on your part to dissipate the impression that has gone abroad regarding your attitude towards our Roman Catholic friends." <sup>13</sup>

By the spring of 1929, Bennett felt he had less reason to be concerned about the situation in Saskatchewan. Dr. Anderson had written that "our Roman Catholic friends are beginning to see we are not the monsters of intolerance our opposition paint us," <sup>14</sup> and the federal leader had replied, with obvious relief, "Few things have pleased me more than hearing that our Roman Catholic friends no longer regard you as a bigot." <sup>15</sup> In the midst of the provincial election campaign, however, Bennett received a letter from F. R. MacMillan, the provincial party president, asking him to write a "note of caution" to James Bryant who, he said, "was inclined to go too far." <sup>16</sup> Bennett's attitude towards religion in politics could be summed up in the words he wrote to Bryant:

. . . How desirous I think it is that the greatest moderation should be observed in dealing with our Roman Catholic friends . . . they probably won't support us, but we shouldn't arouse religious feelings for political purposes by addresses from the public platform. . . . It is not conducive to the best interests of the country, and my observation is that in the end it does not assist the Party whose friends make such addresses. <sup>17</sup>

Although Bryant accepted the advice with good grace, promising to be "as careful as possible under all the circumstances" <sup>18</sup> it became increasingly obvious to many

<sup>10</sup>Bennett to MacKinnon, April 3, 1928, p. 25007.

<sup>11</sup>Bennett to MacMillan, May 14, 1928, p. 25058.

<sup>12</sup>Bryant to Bennett, May 31, 1928, p. 25113.

<sup>13</sup>Bennett to Anderson, May 8, 1928, p. 25051.

<sup>14</sup>Anderson to Bennett, May 6, 1929, p. 25259.

<sup>15</sup>Bennett to Anderson, May 11, 1929, p. 25267.

<sup>16</sup>MacMillan to Bennett, May 8, 1929, p. 25249.

<sup>17</sup>Bennett to Bryant, May 13, 1929, p. 25255.

<sup>18</sup>Bryant to Bennett, May 16, 1929, p. 25280.

observers on the provincial scene that the anti-Catholic feelings fostered by the presence of the Klan in the province had by no means disappeared.

The results of the June 6 election in Saskatchewan brought great jubilation in Conservative party ranks. Although they failed to elect an over-all majority in the sixty-three seat legislature, it was confidently expected that with the support of the four Progressives and the six Independents elected most of whom had been financed by the Conservatives, the Conservative party would head the next government.<sup>19</sup> In spite of subsequent declarations by the Progressives and Independents that they would support a Co-operative government under Dr. Anderson, Gardiner refused to resign until he had met the new legislature in a special session.

The session opened on September 4, and following a defeat on its nomination for Speaker and on a non-confidence vote, the Liberal government resigned, and Dr. Anderson was sworn in as Premier and leader of the Co-operative government.<sup>20</sup> James Bryant was named to the portfolio of Public Works, M. A. MacPherson became Attorney General, Howard McConnell, Anderson's running mate in Saskatoon, Provincial Treasurer, and A. C. Stewart, a fiery Independent from Yorkton, became Minister of Highways.<sup>21</sup>

The abolition of sectarianism in the public schools in the province had been one of the major planks in the Conservative party platform, and one of the first pieces of legislation and certainly the most controversial to be introduced by the Anderson government at the first session of the new legislature was the proposed school legislation. Premier Anderson also acted as Minister of Education, and he approached the school question with the knowledge gained from having been a provincial school inspector for many years in districts which contained a large percentage of non-English speaking settlers. At the Conservative convention in March, 1928, several resolutions concerning the School Act had been passed, and in February, 1929, Dr. Anderson had introduced a bill in the legislature which would have removed all religious emblems from the public schools and prohibited anyone wearing religious garb from teaching in the public schools.<sup>22</sup> The bill was, of course, defeated by the very large majority which the Liberals had at that time, but questions arising from the proposed amendments had played a prominent part in the election campaign which followed.<sup>23</sup>

The *cause célèbre* of the school controversy was the Gouverneur School District court case of 1928. The Ku Klux Klan had retained James Bryant to defend Protestant parents prosecuted under the Truancy Act for removing their children (fifteen in all) from the Gouverneur School, located in a predominantly French Canadian district in south-western Saskatchewan. It was the claim of the Protestant parents that although it was a public school, the flag, normally located

<sup>19</sup>MacMillan to Gen. A. D. McRae, June 18, 1929, p. 25350.

<sup>20</sup>Anderson to Bennett, September 4, 1929, p. 25362.

<sup>21</sup>*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, (C.A.R.), 1929-1930, Toronto, Canadian Review Company, 1931, p. 491.

<sup>22</sup>Leddy to Bennett, January 23, 1929, p. 24890. *Star Phoenix*, Saskatoon, January 22, 1929, p. 24891.

<sup>23</sup>Leddy to Bennett, February 1, 1929, p. 25188.



at the front of the school, had been moved to the back and replaced by a crucifix, and that catechism was being taught for the last half hour of the day and French for the first hour, without a resolution permitting this from the school board, as required in the School Act.<sup>24</sup> They complained, too, that their children were learning to cross themselves, and that in certain instances, Protestant children had been forced to kneel in front of the crucifix for half an hour at a time as punishment for some misdemeanor. Repeated complaints to the Minister of Education had brought no results, so the parents had withdrawn their children from school. Bryant had managed to have the action of truancy brought against his clients dismissed, however, on the grounds that the school had ceased to be a public school when the regulations under the School Act were not properly carried out.<sup>25</sup>

No doubt, this case was still fresh in Premier Anderson's mind when he introduced his seven Bills relating to the school question. Four of the Bills were not contested,<sup>26</sup> but a section specifying that school trustees must be able to read and write English and that school meetings must be conducted in English ran into so much opposition that it was amended to permit exceptions upon the certificate of a school inspector for the district concerned. The most contentious of the Bills, however, was that dealing with religious emblems and religious garb in the public schools.<sup>27</sup> Dr. Anderson was adamant that this section be passed without alteration, in spite of criticism from Roman Catholics within his own party, and a recommendation for less rigidity from Mr. Bennett.

