

# Saskatchewan History

Volume 48, Number 1 Spring 1996



Ross Thatcher's Indian Policy

Liberal Blood Feud: Gardiner vs. Dunning

1974 University of Saskatchewan Employees' Union Strike



# The Saskatchewan Archives Board

The Saskatchewan Archives Board was established by provincial statute in 1945. Under *The Archives Act* (RSS 1978, Chap. A-26) the Board is responsible for appraising, acquiring, preserving and making accessible documentary records in all media, from both official and private sources bearing on all aspects of the history of Saskatchewan, and facilitating the management of the records of government institutions. Two offices are maintained, affiliated with the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina, providing public access to a rich collection of archival materials for research and reference. The Archives Board comprises two representatives of the Government of Saskatchewan, one from each of the two universities in the province, and the Legislative Librarian. The Provincial Archivist serves as secretary.

In addition, the Saskatchewan Archives Board has produced several authoritative works over the years on provincial history and a number of other reference booklets and directories to assist historical research in the province. The journal *Saskatchewan History* first appeared in 1948 and has earned a reputation for excellence, receiving awards in 1962 from the American Association for State and Local History and in 1979 from the Canadian Historical Association.

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# Saskatchewan History

Volume 48, Number 1 Spring 1996

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## SASKATCHEWAN HISTORY

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The editors of *Saskatchewan History* welcomes the submission of articles relating to the history of the province. Manuscripts must be submitted in duplicate, typewritten, and double-spaced. The endnotes, prepared according to the *Chicago Manual of Style*, should also be double-spaced. Authors may submit manuscripts on PC/DOS 360K floppy disk. The disk must be IBM compatible, preferably WordPerfect 5.1. Two hard copies are still required, and the print must be letter or near-letter quality. Manuscripts will be reviewed by qualified readers. The Saskatchewan Archives Board assumes no responsibility for statements made by contributors. Copyright 1996, The Saskatchewan Archives Board.

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# Saskatchewan Archives Board:

## News and Notes

### *Saskatchewan History* Editor Moves On

In late 1995, Joan Champ stepped down as editor of *Saskatchewan History*. Members of the Saskatchewan Archives Board would like to thank Joan for the work she did as editor, and the new editors would also like to thank her for helping make the transition as smooth as possible. Among other contributions, Joan was responsible during her three year tenure for improving the format and appearance of the journal.



Joan Champ

Joan has long been interested in Saskatchewan's history. In 1990 she was awarded her Masters degree in history by the University of Saskatchewan with the completion of her thesis, entitled "Arthur Silver Morton and His Early Saskatchewan Heritage Activities." She has since published five articles focusing on various aspects of the province's history: "Difficult to Make Hay': Early Attempts at Agriculture on the Montreal Lake Indian Reserve," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. 47,

No. 1 (Spring 1995), pp. 27-35; "Remembering Montgomery Place, 1945-1956," in *Saskatoon History Review*, No. 8, 1993; "Sutherland: The Early Years, 1909-1914," in *Saskatoon History Review*, No. 7, 1992; "Arthur Silver Morton and his Role in the Founding of the Saskatchewan Archives Board," in *Archivaria*, No. 32, (Summer 1991), pp. 101-113; and "Arthur Silver Morton: Beating the Bounds on the Saskatchewan," in *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. XLIII, No. 2, (Spring 1991), pp. 41-51. Wife, and mother of two, Joan remains busy with her job as the Archival Coordinator at the Right Honourable John G. Diefenbaker Centre for the Study of Canada and with her volunteer work on numerous (hundreds?) of boards and committees.

Joan's replacements are Chris Kitzen and Steve Hewitt. The new editors are very interested in feedback from readers. They can be contacted through regular mail at the Saskatchewan Archives Board office in Saskatoon or through electronic mail (kitzen@sklib.usask.ca; hewitt@duke.usask.ca)

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### *New Archives Board Member*

*Hon. Carol Teichrob*

*Minister of Municipal Government; Minister Responsible for SaskTel*

The Honorable Carol Teichrob was appointed to the Saskatchewan Archives Board in November 1995, replacing the Honorable Carol Carson as minister responsible for the Board. Carol Teichrob was first elected to the Saskatchewan Legislature in 1991. On November 1, 1991 she was appointed to Cabinet as Minister of Education. She served in that capacity until June 1993, resigning for personal reasons.



Carol Teichrob

She was re-elected in 1995 and appointed to Cabinet November 22, 1995 as Minister of Municipal Government and Minister Responsible for SaskTel.

Mrs. Teichrob served ten years as Reeve and Councillor of the R.M. of Corman Park, and six years as President of Plains Poultry Ltd. She has been a Director of several boards including the Canadian Egg Marketing Agency, the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, and the Saskatchewan Research Council.

Mrs. Teichrob takes an active part in her community. She was named the Saskatoon YWCA Woman of the Year in 1992, and in 1990 received the Rotary Club Award of Excellence for Commerce and Industry.

Carol Teichrob is a longstanding member of the Saskatoon Co-op and St. Mary's Credit Union and is a member of the Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce. She has also served on the University of Saskatchewan Senate.

Currently Mrs. Teichrob is a partner in a mixed farming operation.

*(more News and Notes on page 18)*



# The Thatcher Government in Saskatchewan and Treaty Indians, 1964-1971:

## The Quiet Revolution

by James M. Pitsula



Saskatchewan Archives Board, S-B5173.

*Thatcher speaking with an unidentified Native man, ca. 1970.*

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*James M. Pitsula is a professor of history at the University of Regina. He has authored a number of books. This most recent book is *Privatizing a Province: The New Right in Saskatchewan*, which he co-authored with Ken Rasmussen. He has also previously published articles in the *Journal of Canadian Studies*, *The Canadian Historical Review*, *Prairie Forum*, and *Saskatchewan History*.*

“In my opinion, the treatment that Saskatchewan gives her Indians is not much better than the people of Selma and Alabama today are giving their negroes.”<sup>1</sup>

These words spoken by Premier Ross Thatcher in the Saskatchewan Legislature in 1965 signaled the high priority he gave to Indian problems and his earnest desire to find solutions. Unfortunately, his solutions were not the solutions of the Indian people themselves. While the government’s intentions may have been good, it ultimately found itself at complete loggerheads with the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians (FSI) (now the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations), the organization representing treaty Indians in the province. The Thatcher administration’s paternalistic methods and assimilationist policies ran counter to the growing movement for Indian cultural affirmation and self-determination. A “quiet revolution” occurred during the 1960s, with the FSI emerging as a powerful and effective organization. As a result, the Thatcher government became increasingly estranged from the Federation; the government and the FSI became “two solitudes.”