J. J. Leddy had no quarrel with the removal of religious emblems from public schools in districts where there were no Protestant separate schools, but he objected very strongly to the exclusion of anyone wearing religious garb from teaching in the public schools. In Leddy's view, this was simply a means of forcing the religious sisters out of the public schools, particularly in the northern part of the province. He cited the example of Duck Lake, where there was a Protestant separate school and only Catholic children attended the public school, as an example of the unjustness of the proposed legislation.<sup>28</sup> At Leddy's suggestion, and unquestionably because he was concerned about the repercussions of the school legislation in other parts of the country, Mr. Bennett discussed the school situation with Premier Anderson and endeavored to convince him that some exception to the legislation for areas such as Duck Lake would not only be fair, but politically expedient. Anderson, however, remained firm there would be no exceptions for the few Catholic public schools in existence.<sup>29</sup> The legislation was

<sup>24</sup>C. B. Sissons, *Church and State in Canadian Education*, Toronto, Ryerson, 1959, p. 293. An amendment to the School Act, introduced by the Liberal premier W. M. Martin in 1918, specified, "When the Board of any District passes a Resolution to that effect, the French language may be taught as a subject, for a period not exceeding one hour in each day."

<sup>25</sup>Bryant to Bennett, May 16, 1928, p. 24954.

<sup>26</sup>The Superannuation Act, the School Attendance Act, amendments to the School Grants Act and to the School Assessment Act.

<sup>27</sup>CAR, 1930, p. 483.

<sup>28</sup>Leddy to Bennett, November 6, 1929, p. 25469. Leddy to MacPherson, February 17, 1930, p. 25516.

<sup>29</sup>Bennett to Leddy, March 17, 1930, p. 25518.

intended, he said, "to cure intolerable conditions in a small minority of our public school districts which led to not only ill feeling but to actual strife and law-breaking." The Premier obviously felt that his government, rather than the newly-elected federal Conservative government, was in a much better position to judge the effects of the school legislation:

I feel sure that if Saskatchewan is permitted to compose its own difficulties in this delicate matter a condition of peace and a sense of union will quickly supplant the strife and bitterness which in the past have prevailed in certain isolated areas.<sup>30</sup>

Perhaps a "condition of peace and a sense of union" might have prevailed had Dr. Anderson been content with the changes he had already introduced. Early in 1931, however, as a result of the findings of a study of elementary pupils in French Canadian communities which showed that the latter were scholastically inferior to their English-speaking counterparts, Anderson introduced a further amendment to the School Act which abolished the use of French in the first year of school as was allowed under the Act, and another amendment which specified that all school trustees must be able to speak and write English and be able to conduct meetings in English.<sup>31</sup> For French Canadians all across the country, these amendments simply added insult to injury. It was this language legislation, on top of the religious legislation, which unleashed a torrent of French Canadian abuse against the Conservative party, and which forced Prime Minister Bennett to reverse his strong personal stand in the matter of a Saskatchewan Senate appointment.

On December 30 Prime Minister Bennett visited Regina, and while there he let it be known that he favored the appointment of a Roman Catholic to succeed Senator Turriff. The main reason for Bennett's decision was that Saskatchewan was one of just two provinces which did not have a Catholic senator, and he felt this should be remedied at the earliest possible date.<sup>32</sup> Under normal circumstances, this stated intention of the Prime Minister's might have been accepted although conceivably not liked by the party stalwarts, but in this case the news was received with very bad grace. Anti-Catholic feelings still ran high in many quarters in the province, and for this reason Premier Anderson and his supporters could not and would not accept Mr. Bennett's dictum that the appointment rightfully belonged to a Roman Catholic. They conceded that the *next* appointment could go to a member of the religious minority, but felt that it could be disastrous for the Co-operative government if a Catholic received the first major appointment in the province.

The English-speaking Catholics, on the other hand, were overjoyed at the Prime Minister's intention of appointing a Catholic, and believed that he had made the only just decision under the circumstances. The French Canadians,

<sup>30</sup>Anderson to Sir George Perley, December 12, 1930, pp. 351001-5.

<sup>31</sup>CAR, 1931, p. 253.

<sup>32</sup>Bennett to Anderson, January 17, 1931, p. 428664. British Columbia was the other province without a Catholic Senator.

however, were not content that it go just to a Catholic it must go to a French Canadian Catholic, although the French Canadians made up less than twenty-five percent of the province's Catholic population, and but five percent of its total population. Mr. Bennett was soon to discover that he had a first-class row on his hands in Saskatchewan over which group would have a representative named to Canada's Upper Chamber: Protestant, English-speaking Catholic, or French Canadian. For each it became a matter of principle, and therein lay the danger for the Conservative party.

If Prime Minister Bennett was convinced that the appointment should go to a Catholic, he was just as convinced that it should go to the northern part of the province. The five remaining Senators were all from the south, "on or south of the Canadian Pacific Railway line," and Mr. Bennett felt it was only right and just that the north should be represented. He received little argument on this score from Anderson and his supporters, or from the English Catholics, but for the French Canadians, whose sole candidate, Arthur Marcotte, lived in the southwest, geography was irrelevant. It was race which was of the utmost importance, not geography.

The Anderson government was not particularly concerned about who got the appointment as long as he was not a Catholic. This very genuine concern over the effect a Catholic appointment would have on their government and on the Conservative party in Saskatchewan was felt by a majority of the government, and not by just a few who probably did harbor an anti-Catholic prejudice. Ironically, it was M. A. MacPherson, considered by Catholic and Protestant alike to be completely without religious bias, who forwarded a petition signed by nineteen private government supporters in the legislature to the Prime Minister in mid-January, 1931, which stated,

. . . owing to the attitude of this organization in both recent elections in this Province, we think that [the appointment of a Catholic to the Senate] would not be in the best interests of Saskatchewan at this time.<sup>33</sup>

MacPherson, himself, was even more explicit:

The present objection is so general and so insistent that I do not think it can be ignored . . . such an appointment made before prorogation might even be disastrous to us here.<sup>34</sup>

In this crisis, Anderson and his cabinet were ever-conscious that they had to depend on ten non-Conservative votes in the legislature, and that a federal appointment such as the Prime Minister contemplated could be construed as a rebuke to those members and their supporters who were still suspicious of the influence of the Roman Catholic Church in Saskatchewan. Anderson and MacPherson recognized that they had many pieces of legislation which had to be ushered through the legislature in the session which opened on January 13,

<sup>33</sup>Petition sent to Bennett, January 13, 1931, p. 428550.