The guiding force behind the Thatcher administration’s Indian policies was largely Thatcher himself. He was a premier who completely dominated his government. As his biographer, Dale Eisler, observes, Thatcher “was the boss, and lines of authority, or hierarchical administrative structures, meant little or nothing to him.”<sup>2</sup> He frequently over-ruled his ministers, including the minister responsible for Indian and Métis affairs. Ferd Ewald, the director of the Indian and Métis



branch, recalled in a 1994 interview: "Well, very quickly I became aware that Ross was the boss and John Cuelenaere [the minister] didn't count for anything as far as he was concerned. As a matter of fact, in one of our discussions he said to me, 'You don't listen to him; you listen to me.'"<sup>3</sup> It was Thatcher who gave impetus and direction to government Indian programs. His personal stamp was on everything the government did in this area.

Thatcher was motivated by compassion for Indians whose poverty and suffering he witnessed first hand when he visited reserves in various parts of the province. One of his first initiatives after forming a government in May 1964 was to call a provincial Indian and Métis conference, held at the Bessborough Hotel in Saskatoon in September. The Premier's keynote address called attention to the "deplorably low" living standards of Indian people: "Housing is primitive in most cases. Virtually no Indian houses have flush toilets. Few have running water. Heating is usually provided by the old tin heater. Good highways in our reservations simply do not exist. Electricity and telephones in most cases are a dream."<sup>4</sup> Something had to be done, and Thatcher said his government would not shrink from the task.

In the same way that he took the lead in identifying the problem, he dictated the remedy. The answer was to help Indians find jobs and support themselves—to bring them "more closely into the general economic development of all the people of this Province."<sup>5</sup> According to Thatcher, employment and self-reliance led to self-esteem, confidence, and successful integration into mainstream society. The emphasis on "jobs, jobs, jobs" meshed with Thatcher's right-of-centre political philosophy.<sup>6</sup> He believed strongly that people should support themselves if they were capable of doing so, and that the government did not owe any able-bodied person a living. He felt that the Indian Affairs branch had erred badly in giving welfare payments instead of job opportunities. His concern about this was evident as early as 1957 when, as a member of parliament, he asked the Indian Affairs minister how many Indians were receiving relief rations and what plans the minister had to remove Indians from relief and place them in jobs.<sup>7</sup> Now that Thatcher was premier, he had a chance to put the emphasis where he thought it belonged, namely, job placement.

Thatcher was responsible not only for the content of his government's Indian policy, but also the method by which it was implemented. He was a practical person with an eye on the bottom line. He was not particularly interested in abstract theorizing, intangible social and cultural issues, or long-term results; he wanted concrete results, and he wanted them now. Dale Eisler explores this aspect of Thatcher's personality, relating how, as a young man, he had studied the habits of his employer, J.S. McLean, president of Canada Packers. McLean

insisted on having a weekly profit-and-loss statement on his desk every Monday and seemed to make all his decisions on the basis of that statement.<sup>8</sup> Thatcher followed the same method in managing his Moose Jaw hardware store,<sup>9</sup> and when he took charge of the Saskatchewan government he applied the same bottom-line technique.<sup>10</sup> For example, he demanded a weekly statement from the Indian and Métis branch, indicating how many Indians had been placed in jobs. If the numbers were high, the government's policy was succeeding; if the numbers were low, the policy was failing. Social policy was governed by a profit-and-loss statement.

This approach to government neglected and devalued aspects of personal and community life that could not be measured in quantitative terms. Cultural issues, for example, received short shrift. On one occasion, Thatcher commented: "What is their [Indian] culture? Living in tents or dirty filthy shacks on a reserve? Culture is fine, but we've got to be realistic and bring them to where the jobs are, where the children can go to school and where they can live in a decent house."<sup>11</sup> Thatcher was an assimilationist. He wanted Indians to take up jobs and integrate as individuals into Canadian society. Talk of Indian culture, treaty rights, and self-government left him cold.

Thatcher's Indian policy was shaped not only by his political philosophy and his cast of mind but also by his interpretation of the history of relations between Aborigines and non-Aboriginals in Canada. He, like many of his contemporaries,<sup>12</sup> believed that Euro-Canadians had been essentially benevolent in their dealings with indigenous people. In a speech to the Legislative Assembly, Thatcher claimed that throughout Saskatchewan history, non-Indians had done what they could to help Indians and Métis: "We've had this problem for 90 years and throughout our history, various agencies and institutions of Canadian society have attempted to grapple with the issue. The early administrators, the missionaries, the traders and various governments have all made their contribution." Euro-Canadians had been guilty at worst of neglect: "Part of the Indian's plight of course must be attributed to indifference, apathy and lack of understanding on the part of the white man." However, Thatcher quickly fixed responsibility on Aboriginal people themselves: "But the fault is not all on one side. Far too often we have found that some Indians and Métis are not particularly anxious to take permanent employment. Far too often some have shown little initiative and have assumed little responsibility for their future."<sup>13</sup> Missing from the Premier's thinking was an awareness of the fact of conquest—the disruption of the economy and way of life of Aboriginal people, the imposition of a paternalistic regime, and the campaign against their culture, language and religion. Thatcher's ignorance of these matters left him ill-equipped to respond to the demands of Indian leaders that past injustices be



acknowledged and addressed.