<sup>34</sup>MacPherson to A. W. Merriam, January 17, 1931, p. 429643.

including the controversial amendment to the School Act which would eliminate the teaching in French in the first year of school, and that they could not afford to antagonize any of their supporters—Conservative, Progressive, or Independent. Also of concern to the cabinet was the imminent decision of the United Farmers of Canada, Saskatchewan Section, to enter politics as an organization; it was expected that at least two of the government's Progressive supporters would join the new Farmers Party. Political expediency, therefore, dictated that nothing be done to rock the already leaky boat of the Co-operative government; Anderson and most of his cabinet felt that a Catholic appointment under the circumstances would be tantamount to abandoning ship altogether.

Prime Minister Bennett, however, was not swayed by the outcry from the Anderson government; he was determined to appoint a Catholic, with or without their support. The only decision he felt he had to make was which Catholic should be given the Senate seat. Three men emerged as leading contenders—Joseph Foley and J. J. Leddy, both English Catholics, and Arthur Marcotte, the French Canadian Catholic.

Joseph Foley appeared at the outset to have the edge on his rivals. His claim that he had been promised a Senate appointment by the then Prime Minister Meighen in 1921 was confirmed by Meighen, who stated that he had made up his mind to appoint Foley after the death of Senator Ben Prince, a French-speaking Catholic from Battleford, but that he had been unable to do so "due to the claims of others immediately associated with the Government itself."<sup>35</sup> James Calder, a member of Meighen's cabinet had received the appointment instead, and the Union government had been defeated before another vacancy occurred. Foley had wide support, including that of the two Conservative senators from Saskatchewan, Senators Laird and Gillis, both of whom admitted that a Catholic appointment was justified, but specified that it should be an English, not a French Catholic appointment.<sup>36</sup> Although he could certainly not claim to have the support of the Anderson government, Foley was at least more acceptable to them than was any other Catholic in the province.<sup>37</sup>

Unfortunately for Foley, however, he could not gain the support of the one organization which was vital to him—the Catholic Church. Foley freely admitted to the Prime Minister that he had at times been at variance with the authorities of his church, and that at times he had found it "difficult to be consistent with both organizations [the Conservative party and the Catholic Church] on account of their opposing views."<sup>38</sup> Try as he might, Foley could not get back into the good graces of the church hierarchy in the province, and Bishop Prud'homme of Saskatoon sealed his fate when he wrote,

<sup>35</sup>Arthur Meighen to Senator Laird, December 6, 1930, p. 429291.

<sup>36</sup>Laird to R. W. Mannion, December 11, 1930, p. 429274.

<sup>37</sup>Anderson to Bennett, December 9, 1930, p. 428666.

<sup>38</sup>J. F. Foley to Bennett, January 24, 1931, p. 429300.

I strongly oppose the appointment of Mr. Foley of North Battleford if you intend to appoint a Catholic, as Mr. Foley can not in any way represent worthily the Catholics.<sup>39</sup>

Joseph Foley may have been a good Conservative, but he was not considered by his church to be a good enough Catholic.

J. J. Leddy of Saskatoon was the English-speaking choice of the Catholic hierarchy in Saskatchewan. For Leddy, if the Catholic Church and the Conservative party were at odds, as they were over the school legislation, there was no question in his mind as to which side he supported—it was his church's viewpoint which he espoused every time. This attitude certainly earned him the gratitude of his church, but it also earned him the animosity of Conservative politicians in Saskatchewan.<sup>40</sup> While the Prime Minister was prepared to ignore the wishes of his provincial supporters about the appointment of a Catholic, he had no intention of turning a deaf ear to the almost unanimous disapproval of Leddy by his federal members from the province and the Conservative members of Anderson's government.<sup>41</sup>

With the two major Catholic candidates from the north all but eliminated, for religious or political reasons, where could Mr. Bennett turn? It was reported in the press that the appointment was subsequently offered to Dr. R. H. MacDonald, a prominent Saskatoon surgeon and Catholic layman, but MacDonald apparently turned down the appointment for personal and financial reasons.<sup>42</sup> The Prime Minister's dilemma, it seems, was not to be solved by the choice of a "dark horse" candidate.

There was, however, still one major Catholic candidate to be considered—Arthur Marcotte, from Ponteix in the Gravelbourg area. Marcotte and his supporters, the majority of whom came from outside Saskatchewan, insisted that a French Canadian replacement for the late Senator Ben Prince was long overdue. Furthermore, they contended that the appointment of Marcotte would compensate in some small way for the "persecution of French Canadian Catholics" by the Anderson government.<sup>43</sup>

Marcotte himself lost no time in making his bid for a seat in the Senate, first writing to the newly-elected Prime Minister Bennett on September 16 1930, just eight days after the opening of the first session of the Seventeenth Parliament. Marcotte admitted that there was no vacancy at that time, but that there could conceivably be one in the not too distant future, and he wanted Mr. Bennett to be aware of his views on the matter. Marcotte's main point was

<sup>39</sup>Bishop Prud'homme to Bennett, February 26, 1931, p. 429759.

<sup>40</sup>Bennett to Rev. F. T. Foley, February 24, 1931, p. 429724. Leddy to Mannion, March 25, 1931, p. 429757. Bennett to Leddy, April 18, 1931, p. 429769.

<sup>41</sup>Bennett to Leddy, April 18, 1931, p. 429769.

<sup>42</sup>*Leader-Post*, Regina, March 23, 1931, p. 5. In an interview, Justice Emmett Hall, a close friend of MacDonald, stated to the writer that Mr. Bennett had definitely offered the appointment to MacDonald. Whether or not this was an official offer, or merely an attempt to determine whether or not MacDonald would be interested if such an offer were made, is difficult to assess.

<sup>43</sup>Various French Canadian Associations to Bennett, December 30, 1930-July, 1931, pp. 429177-429254.

that the French Canadian race deserved recognition in Saskatchewan, and a Senate appointment was the recognition they sought. He claimed too, that Arthur Meighen had assured him that the next Senate appointment after James Calder would be his, although this was subsequently emphatically denied by Meighen.<sup>44</sup>

When Senator J. G. Turriff died on November 10, 1930 the Marcotte forces began their campaign in earnest. Literally dozens of letters and briefs from French Canadian organizations across the country were sent to the Prime Minister on Marcotte's behalf; the tenor of their remarks was to demand, rather than request, that the appointment be given to a French Canadian, namely, Arthur Marcotte. Raymond Denis, President of the Association Catholique Franco-Canadienne which claimed to have 50,000 members in Saskatchewan, wrote,

. . . we take the liberty of insisting upon the nomination of a French Canadian . . . [such an appointment] would only be an act of justice. . . . It would be, furthermore, a clever action on the part of the Government as it would thus prove that it is not hostile to the French element, as it is now believed by certain people.<sup>45</sup>

Bishop Prud'homme suggested that the appointment of Marcotte would "help smooth out old scores and increase the Prime Minister's prestige in Quebec."<sup>46</sup> L'Association Catholique des Voyageurs de Commerce du Canada called on Mr. Bennett "to scourge and disgrace the fanatic Anderson, persecutor of the Catholic religion and French-speaking Canadians." If Marcotte is appointed, they continued, "you may be assured of the support of all French-speaking Canadians of the Province of Quebec and other provinces, who are desirous to help their brothers in Saskatchewan."<sup>47</sup> Arthur Sauvé, one of three French Canadian ministers from Quebec in the Bennett cabinet, pointed out to the Prime Minister that Marcotte was "well known and esteemed in Quebec." Sauvé, too, was under the impression that Meighen had promised his next appointment to Marcotte, and emphasized that "we, as representing our compatriots in the Cabinet, are in duty bound that this engagement be respected, if we want our dignity and prestige to be maintained in our province."<sup>48</sup>

As the pressure for Marcotte's appointment mounted, it became increasingly obvious that for the French Canadians this was to be a symbolic appointment; if Mr. Bennett appointed anyone other than Marcotte he would, in the eyes of the French Canadians, be condoning the actions of the Anderson government in their "persecution" of the Catholics and French-speaking people in Saskatchewan. The attention of all French Canadians would be directed to the filling of the vacant seat in Saskatchewan. The implications were only too clear.

<sup>44</sup>Arthur Marcotte to Bennett, p. 429824. Meighen later stated that he had told Marcotte that the next appointment would go to the minority, but that he had never intimated in any way that Marcotte would be appointed. Meighen to Bennett, February 13, 1931, p. 429988.

<sup>45</sup>Raymond Denis to Bennett, December 15, 1930, p. 429180.

<sup>46</sup>Bishop Prud'homme to Bennett, December 24, 1930, p. 429859.

<sup>47</sup>L'Association to Bennett, May 2, 1931, p. 429246.

<sup>48</sup>Arthur Sauvé to Bennett, January 17, 1931, p. 429887.

Prime Minister Bennett, however, was not a man to bend easily under pressure. While he believed that the appointment should go to a Catholic, he was not at all sure it should go to a French Canadian.<sup>49</sup> What he was sure of, however, was that it should go to the north, and, in Mr. Bennett's mind, this automatically eliminated Marcotte. The latter, however, was not one to take "no" for an answer. Marcotte stressed that all the Catholic hierarchy and French Canadian associations backed him, and pointed out "this cannot be overlooked without danger. Our people know how faithful I have been and it will not forgive and forget an unfair treatment when I am asking justice for my people and in their name."<sup>50</sup>

Mr. Bennett's repeated attempts to convince Marcotte of the validity of his contention that the appointee must come from the north met with stubborn disagreement. The Prime Minister wrote,

Neither you nor anyone else has met the argument that the next Senator should come from the northern part of the province and be a Catholic. You reside in the southern part of the province, and, therefore, do not qualify for this vacancy. I think you will agree with me that there is no adequate answer to this argument.<sup>51</sup>

Mr. Marcotte, unfortunately, did not agree. Speaking of the geographical question, he replied:

It is unfair to the minority, prejudicial to the best interests of our party and just arbitrary in order to eliminate the legitimate candidate of the minority. . . . The nomination will have repercussions in every province as it affects over one third of our population. It is very anxiously waited for in Quebec where it will have an importance which cannot be ignored.<sup>52</sup>

The intimation that perhaps the Prime Minister himself was being swayed by racial prejudice brought the impatient reply:

Surely with your training, you realize that political considerations necessitate that the northern part of the province be represented, and in this case, political considerations and justice march hand in hand.<sup>53</sup>

For Marcotte and his supporters, however, justice could take only one form—the appointment of Arthur Marcotte to the Senate. Let future vacancies be awarded according to geography, but this Senate seat must go to a French Canadian.

Other than the fact that he was a leader in the French Canadian community, what were Marcotte's political qualifications for the appointment? He had always been a willing speaker at Conservative rallies, and during election campaigns had given unstintingly of his time and energy to help Conservative candidates

<sup>49</sup>Bennett to Rev. L'Leary, January 29, 1931, p. 430234. Bennett wrote, "The largest racial branch of the Roman Catholics in Saskatchewan is not French Canadian, and therefore, it is difficult to justify the view a French Canadian should be appointed."

<sup>50</sup>Marcotte to Bennett, January 16, 1931, p. 429884.

<sup>51</sup>Bennett to Marcotte, February 7, 1931, p. 429962.

<sup>52</sup>Marcotte to Bennett, February 14, 1931, p. 429984.

<sup>53</sup>Bennett to Marcotte, February 20, 1931, p. 429986.

throughout the province.<sup>54</sup> During the 1929 campaign, however, he could not bring himself to support the Anderson-led Conservative Party, nor did he wish to speak out against the party he had supported for twenty years, so he had removed himself from the scene, spending ten months in his native province of Quebec.<sup>55</sup> The fact that he did not publicly disagree with his party's stand, as did Leddy and A. G. MacKinnon, undoubtedly saved him from the deep hostility which the Conservative candidates in particular felt for his two co-religionists, but it did not enhance his reputation with his fellow Conservatives. Senator Laird spoke of him as "a decent little chap of no capacity or experience, a small town lawyer."<sup>56</sup> while Father Athol Murray, the independent-minded founder of Notre Dame College at Wilcox, could muster no more enthusiasm than to refer to him as "our good-hearted, level-headed friend Marcotte."<sup>57</sup> F. W. Turnbull, the federal Conservative member from Regina and a long-time party organizer in the province, cautioned the Prime Minister that "people here are of the opinion that Marcotte is using pressure from Quebec and they are inclined to resent it," but admitted, "otherwise he has some claim on the party."<sup>58</sup>