One of the government's first moves was particularly annoying to treaty Indians. Indians and Métis were brought together in one conference in September 1964 and urged to cooperate to find common solutions to their problems. The Federation of Saskatchewan Indians had always given the highest priority to the defence of treaty rights.<sup>14</sup> They were offended by the government's cavalier lumping together of "all people of Indian ancestry." To make their point, treaty Indians convened a separate closed meeting of their own during the conference.<sup>15</sup> When an attempt was made to have the full conference endorse all the resolutions adopted by the study groups, John Tootoosis of the FSI led the opposition. He spoke in Cree, ignoring the efforts of the government official who was chairing the meeting to call him to order,<sup>16</sup> and persuaded the Indian delegates not to pass resolutions jointly with the Métis. After the conference, the FSI executive sent a letter to Thatcher saying that on matters affecting treaty Indians, they alone should be consulted.<sup>17</sup>

The Thatcher government's indifference to the distinction between Indians and Métis was deliberate and calculated. It believed that special status for Indians and the existence of a separate Indian Affairs branch to deliver services to Indians were barriers to integration.<sup>18</sup> Thus, the Saskatchewan government recommended that the British North American Act, which placed status Indians and Indian lands under the jurisdiction of the federal government, be amended to give control to the provinces. The Saskatchewan brief to the federal-provincial conference held in October 1964 proposed a "staged extension" of provincial services to Indians, including social welfare, health, education, natural resources and agriculture. It also suggested the incorporation of Indian reserves into school districts and municipalities: "This would give the Indian a direct voice, not only in educational programs, but in the local administration of the area ... . We believe that keeping reserves out of school districts, municipalities and other local authorities constitutes a barrier to the integration of the Indian population into the stream of Canadian life and prevents them from receiving the same standard of service received by others."<sup>19</sup> Under this scheme, reserves would cease to be distinct units, and band self-government would be impossible.

Although the transfer of Indian administration from the federal to the provincial government did not take place, the Thatcher government's proposal reveals how committed it was to integration. Moreover, Ottawa's constitutional responsibility for Indians did not deter the province from involving itself in Indian affairs. In April 1965 it established an Indian and Métis branch within the Department of Natural Resources. Thatcher said the branch would "accelerate the process by which these people [Indians and Métis] become an integral part of Canadian society." He compared the branch's

mission with the desegregation movement in the American South. Both were seeking the liberation of an oppressed racial minority. Thatcher was aware that the establishment of a special branch for Indian and Métis people might in itself be perceived as segregationist, but he countered this argument by pointing out that the branch would be primarily responsible for research, program planning, and the coordination of services offered by other departments. The "number one job" would be to find employment for Indian and Métis people.<sup>20</sup>

The first director of the branch was Ferd E. Ewald, who had a Master's degree in Social Work and had been employed as the supervisor of case work services for the John Howard Society in Toronto.<sup>21</sup> In 1965, three placement officers were hired, two of whom were of Indian ancestry. One of them worked out of Regina and recruited job candidates from the reserves in the File Hills-Qu'Appelle Agency, another sought employees from the Crooked Lake Agency for work in the potash mines in the Esterhazy area, and the third, based in Prince Albert, covered a wide area in the north.<sup>22</sup> Ewald reported that employers in the private sector were "very receptive" to the placement program. He pointed out that Indians and Métis represented a new pool of labour which could be tapped to meet the manpower shortage facing employers in the province.<sup>23</sup> For example, contractors on the South Saskatchewan River dam project complained that their major problem was the lack of construction workers. To meet the need, they went to northern Saskatchewan and northern Manitoba to hire Indian workers.<sup>24</sup>

From 1 April 1965 to 1 January 1966 a total of 758 placements were made in industry, government and business.<sup>25</sup> However, only a small proportion of those placed stayed in their jobs for more than a few weeks. Ewald wrote Thatcher about this problem, citing the case of thirty Métis placement candidates who were assigned to construction work at the South Saskatchewan River Dam, but had returned home to Cumberland House after a few weeks of employment. Some said that the work was too hard, some were lonely being away from their relatives and friends and others wanted to do some moose hunting. Ewald said that successful placement depended upon good counseling and close follow-up.<sup>26</sup> A candidate could not be placed in a job and then forgotten; he or she needed advice and support during the period of adjustment to a new job, a new home, and a new way of life. Since adequate follow-up placed heavy demands on a placement officer's time, Ewald argued that the branch needed to hire additional placement staff.

Thatcher was unreceptive to these arguments. He informed Allan Guy, the Legislative Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources: "I am not anxious to have the personnel increased in the Indian and Métis Branch. I wish you would tell Ferd Ewald to get on



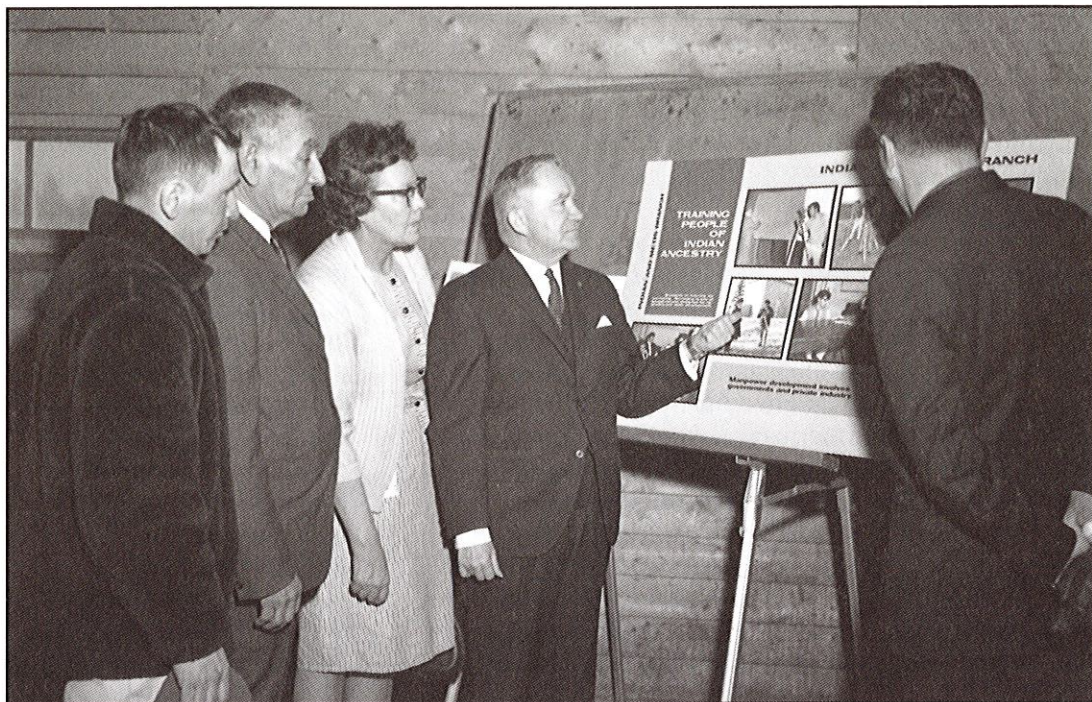
with what he has.”<sup>27</sup> Ewald confessed he was “bewildered” by this message. He thought it was unreasonable for the premier to expect so much in the way of “placement, housing, educational upgrading, developing leadership, etc.,” but to refuse to provide the staff necessary to do the job.<sup>28</sup> What made Thatcher’s position even more aggravating to Ewald was the fact that half the cost of employing more placement officers would be paid for by the federal government. In April 1965 Saskatchewan signed a five-year federal-provincial Agricultural Rehabilitation and Development Act (ARDA) agreement, which covered programs for Indian lands and Indian people.<sup>29</sup>

Thatcher, for his part, believed that Ewald was not deploying his staff effectively: “I continue to be absolutely puzzled by your weekly reports. Week after week, we have about two employees reporting placements. We have a staff of 12. It occurs to me that there are too many generals in your department and not enough men in the field. I expect this matter to be rectified and I would like to discuss it with you at the earliest possible moment.”<sup>30</sup> Allan Guy and Natural Resources Minister John Cuelenaere came to Ewald’s defence. They pointed out that the Indian and Métis branch was responsible for administering the Green Lake farm and forestry operation, an economic development project for Métis people that had been operating for several years, as well as housing projects. Other staff were needed for general administration and clerical support.<sup>31</sup> Thatcher was unmoved: “I regret that I cannot agree with any further increase in the Indian and Métis Branch. Please keep your personnel precisely where it is.”<sup>32</sup>

Thatcher instructed that the branch be reduced from eighteen to sixteen for the budget year 1966-67. This resulted in the elimination of the entire Research and Planning Division and some clerical positions. However, he bowed to the pleas of Ewald, Guy, and Cuelenaere by giving permission to hire three additional placement officers.<sup>33</sup> Despite the premier’s extreme reluctance to expand the bureaucracy, he could be swayed by political considerations. In the run-up to the 1967 election, Deputy-Premier Dave Stuart reported

that he was under great pressure to place a community development officer in the Indian Head-Fort Qu’Appelle-Melville-Balcarres areas: “In view of the fact that the Indian population in this area could affect at least four of the provincial seats we now hold, I would recommend that we be given permission to add one employee and vehicle to our establishment.”<sup>34</sup> Thatcher jotted on the memo: “With a lack of enthusiasm, I agree. Can he produce?” Indian administration was obviously not immune from partisan politics.

Despite the branch’s single-minded focus on job placement, there were signs that the program was not working well. A follow-up study of 600 placements



Saskatchewan Archives Board, Saskatchewan Government Photo Collection, 66-1022-01

*Speaking to natives on the Sandy Lake Reserve, Dave Stuart outlines training programs available to Indians in Saskatchewan*

indicated that eighty-one percent resigned their jobs after working an average 3.8 weeks.<sup>35</sup> In 1966 Dave Stuart replaced John Cuelenaere as the Minister of Natural Resources with responsibility for the Indian and Métis branch. Sizing up the situation, Stuart saw an agency beset with problems: “Understaffed, limited budget, low salaries, confused chain of command, and lack of cooperation with federal departments and occasionally with some provincial departments.” His solution was “to launch a crash program aimed at placing 3 or 4 times as many Native people in jobs as we have up to this time.” The program would begin with government and crown corporations and then enlist the support of business and industry. After the drive was launched, “we should embark on a program to let the Indian and Métis people know what we are doing and ask for their help. I’m thinking of a number of teams



touring the Indian Reservations as one way to get them enthusiastic about what we are trying to do.”<sup>36</sup> The timing was interesting. First, the program would be implemented, and then Indians would be told about it.

Ewald had serious doubts about Steuart’s plan. The branch director thought that more groundwork and basic preparation had to be done: “Placing people indiscriminately throughout the province without their involvement, preparation and adequate follow-up is extremely frustrating to the individual and futile. It is time-consuming to the staff and public money is being spent unwisely.”<sup>37</sup> He advised that training courses were needed in “social orientation for living,” “simple work routine conditioning,” as well as specific job skills.<sup>38</sup> Instead of a crash program, Ewald favoured a more gradual community development approach. Community development represented an alternative to the traditional, paternalistic approach to social development.<sup>39</sup> It was a technique that had been widely applied in Third World areas, the essence of which was to bring about change “through the cooperation and involvement of the local people, with a view to achieving social and economic security.”<sup>40</sup> The emphasis was on self-government and self-administration, rather than the provision of services to residents of the community.

Ewald suggested spending modest sums of money to place skilled staff members in Indian and Métis communities. They would involve the local people, encourage their participation in working to solve their own problems and assist them in making maximum use of their own resources, turning to external resources only when necessary. Such a program would not be flashy or have immediate results, but, over the long haul, Ewald believed it would be more beneficial. Integration would succeed only if Indians wanted it. He hoped that through community development, Indians themselves would seek training, forego “traditional customs and conventions” and adopt the values and behaviour patterns of mainstream society.<sup>41</sup>

Premier Thatcher had little use for the concept of community development. His administrative style was very much “top-down,”<sup>42</sup> and he thought that community development wasted resources that could be devoted to job placement. Interviewed in 1994, Ewald said:

...he [Thatcher] didn’t want the truly community development [sic]. This he regarded as communism. As a matter of fact, when I heard this from him, I thought, well, I had better utilize some other terminology when I talk to him about things like that, and, as a matter of fact, we called it representational work. Anyway, he wanted Indians placed in jobs. He didn’t care if they were there the next day or not. It was a show sort of thing. It was political. It was totally political.<sup>43</sup>

Ewald’s assessment may be overly harsh, but there is no mistaking the policy clash. Thatcher believed in an individualistic strategy—helping individual Indians take

their place in the work force as part of the larger society—while Ewald favored a more community-based approach—enabling Indian communities to decide their own destinies. The latter approach was more in tune with the views of Indian leaders. Aboriginal representatives met with government officials on 20 December 1966 to discuss Steuart’s crash job placement plan. Chief Lawrence Thompson stressed the need for extensive counseling, pointing out that Indians had been living in isolated rural areas and required a great deal of assistance in orientating themselves toward employment in urban centres. Hilliard McNab expressed the view that immediate placement might be possible for those with appropriate education, but not for those with little formal training. Allan Ahenakew also advised caution, calling upon the government to consider the needs of reserve residents who were not able to move to the city. The consensus was that, while a placement program might be helpful, it could “fall flat if we go too quickly.”<sup>44</sup> FSI head Walter Deiter specifically recommended that a community development program precede job placement.