Unquestionably, Marcotte did have "some claim" on the basis of service to the Conservative party, but no more so than dozens of other men whose names had been submitted as potential candidates for the Senate. What he did have, of course, was the unanimous support of French Canadians across the country, and very strong support from the Catholic hierarchy. This support alone, however, would not have persuaded Mr. Bennett to reverse his stand in connection with an appointment for the north. He continued to feel strongly that the north deserved the appointment, and he also had considerable sympathy for the plight of English-speaking Catholics, who recognized that they were neither fish nor fowl when Canadian political appointments were being considered. In an interesting exchange of letters with the Prime Minister, the Rev. F. T. Foley, editor of *The Catholic Record*, put it this way:

Protestants look upon a French Canadian appointment as a *Catholic* appointment; French Canadians look upon the appointment of an English-speaking Catholic as an *English* appointment. So between the French Canadian Catholics on the one hand, and the Protestants on the other, English-speaking Catholics are ground between the upper and nether mill stones.<sup>59</sup>

This, then, was the Prime Minister's dilemma. An appointment to an English speaking Catholic stood the danger of being condemned by both the Protestants and the French Canadians, but for different reasons. For the Protestants, if the appointment went to a Catholic it made no material difference what his racial background was—his religion was the main thing taken into account. But, for

<sup>54</sup>In an interview, the Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker stated that Marcotte had always answered calls to speak, regardless of the difficulties which might have been involved. Mr. Diefenbaker feels that Marcotte deserved the appointment.

<sup>55</sup>Marcotte to Bennett, June 28, 1934, pp. 351438-40.

<sup>56</sup>Laird to Mannion, December 11, 1930, p. 429274.

<sup>57</sup>Rev. Athol Murray to Bennett, April 20, 1931, p. 430545.

<sup>58</sup>F. W. Turnbull to Bennett, December 12, 1930, p. 429094.

<sup>59</sup>Rev. Foley to Bennett, March 16, 1931, p. 429745.



the French Canadians, an appointment to an English-speaking Catholic meant a rejection of their plea for recognition of the French Canadian race; they could get little or no satisfaction from the fact that one of their co-religionists was appointed. English-speaking Catholics, on the other hand, could get some measure of consolation from the appointment of a French Catholic rather than a Protestant.

In the final analysis, Mr. Bennett's firm conviction that the appointment should go to the north, preferably to an English Catholic, came to naught. When Premier Anderson introduced the amendments to the School Act which, among other things, would prohibit the use of French in the first year of school, both he and the Prime Minister were forcibly reminded that, while salutary legislation in a province may have no impact on the federal scene, controversial or discriminatory legislation can threaten the very existence of the federal party whose provincial counterpart has enacted the legislation. So it was with the School Act amendments.

When the Prime Minister's office learned the details of the proposed legislation, a strongly worded wire was sent to Regina by A. W. Merriam, Mr. Bennett's private secretary. There can be no doubt that the concern of the Prime Minister and Merriam were genuine, and was based on outraged protests from French Canadians everywhere, but particularly in Quebec:

HAVE READ ACCOUNT OF INTRODUCTION OF BILL PROHIBITING USE OF FRENCH LANGUAGE FIRST YEAR IN SCHOOL. HOPE YOU REALIZE THIS MAKES CONDITIONS VERY DIFFICULT FOR CHIEF AND WILL PROBABLY RESULT IN DOWNFALL FEDERAL CONSERVATIVE ADMINISTRATION. IT WILL DIVIDE COUNTRY AND DO MORE TO WRECK CANADIAN UNITY AT THIS TIME THAN ANY OTHER SINGLE THING THAT HAS HAPPENED FOR MANY YEARS. AM VERY MUCH AFRAID IT WILL RESULT IN IMMEDIATE APPOINTMENT OF FRENCH CATHOLIC TO SENATE.<sup>60</sup>

While Mr. Bennett was prepared to admit that the only solution to the uproar caused by the Saskatchewan legislation was to appoint Marcotte, he still had to convince the Saskatchewan caucus of the wisdom of this move. A speech in the House of Commons by the Solicitor General, Maurice Dupré, on April 13, indicated that French Canadian resentment against the Saskatchewan legislation continued to be an overwhelming emotion:

. . . I realize that I am treading on very delicate ground. . . [but it is] my duty to say how much I regret the attitude taken recently, and even during the last eighteen months [in Saskatchewan]. . . The laws enacted against the French language . . . are an insult to the true Canadians established here for fourteen or fifteen generations. It was in the name of God, but in the French language, that the first cross was consecrated on Canadian soil.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>60</sup>Merriam to MacPherson, March 5, 1931, p. 351714.

<sup>61</sup>CAR, 1931, p. 47.

During the Easter recess later in the month, arrangements were made for Marcotte to meet with the Saskatchewan Conservative federal members and defeated candidates, and at the meeting in Regina Marcotte apparently secured their backing for the appointment. When the official announcement did not come, Marcotte wrote once again to the Prime Minister, stating that "the minority should not be kept any longer without representation. Wrong conclusions are easily drawn. . ." <sup>62</sup> It was left to Bishop Villeneuve of Gravelbourg, however, to sum up what the Senate appointment had come to mean to the French Canadians. Writing to the Prime Minister, he said:

The whole Province of Quebec expects your decision on this matter to judge what is the actual government's mentality and effective consideration about the French Canadians in and out of Quebec. <sup>63</sup>

Arthur Marcotte was notified that he had been appointed to the Senate on July 6, and a few days later the Prime Minister wrote what he undoubtedly hoped would be the final word on the Marcotte appointment:

I trust the appointment of Mr. Marcotte may contribute to the maintenance of better understanding between the men and women of the various creeds and races in the Province of Saskatchewan. <sup>64</sup>

As might have been expected, the Loyal Orange Association and the Ku Klux Klan both registered strong protests against the appointment. <sup>65</sup> but the majority of the other groups and individuals who had protested so vehemently against the intended appointment of a Catholic (French or English) accepted it as a *fait accompli*, and realized that further protest was futile.

Ironically, Arthur Marcotte, who with the exception of the 1929 provincial election had been an untiring worker for the Conservative party before he became a Senator, turned his back on Saskatchewan when he received the appointment, and rarely visited the province thereafter. His absence was particularly noticed in the provincial election campaign in 1934, when repeated requests to have him visit the province to speak on behalf of the Conservative candidate in Gravelbourg fell on deaf ears. Marcotte absolutely refused to return to Saskatchewan to speak on behalf of the Anderson government, for whom he felt nothing but deep-seated bitterness.