There was also evidence that Indians disliked the assimilative aspects of the Thatcher government’s program. The welfare office in Melville hired an Indian who quit after three months, complaining “You whites want to make a white man out of me. I am not interested.”<sup>45</sup> Walter Gordon, an Indian employed as a placement officer from 1965 to 1968, protested that the government expected Indians to give up their cultural identity when they entered the world of work:

Our [Indian and Métis] Branch is ignoring the basic problems. We are believing in false hopes if we think that we can create a mold to mold the people of Indian ancestry in. The white man believes in this mold and due to his belief, we the Indian people must, without question, accept it, because it is the white man’s money, his government, his directors. We have become aliens, after being the first citizens in Canada.<sup>46</sup>

Gordon identified a basic flaw in the government’s strategy. What it called “integration” was really assimilation. The Indian was supposed to leave the reserve, take up a job and adapt to the dominant society. True integration would have been a two-way street, in which both sides made adjustments to accommodate the other.

Ewald decided in January 1967 that his policy disagreement with Thatcher was so fundamental that he could no longer continue as director of the Indian and Métis branch.<sup>47</sup> His replacement was Wylie Spafford, an ex-Air Force officer from Moose Jaw.<sup>48</sup> The nature of the relationship between the new director and the premier was evident from an exchange reported in the *Regina Leader-Post*. Spafford was explaining to a public meeting why extensive counseling was necessary prior to job placement, when Thatcher interjected: “We can get on this counseling kick too far.” Spafford then had the effrontery to challenge the premier’s opin-



ion, whereupon Thatcher made it clear who was boss: "I just want you to remember your job is still to find jobs. And I will judge the branch by the number of job placements it makes."<sup>49</sup>

Spafford was able to report that in the four-month period from 1 April to 31 July, 1967, 832 persons of Indian ancestry were placed in jobs. This figure exceeded by twenty-two the total placements of the 1965-66 fiscal year and compared favorably with the 1,230 placements of 1966-67.<sup>50</sup> The numbers were deceptive, however. Even Premier Thatcher had to admit that "many of these individuals have not remained permanently on the job."<sup>51</sup> Addressing the Legislative Assembly on 5 March 1969, he warned that Saskatchewan was a "ticking time bomb" and that every effort had to be made "to stem a rising tide that threatens to become a major social disaster."<sup>52</sup> He announced that the Indian and Métis branch would be upgraded to full departmental status in order to achieve "a decided stepping-up of an action program."

The priorities of the new department were: "first, to find employment for native people throughout the province; secondly, to provide our natives with the educational upgrading and vocational training to equip them to take employment; thirdly, to help Indian people relocate, if necessary, and to ensure that adequate housing is available to them."<sup>53</sup> In other words, the department would do what its predecessor had done. There was no policy change, merely a bureaucratic restructuring.

David Ahenakew, elected chief of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians in 1969, objected to the fact that the Indian and Métis department had been established without consulting Indians. He asked for an amendment to the legislation creating the department. Where the bill read, "The department shall coordinate and carry out programs approved by the minister and designed to assist people of Indian ancestry," the FSI wanted it to read, "The department shall coordinate plans in consultation with Indian organizations."<sup>54</sup> Ahenakew was protesting against the provincial government's paternalism, its assumption that it knew what was best for Indians. He also sensed that provincial intrusion into Indian affairs might constitute a threat to the Indian relationship with the federal government: "Unless we can get guarantees in writing that our sacred treaty rights will not be jeopardized, we cannot accept the department."<sup>55</sup>

The Liberals denied that Indians had not been consulted. Allan Guy said that Thatcher had spent more time visiting reserves and northern settlements than had any other premier: "This is about the best form of consultation that you can find when the head of the Government and his colleagues go into reserves, sit down and hold meetings and talks with the chiefs, the local councilors and the people, pat the children on the head and ask them how they are doing in school."<sup>56</sup> The

comment shows that the government did not regard the FSI as the legitimate voice of the Indians of Saskatchewan. Thatcher believed he could go "over the head" of the FSI directly to the people on the reserves. Moreover, the quote hints that the premier practiced a patronizing, "pat-on-the-head" type of consultation. He said that the time for consultation was over. Everybody knew that Indians urgently needed jobs, education, and housing; the time had come for action.<sup>57</sup>

The premier ignored Ahenakew's argument that Indian organizations should be involved in designing



Saskatchewan Archives Board, S-B5171.

*Premier Ross Thatcher addressing a class of Native students, ca. 1970.*

and implementing the programs intended to meet these needs. The FSI chief had concrete suggestions for improvements. According to the *Leader-Post*:

He [Ahenakew] contends that comprehensive education and upgrading programs must come before job placement. 'They (natives) don't know anything about what it's like outside their small community,' he said. They have to learn to go to work every day and simply 'the way things are—like what an inside toilet is.' If people are moved from reserves into the city without having had this most basic education, they won't last two weeks in their new jobs, and will be worse off than before, Mr. Ahenakew said. 'The problem with the Indian and Métis branch is that its prime and only purpose is to find jobs, and I'm afraid this is going to be the same thing,' he said.<sup>58</sup>

The government, ignoring FSI criticism, went ahead with its plans. Thatcher offered the position of deputy-minister of the new department to Métis leader Howard Adams. When Adams declined, the premier said there were no other qualified Aboriginal candidates available,<sup>59</sup> and the job was given to James S. Sinclair, the former head of the northern affairs branch of the Department of Natural Resources. The Indian and Métis department was organized in three sections: an administrative branch, a placement and training branch, and an economic development branch. The administrative branch, with six staff members in 1971, provided



administrative support and staff service to the department. The placement and training branch had twenty staff members and placed a total of 1,886 Indian and Métis people in jobs in fiscal year 1969-1970, and 1,874 in 1970-71. The jobs were about evenly split between government and the private sector.<sup>60</sup> Most of them were short-term rather than permanent, which suggests that the department served the casual labour needs of employers.<sup>61</sup> However, the key question as to how long workers remained in their jobs, regardless of whether the jobs were short-term or permanent, was unanswered. The department simply did not keep track of this sort of information.