In a long letter to M. A. MacPherson, for whom he had great respect, Marcotte admitted that while he could not "quarrel very much" about the crucifix legislation, he could not forgive the further amendments to the School Law the following year "simply to hurt French-Canadian feelings." It was obvious that, for Marcotte, his reputation with his fellow French Canadians was much more

<sup>62</sup>Marcotte to Bennett, April 25, 1931, p. 430027.

<sup>63</sup>Bishop Villeneuve to Bennett, May 8, 1931, p. 430029.

<sup>64</sup>Bennett to Bishop Prud'homme, July 11, 1931, p. 430039.

<sup>65</sup>Loyal Orange Association to Bennett, August 17, 1931, p. 430056. Grand Wizard of Ku Klux Klan to Bennett, July 29, 1931, p. 430051. Bennett to Rev. Murray, July 16, 1933, p. 429016. Walters solicited support from dozens of ethnic organizations, both Protestant and Catholic. D. S. Johnstone reported to Mr. Bennett that Walters had offered him money for his support. (Johnstone was President of the Saskatchewan Conservative Association from 1930-1932), pp. 428672-428840.

important to him than his reputation with his fellow Conservatives from Saskatchewan. It would be folly, he told MacPherson, to

. . . lose my prestige and influence among my people all over Canada . . . and more especially in the province of Quebec where I am in a position to render very good services . . . to try and defend publicly a government which, to the knowledge of the whole of Canada is recognized as hostile to our people.<sup>66</sup>

In Marcotte's view, the hostility of the Conservative party dated back to the by-election at Arm River in 1928 when "the conservative fight was based on lies, calumnies, prejudices and hatred against our church and race." In 1929 the situation had been no better:

Most of our candidates, and especially their workers, openly stated on the public platform that they were fighting against catholics and french-canadians. Dr. Anderson never did that himself but never made a gesture to stop it. It became so bad that I could not take part in the campaign and preferred to leave Saskatchewan until it was all over.<sup>67</sup>

His own appointment to the Senate, as much as he had desired it, had not made Marcotte forget what his religion and race had suffered in Saskatchewan. The fact that the members of the Saskatchewan government had fought against his appointment had, if anything, made him all the more bitter towards them.

Had the Conservative-led Co-operative government been successful in the 1934 election, Marcotte's absence from the election scene would not have been felt so deeply, but when it failed to elect a single candidate there was much soul-searching done on the part of Conservatives on both the provincial and federal scenes. Mr. Bennett complained to the caucus about the ingratitude of the people of Gravelbourg who failed to show their appreciation for the appointment of a French Canadian from their district to the Senate, and these remarks, when reported to Marcotte, brought forth a strong letter of protest. French Canadians are not ungrateful, he wrote, "but we are not slave dogs either, and Dr. Anderson has just reaped what he has sown in regard to French Canadians, despise and scorn."<sup>68</sup>

The Prime Minister was dismayed at the bitterness expressed by Marcotte, both in his letter and in the letter to MacPherson, a copy of which he had enclosed. Mr. Bennett had been reminded, only too vividly, by the results in Gravelbourg that one cannot expect gratitude from the electorate, but he was human enough to be disappointed when one of his own party members, whom he had appointed against great opposition from so many other members of his party, felt only bitterness towards men who had been his co-workers in the Conservative party:

In the light of your letter, I realize how great a strain your appointment was upon many of our Party friends. I think had I been in your place

<sup>66</sup>Marcotte to MacPherson, June 12, 1934, p. 351445.

<sup>67</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>68</sup>Marcotte to Bennett, June 21, 1934, p. 351449.

I would have gone out and shown to them that you appreciated your appointment and desired to associate yourself with them in their hour of difficulty and defeat.<sup>69</sup>

Mr. Bennett, whose great hope when he had appointed Marcotte in 1931 had been that it would help to heal the French-English, Catholic-Protestant breach contributed to, if not created by, the Anderson government, came to the reluctant conclusion that his hopes had not been realized.<sup>70</sup> Marcotte's inability to forgive his fellow-Conservatives for their religious and racial bias simply illustrates that a slight once suffered by a minority is not easily forgotten. The appointment of one French Canadian to the Senate, as much as they had demanded it, was certainly not enough to make the minority forget its grievances. Marcotte and his fellow French Canadians, in fact, saw no reason whatever to be grateful for an appointment which they considered had been rightfully theirs.

Had the Prime Minister's attempt to make amends for the Saskatchewan legislation by appointing a French Canadian over the objections of the Saskatchewan Conservatives, the English Catholics, and against his personal conviction that the appointment should go to the north, accomplished nothing. While its long-term effects were negligible, it did have the immediate benefit of "de-fusing" a potentially explosive situation.

Irene H. McEwan

<sup>69</sup>Bennett to Marcotte, June 25, 1934, p. 351443.

<sup>70</sup>*Ibid.*

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## Archaeological Study of the Fort Pelly Site

**D**URING THE MONTHS of June, July and August, 1971, the Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History in Regina, a branch of the provincial Department of Natural Resources, began the excavation of the site of the first Fort Pelly which was one of the major fur trading posts in Saskatchewan. I had the good fortune to be in charge of the fine crew that was assembled for work on the site.

The first Fort Pelly was built in 1824 by the Hudson's Bay Company after the amalgamation of this company and the North West Company. Fort Pelly soon became the headquarters for the whole Swan River area and as such served as provision centre for posts as far away as Fort Ellice, Fort Qu'Appelle and Last Mountain House. The major area of trading influence extended to the areas bounded by Lake Winnipegosis, the Red Deer River, the Quill Lakes, Touchwood Hills and the Qu'Appelle Valley. In November, 1842 the original buildings were destroyed by fire but the post was immediately rebuilt on the same location. In 1856-57 a new Fort Pelly was built on higher ground a quarter of a mile to the south-east of the original site. This move was necessitated by the periodic flooding of the original post at times of high water on the Assiniboine River. For a period of time the old fort buildings were used as living quarters for some of the men and as barns for cattle and horses.

After much archival research, it was determined that no ground plans, drawings, or sketches of the first post existed, so armed with only sketchy references extracted from various journals we began to tackle the task of filling in the gaps of history by archaeological means. Of prime importance was the location of the original palisade, which according to journal entries was 120 feet square.

By a fortuitous occurrence, while clearing the site a rather heavy post was noted as exposed by an open badger hole. This, therefore, became our first excavation unit and as it turned out was located on the original eastern palisade line. The original north palisade line was also later located. A total of twenty-six 10' x 10' excavation units were done during the summer.