From the time the Thatcher government assumed office, it encouraged both government and non-government employers to hire people of Indian ancestry. Initially, the program was voluntary, but in 1970 the government imposed formal hiring requirements on contractors and institutions receiving public funds. Recipients of government contracts were obliged to employ a minimum of fifteen percent native employees in areas where the population was predominantly Indian or Métis and five percent in other areas of the province. Hospitals in predominantly native centres had to employ fifteen percent staff of native ancestry. The quota for hospitals in major urban centres was six percent, and for smaller hospitals and special care homes, five percent. These levels were to be attained by the end of the 1973-74 fiscal year.<sup>62</sup>

One of the functions of the placement and training branch was to arrange for upgrading courses to be conducted by the Department of Education at a number of rural and urban communities throughout the province. Courses leading to grade twelve certificates were offered, as well as skill development and trades courses. The latter included driver education, welding, radio and television repair, heavy equipment operation, motor vehicle mechanics, building construction and forestry operations. Other courses led to certificates qualifying individuals to work as nursing assistants, bookkeepers, stenographers, and laboratory and X-ray technicians, surveyors and in other semi-professional careers. Financial assistance was given to sixteen Indian and Métis students attending university in 1970-71 and to more than twenty others completing high school by correspondence or at night school.<sup>63</sup>

In addition to arranging upgrading and training, the placement branch found housing for Indian and Métis people who moved into urban centres to take up jobs. The Department of Municipal Affairs bought houses throughout the province for rental at subsidized rates. Placement officers selected applicants for these houses and provided family counseling related to home upkeep, budgeting, health care, shopping, and so on.<sup>64</sup> At the end of the 1970-71 fiscal year, a total of 145 houses had been purchased by the province for use in this program.<sup>65</sup>

The third unit in the Indian and Métis department was the economic development branch. With seven staff members in 1971, it helped people of Indian ancestry establish business enterprises by providing advice and guaranteeing loans to a maximum for each project of \$5000. Native-owned companies were also eligible for grants of up to \$2000. An example was Native Metal Industries of Regina, with sixty employees in 1971, which supplied scrap metal to a local steel and pipe maker. Other native-controlled enterprises included tourist camps and outfitting businesses, as well as cattle raising, pulp cutting and market gardening ventures.<sup>66</sup>

An overview of the Thatcher government's record in Indian and Métis programming during its seven years in office reveals impressive statistics. There were over 8,000 job placements, although a large, but indeterminate, number of those placed in jobs quit after a brief interval. Some 5,100 Indians and Métis attended academic upgrading and training courses at a cost of \$5,623,000. About 300 new homes were built in northern Saskatchewan, and 145 rental homes were purchased in urban centres. Over \$300,000 was provided in grants for eighteen economic development projects.<sup>67</sup>

Thatcher was proud of his record and claimed at an election rally in 1971 that Saskatchewan led the rest of Canada in Indian and Métis development programs:

We decided the only way to break the vicious cycle of poverty, ignored by the previous CCF-NDP administration, was to give the native people equal opportunities for obtaining work. As a result, we established the first provincial Indian and Métis department in Canada ... . By having equal opportunity for obtaining jobs, they could improve their standard of living and regain their self-respect lost through years of dependency on welfare.<sup>68</sup>

However, FSI chief David Ahenakew had a far different assessment: "The Indian people have never asked for a second bureaucracy to be created by another level of government."<sup>69</sup>

What had gone so wrong for the Thatcher government? Why were its efforts to improve the lot of Indian people so out of step with the thinking of these same people? A large part of the answer was that Premier Thatcher, who dominated policy-making in his government, never really listened to Indian people, but tried to impose his own ideas on them. His preoccupation with job placement grew out of his right-of-centre political philosophy, his opposition to welfare programs, and his desire to see tangible, quantifiable results. He had little awareness of the legacy of conquest and did not understand the desire of Indian people to preserve their culture, traditions, and treaty rights. His vision of the future was that Indians would be economically integrated and culturally assimilated into the dominant society. As a result, he did not see a role for the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians as a voice or centre of



power for Indian people. As the years passed from the 1960s into the 1970s, the Indian movement for self-determination grew stronger and the FSI became a better funded and more effective organization. Thatcher did not change with the times; his views in 1971 were the same as they had been in 1964. Consequently, the gap between him and the FSI grew wider and wider, until, at the end, he was left stranded and isolated from Indian reality.

There were in the 1960s stirrings of reform in the federal Indian Affairs branch. In 1964, a community development program was initiated to encourage local decision making and phase out the hierarchical, paternalistic Indian Affairs management style. Although complaints from superintendents and agents who resented this challenge to their authority led to the program's cancellation in 1968, it did have some impact. It was replaced with a band councilor leadership training program.<sup>70</sup> In addition, the Indian Affairs branch in 1965 appointed Indian advisory councils at both national and regional levels.<sup>71</sup> Through these councils, Indian representatives could express their views on proposed revisions to the Indian Act and on other matters affecting them. Like the community development program, the advisory councils gave rise to controversy. Some Indians protested that the government ignored their recommendations; others said that the councils competed with Indian organizations who better represented Indian viewpoints. Although the experiment was

discontinued in 1967, it was not a complete failure. The advisory councils gave Indians the opportunity of getting together to discuss issues of common interest, and they allowed some limited Indian input into policy formulation.<sup>72</sup>

In Saskatchewan, there were signs of grassroots activism at the reserve level. For example, the File Hills Community Club was formed in 1964 to sponsor adult education courses and self-development programs for teenagers. Liz Pinay, a reserve resident, explained that money for the club had been raised through raffles, fowl suppers, bingos, rummage sales, and a canteen operated on a voluntary basis. She said the aim of the club was community self-betterment: "If education is the answer to our problems, then we intend to stop wasting our time brooding and get to work."<sup>73</sup> In 1966, an adult education program was conducted at Standing Buffalo reserve. Financed by the federal Indian Affairs branch, it was organized with the help of an advisory committee of reserve residents. Two members of the committee, Vivian and Bernice Yuzicapi, published a newsletter twice a month.<sup>74</sup> The first graduation ceremony took place in March 1966, when twelve adults received their grade three diplomas. John Ferguson, the teacher, noticed a transformation among the students: "Slowly their self-respect and confidence, which had disintegrated over the years, returned, and they started making their own decisions." He noted that they organized the graduation ceremony, cleaned and decorated the building,

and raised money to feed the guests, all without consulting him.<sup>75</sup> On the Gordon reserve, William McNabb, a 30-year-old Indian health officer, started a combined newsletter and newspaper in 1966. Copies were distributed to the Gordon, Poor Man's, Day Star, and Muskowekan reserves. He said he avoided politics, but his goal was to get people thinking: "We've been asleep for so long I feel this may be the only way of getting to the people. We need a paper to educate our people to help them see what others are doing to help themselves."<sup>76</sup>

Indian women, too, were dissatisfied with the status quo. A



Photography Alan Hill. Saskatchewan Archives Board, Saskatchewan Government Photo Collection, S-B5957.

Mrs. Angela Soloman, Patuanak, works on birch bark baskets, 1961



provincial conference of Indian women attracted sixty delegates to Fort Qu'Appelle in the fall of 1967. The organizer was Gladys Johnston, a community development officer working for the federal Indian Affairs branch. The stated purpose was "to demonstrate to society that Indians are not all sitting back on their reserves doing nothing. We are concerned. We have potential leaders and we are going to start moving." As one delegate remarked, "We're tired of asking permission from the white man for everything we do."<sup>77</sup> The women chose Mary Ann Lavallee of Cowessess reserve and Rose Ewack of White Bear to present a brief dealing with child welfare to the next conference of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians. The brief stated that too many children were being neglected, left without food, heat or supervision, and it called for the extension of provincial child welfare services to the reserves.<sup>78</sup>

The activism occurring on some reserves was accompanied by a renewed pride in indigenous culture and tradition. The pow-wow at Standing Buffalo reserve near Fort Qu'Appelle in July 1967 drew about 3000 dancers and observers. Reverend Adam Cuthand commented: "Here the emphasis is placed on helping Indians accept themselves with pride, as Indians. That is the only way they can become better citizens. It reminds them that Indians have a heritage and a culture they created themselves, without any help from the white man."<sup>79</sup> Another participant simply said, "A pow-wow is one thing civil servants can't tell us how to run." Significantly, federal Indian Affairs minister Arthur Laing attended the pow-wow and took the opportunity to say that the Indian Act was being revised "so that the Indian will have a great deal more freedom to manage his own affairs."<sup>80</sup>

Some modest progress toward band self-administration occurred during the 1960s. By 1969, eighteen bands were administering their own social assistance programs, and a few bands had assumed responsibility for house construction, road construction, and police work.<sup>81</sup> More than \$2,000,000 in annual expenditures had been transferred from the Indian Affairs department to band level. Efforts were made by Indians to take control of Indian education. For example, conflict ensued when a group of parents in the Lebret area held meetings in 1969 to plan a takeover of the residential school. The regional superintendent of Indian education complained of not being invited to the meetings, and, when he went uninvited, complained of being treated rudely, shouted down, and insulted. "I won't go again unless they're prepared to be reasonable and listen to me," he said.<sup>82</sup> By the end of the year, Ottawa had ceded control of the school to the local community.

There were other occasions when Indian assertiveness led to clashes with the Indian Affairs department. In June 1967, a group of eighteen Indians from Carry the Kettle reserve planned a demonstration at the Indian Affairs offices in Regina. They called off the event

when they were granted a special meeting with department officials. The protesters were primarily concerned about housing conditions and drinking water. Edith Thompson told of houses eighteen by twenty-two feet occupied by eight to ten persons. Another member of the delegation said there was frost three feet high on the inside wall during the winters and "there is no end of colds for the little ones." Only one pure water well was available for 700 persons. "Most of us drink slough water," one woman interjected, "Two babies died because they drank that water—and [people] are still drinking it."<sup>83</sup>

Many of the themes of the Indian movement in the 1960s were captured in a speech by activist Mary Ann Lavallee to the National Conference on Indian and Northern Education at Saskatoon in March 1967. She said that Indians wanted "an opportunity to fulfill our destinies and use our mental capabilities." Indians had been "puppets too long, dancing to the tune of a bureaucratic hierarchy of administration and officialdom." Indians wanted to be listened to: "You don't listen because you know better anyway. Is it any wonder we have turned a deaf ear to government?" Lavallee maintained that "white society has squeezed the pride, tradition, and culture out of Indians, like juice from an orange and called the residue the Indian problem." Indians wanted to maintain their distinct native heritage; they did not want to be "carbon-copy white men." She said that "thus far Canada's first citizens have been misrepresented and misinterpreted, producing a distorted image of Indian people which is magnified by crude jokes on television." Non-Indian school children needed to learn the true facts about Indians. "Indian treaties should be taught in the schools as is the Treaty of Versailles, and other Indian matters should be given equal treatment with events outside Canada."<sup>84</sup>