As excavations continued, the following features or structures were at least partially excavated so that locations of some of the buildings became known. Adjacent to the east palisade line the forge area and tempering trough of the blacksmith shop were located. Along this same line, further to the south, the superstructure of a building tentatively designated as a stable was located. Near this structure a bone refuse pit was excavated. A series of two superimposed fire hearths and what would appear to be the wooden and stone superstructure of a major building (warehouse??) were also located. Immediately adjacent to the north palisade line we excavated what appears to be one of the blockhouses and just inside this structure the base of the flagpole was excavated. A section of this north palisade was located further to the west. This section, however, was

not in an upright position but had apparently fallen over in situ and been thus buried, by subsequent soil drifting. A circular pit that was evidenced by a shallow depression on the surface was excavated. No definite use for this can yet be determined. The most feasible explanation seems to be that it was a shallow pit dug below an already existing building for storage. At this point we are designating the major structure revealed by this summer's excavations, as the chief factor's or master's house. The cellar depression is located on the highest point of land in the surrounding area. The northern half of this cellar was excavated. Features found included the east foundation line, cribbing logs, cellar outline and bark-lined floor.

Material common to most historic fur trade sites was recovered in some volume. Artifacts such as hand-wrought and machine-made square nails predominated. Next in number of occurrences were fragments of stems and bowls of Kaolin trade pipes. They were largely the T. D. variety. Broken china was found in all excavation units and those that were recognizable by the hallmark were "Copeland-late Spode". A major recovery was the almost totally restorable plate found in many fragments in the tempering trough of the blacksmith shop. Glass fragments representing both window glass and glass bottles were numerous. Several metal trade points and much of the barrel-hoop material from which they were made were found. Other hunting artifacts were two long bone harpoons—one from along the east palisade line and one in the warehouse fire hearth. One large fish hook was recovered from the master's house cellar. Fragments of lead foil—the lining from tea crates—was a rather common recovery. Clothing was represented only by two shoe soles and one heel, and a small section of green stroud cloth. Artifacts, however, associated with clothing were numerous. These included buttons of metal, bone, and shell; needles; dressmaking pins; thimbles; and dress or collar hooks and eyes.

Small glass seed beads were common. In one instance some 1,400 were recovered near the firehearth in the warehouse. These had once been stored in a cylindrical birch bark basket. This basket was found underlying some of the outer stones of the hearth. Two baling seals were found, one in the warehouse, and one beside a third cellar depression we are tentatively designating as the kitchen, which is immediately adjacent to the factor's house. A metal hoe blade was recovered from the blacksmith shop in the tempering trough. Tableware was not common, but several knives were found including one with complete incised bone handle still intact.

Evidence of boat building activities, which the journals tell us was carried on here, was provided by the finding of a large oar lock along the north palisade line. Other single or similar groups of artifacts of note recovered included a jew's harp, two dog harness bells, one trade axe richly engraved, darning needle made of lead, several locks or lock parts and keys, door hanger spikes, files, chisels, offset awls, pen nibs, gun flints, gun worms, and serpentine side plates, to list just a few.

## Book Reviews

HISTORICAL ESSAYS ON THE PRAIRIE PROVINCES. Edited by Donald Swainson. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1970. Pp. 312. \$3.95.

This collection of essays is a welcome addition to the literature on the prairie west. Professor Swainson has brought together, from the historical journals of the three prairie provinces, and from other sources, some of the best studies of the development of the region "during the era of settled and permanent communities." The selections include excerpts from early histories by Alexander Begg, Alexander Ross and J. J. Hargrave, and recent articles on prairie settlement, the rise of agrarian organizations and western politics. A brief introduction and a select bibliography of published works complete the volume.

Two main themes run through much of prairie history, Swainson suggests. The first is exploitation and control by outside metropolitan centres and the second, a result of the first, is the rise of a spirit of western resentment and discontent. Of the several essays in the volume which examine these related themes, W. L. Morton's "The Bias of Prairie Politics" is the most lucid. Morton argues that the increasing divergence of prairie politics from the national standard has been the result of an initial prairie bias derived from the subordinate status of the West within Confederation. The resistance of Riel and the Métis began a tradition of western grievance and special claims. Opposition to political and economic domination by central Canada has manifested itself in the appearance of strong farmers' organizations and sectional protest parties. In consequence, the national parties have been seriously weakened on the prairies and the influence of the region in the national government has diminished. The West has been searching for equality in Confederation so that it might be like, not different from the rest of Canada, but the bias of prairie politics has operated to produce equality with a difference.

The efforts of western farmers and ranchers to secure relief from the economic disadvantages under which they laboured are described in greater detail in the four articles on the Patrons of Industry, the Saskatchewan Stock Growers' Association, the Farmers' Union of Canada, and W. R. Motherwell, a founder of the Territorial Grain Growers' Association. The emergence of a radical political tradition in the West is made evident in Kenneth McNaught's study of the early career of J. S. Woodsworth.

Third parties and regional protest are not the only topics considered by the contributors to this volume. There is an interesting description of the military tactics of the Métis, and a sympathetic biography of Big Bear, chief of the Plains Cree. In an article previously reprinted elsewhere, Donald Creighton argues that the notion of a compact between the two founding linguistic groups, English and French, was not implicit in the guarantee of education and language rights in the Manitoba Act of 1870 and the North-West Territories Act of 1875. In each case the final legislation was the result of accident and improvisation.

Three articles examine settlement patterns in Manitoba and the particular difficulties of the Mennonites and the Hutterians in establishing homes in a new land. R. Craig Brown finds evidence of a developing nationalist sentiment in the western press in the late nineteenth century. John Saywell explains how Liberals were chosen to head the new governments of Saskatchewan and Alberta in 1905, and Lionel Orlikow shows that the reform movement in Manitoba before the First World War was a coalition of groups seeking prohibition, women's suffrage and direct legislation. The impact of drought and depression is vividly revealed in Blair Neatby's "The Saskatchewan Relief Commission, 1931-34."

Any collection of this kind is of course open to the criticism that studies of equal or greater merit have been omitted. A more representative sample might well have included articles on topics such as churches and pioneer life, enforcement of prohibition in the North-West Territories, urban growth and the rise of a vigorous western press, the origins of the publicly owned telephone systems on the prairies, or the plight of western Canada's "enemy aliens" during the First World War, to cite just a few examples from back issues of the prairie and other historical journals. Yet on the whole, the stated purpose of the volume, to "illustrate the quality of western historical writing", has been achieved. The articles which Swainson has chosen should arouse an interest in the history of the prairie west, and the select bibliography will refer the reader to a "body of regional historical literature unmatched elsewhere in Canada for either quality or interest." This most recent addition to that literature is further evidence that such a claim is well merited.

J. W. Brennan

**THE LAST SPIKE: THE GREAT RAILWAY, 1881-1885.** By Pierre Berton. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1971. Pp. 478, Illustrations and Maps, \$10.00.

Pierre Berton has written the latest and best romantic history of the Canadian Pacific Railway. In it he tells of courageous and determined men meeting and surmounting seemingly insurmountable obstacles to complete one of the greatest projects ever undertaken in Canada. Berton has an admirable knowledge of both the plot and the principal characters and writes in a very lively and exciting style.

The hero of the book is without doubt William C. Van Horne, the American born and trained general manager of the C.P.R. who became the mastermind and driving force behind the construction teams. Only slightly less significant are George Stephen and Donald Smith, the syndicate members primarily responsible for raising the money to keep the construction crews at work. They finally pledged their considerable private resources to raise urgently needed funds. The irascible and often incongruous Major Rogers who discovered the pass through the allegedly impenetrable Selkirks also ranks among the great.

The politicians, notably John A. Macdonald, do not fare as well. Liberals opposing the contract and the company are portrayed as men of brilliance but



lacking in vision. Macdonald appears as an old and indecisive politician given to delays and worries about cabinet and caucus solidarity when only decisive political leadership can save the company. The crucial financial transfusions are only given at the very last minute, after Stephen and Smith have given up all hope and prepared themselves for honourable bankruptcy. In the end it was Louis Riel who provided the emergency in which the C.P.R. could prove its worth to the nation and thus earn the indispensable government aid. In Berton's first volume, *The National Dream*, Macdonald is portrayed as a man of vision; in *The Last Spike* he is an old and indecisive but well-intentioned politician.

The biggest challenges met in the building of the railway were physical. The problems of finding a suitable route, the herculean labours performed by armies of navvies, the social composition and problems of prairie cities and towns and the raucous life in the construction camps on the raw frontier are all shown in colourful and interesting detail. Further obstacles and difficulties making the history of the C.P.R. a real cliffhanger are found in the rather vague and sinister machinations of the rival Grand Trunk Railway. The Grand Trunk had great influence among members of the Canadian parliamentary opposition and in the financial circles in London, England. It did not hesitate to use these in attempts to destroy the C.P.R.

These are the ingredients which Berton blends into a lively and very interesting book. Extensive research has been done and Berton claims every fact can be footnoted. The principal weakness of the book nevertheless lies in the documentation. Newspaper accounts, recollections of old timers, private letters and papers of interested politicians, and official government publications are used extensively. Berton was not permitted to see the records of the C.P.R. Taken by themselves, the writings of newspaper reporters, old timers, lobbyists or committed politicians are often suspect, if not worse. Occasionally their use leads to serious problems. Thus, on page 352, on the strength of a quote from a 1936 pamphlet whose author got the story from the Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, who was told it by Van Horne, we are told that Stephen and Smith pledged "everything they possessed" to raise further funds for the company. Fifty-one pages, several major personal expenditures and a series of financial crises later, we suddenly find Stephen and Smith again coming to the rescue by purchasing half a million dollars worth of bonds. How many times can a man give all he has to save even the most worthy venture? Only a copy of the mortgage documenting the facts retailed at third or fourth hand on page 352 will provide full documentation. Statements of pamphleteers, partisans and embattled company officials in search of government aid need more critical scrutiny than they are given. Access to company records would certainly facilitate conclusive documentation, precision and accuracy.

The book lacks specific details on several important points. Tales of financial crises abound, but nowhere is there a clear statement of how much the railway actually cost or where all the money came from. Accounts of land speculation and western rate grievances are given considerable prominence, but the total amount of money received by the C.P.R. from land and townsite sales, or the

actual freight rates charged, are not given. In this respect the old and rather dull history of the C.P.R. by Harold Innis, published nearly fifty years ago, is more satisfactory. Berton's book will generate interest and enthusiasm which is well deserved. It is not, however, the definitive work on the C.P.R. We may have to wait a long time for a writer who can combine the talents of Berton and Innis in a truly interesting, factual and fully documented history of the C.P.R. Such a writer will need unobstructed access to the official records of the company.

T. D. Regehr

**STOUT HEARTS STAND TALL.** By Ivor J. Mills. Vancouver: The Author (126 W. 59 Avenue, Vancouver 15), 1971. Pp. 330. \$4.75.

Mr. Ivor J. Mills, in this tribute to his father, Hopkin Evan Mills, provides not only a family history but an insight into farming conditions in Saskatchewan in the period between the world wars and the motivation, philosophy, and activities of a group of people who advocated radical or socialist solutions to the problems of that time. "Hop" Mills, a farmer of the Colonsay district, was imbued with the Marxist philosophy and became a member of the Farmers' Educational League and the Farmers' Unity League. With W. E. Wiggins he served on the executive of the United Farmers of Canada (Saskatchewan Section) during 1929-1931. Wiggins, also a radical and eventually a Communist candidate in provincial and federal elections, has contributed an introduction to this book and figures prominently in it.

Ivor Mills, now a teacher in British Columbia, has intruded some of his own philosophy and poetry in this work, as well as interesting recollections and anecdotes of family life and of travelling with his father in canvassing for the various organizations with which the latter was involved. The book is handsomely illustrated, indexed, and well-printed. The inclusion of numerous letters of condolence and descriptions of the demise of close relatives, while understandable in a family history, tends to detract from the quality of the book for the general reader. Many of the facts and episodes should be checked against other sources. For example, the author confuses the periods of office of A. J. McPhail and L. C. Brouillette as president of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool (p. 187). The story about Mills' appearance, as a Communist candidate, on the same platform with W. L. Mackenzie King in the Lake Centre constituency in 1940 is of dubious authenticity. In that election King stayed close to Ottawa, although he did make a trip to Prince Albert for his nominating convention, apparently the only place in Saskatchewan he spoke during the campaign. One can scarcely imagine the Prime Minister sharing a platform with opposition candidates in a local riding. Despite such reservations, students will find this book a useful source for the aspects of the farm movement, politics, and personalities, with which it deals.

A. R. Turner

**SASKATCHEWAN EXECUTIVE  
and  
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