These concepts of cultural pride and self-determination were expressed institutionally in the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians. The FSI came into existence in 1958, when the Saskatchewan government sponsored a conference of chiefs and councilors at Valley Centre, Fort Qu'Appelle, to discuss the extension of voting and liquor rights to Indians. Although the delegates did not support either proposal, they did elect an Indian Advisory Committee, composed of one person from each of the nine agencies, to help plan the next conference and to do "educational work" concerning the franchise and liquor rights on the reserves. The Advisory Committee doubled as the provisional executive of the FSI, which was formed when the delegates at the 1958 conference voted to merge the Union of Saskatchewan Indians with the Queen Victoria Protective Association.<sup>85</sup> The constitution was approved at the 1959 conference, and the FSI officially came into being.<sup>86</sup> Beginning in 1961-62, the provincial government gave the Federation an annual grant of \$7500, sufficient to pay for an annual conference and publish a newsletter.<sup>87</sup> The size of the



grant was increased to \$10,000 in 1963-64.<sup>88</sup>

The provincial government continued the funding at \$10,000 per year from 1964 to 1971. The fact that the grant was not increased was a definite sign that Thatcher did not wish to see the FSI grow in strength and influence. Ferd Ewald, director of the provincial Indian and Métis branch, limited the Federation's role to "[assisting] in the dissemination of information on a wide range of matters of concern to Indian people, [and giving] the provincial government an indication of what Indian problems there are, and what programs may be established to meet them."<sup>89</sup> He made it sound as though the FSI was merely a conduit between the provincial government and the Indian people, rather than an independent force in its own right. In addition, the evidence suggests that in the mid 1960s the federal government was no more willing than the Saskatchewan government to accord status to the Federation. When the Indian Affairs department set up the Saskatchewan Indian Advisory Council in 1965, it gave nine seats to elected representatives from the various agencies as well as one seat to each of three organizations: the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians, the Queen Victoria Treaty Protective Association, and the Qu'Appelle Valley Chiefs. In the eyes of Ottawa, the FSI had not yet established itself as the dominant organization representing Saskatchewan Indians.

The role of the Federation began to change when Walter Deiter was elected chief in 1966. He was an employee of the provincial Indian and Métis branch, and had been active in the Native Alcohol Council, as well as president of the Indian and Métis Friendship Centre in Regina. Thatcher appointed him to the board of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation in 1967, the first person of Indian ancestry to hold this position.<sup>90</sup> Under Deiter's leadership, the FSI was transformed from an advisory body to a program delivery organization. He pointed out that while federal and provincial governments administered many programs intended to improve the Indian standard of living, little progress had been made because of poor communication between Indians and government officials. He proposed that the FSI hire communication workers to explain government programs to people on reserves. These workers would also help reserve residents identify their problems and develop plans to overcome them.<sup>91</sup>

W.R. Parks, the deputy minister of the Department of Natural Resources, seemed cool to the FSI's plans. He referred to the proposed communications officers as "so-called communications officers,"<sup>92</sup> and he said that Walter Deiter was "becoming increasingly pushy."<sup>93</sup> The province declined to give funds for the communications program, but Ottawa proved more helpful. Support came, not from Indian Affairs, but rather through the Agricultural Rehabilitation and Development Act agreement. With a budget of \$69,000 in 1967-68, the FSI hired six communications workers.<sup>94</sup>

Deiter believed that Indians had suffered too long under the paternalism of the Indian Affairs department: "No Indian that was taught to think for himself could live under that administration. It wasn't up until too recently I could make a phone call and ask for an appointment—they didn't have any respect for my phone call or my appointment or anything." He stood for Indian self-government and the defence of treaty rights. He wrote in 1968 that treaties were solemn commitments made by "sovereign states," and that "there is little hope that Indian people will willingly participate in any programs of extension of normal provincial services to Indian reserves, without constitutional assurances of their rights."<sup>95</sup> Deiter did not classify himself as a militant extremist: "I don't go along with the idea of Black Power or Red Power ... ." He said that Indians were by nature a peaceful people: "They don't have any of these notions of revolution or wanting to control the whole world." He added, however, that Indians might have to be tougher and more demanding in order to secure their goals.<sup>96</sup>

In 1969, David Ahenakew of Sandy Lake succeeded Deiter as FSI chief. Ahenakew, at the age of eighteen, had joined the Canadian army and served for sixteen years in various parts of the world, including Korea and West Germany.<sup>97</sup> He retired from the military in 1967 and joined the provincial Indian and Métis branch as a placement officer in the North Battleford region. When the FSI obtained funds from ARDA for community development, Ahenakew left the provincial government and went to work for the Federation. He disagreed fundamentally with what he called the Thatcher government's "push, push, push" approach. Ahenakew maintained that Indians should be allowed to develop in their own way and at their own speed. He called for twenty-year programs, not four-year programs. Some understanding of his thinking can be gained from an interview he did with Eric Malling of the *Leader-Post* in 1968:

Movements to improve the Indians' lot must start within the communities themselves and then move out gradually, said David Ahenakew, 34, an Indian community development worker stationed near North Battleford. Attempts to integrate Indians into white society individually have not been very successful, he said in an interview. Development projects organized by the poor people themselves may be less efficient than those created by experts, but they will have roots in the community and the support of the people, said Mr. Ahenakew . . . Indians know what their problems are but need information about the ways of solving them, he says. The reserves need to be organized and people need to understand each other . . . We need to get them organizing, thinking, planning and sweating. Then when they get stuck on a problem they will ask for outside assistance.<sup>98</sup>

An even more revealing insight into Ahenakew's goals comes from a conversation he had with John Ursan, his supervisor in the Indian and Métis branch.



Ursan hired Ahenakew as a job placement officer, and, about six months later, decided to pay him a visit to see how his placements were coming along:

And that's when I found out he wasn't doing placements, he was organizing [for the FSI]. And I said 'David, [here Ursan clapped] go at it boy. Do it.' And I didn't give a damn if I got one placement from him. He was just wonderful. He was going up to Meadow Lake and beyond. He was having a ball, very aggressive. After our meetings, he said, 'My wife has invited you for dinner with our family.' We had a lovely dinner . . . At eight o'clock the three children came down from upstairs with their pyjamas and each said, 'Good night, Mr. Ursan, it was nice meeting you,' and, as the kids went back upstairs, David said to me, 'That's what it's all about. If we can keep those kids from fighting your kids in the future and have a quiet revolution, then we've got it made, John.' And I'll tell you those words just cut through me. They were beautiful. And that's how David approached this thing. The quiet revolution.<sup>99</sup>

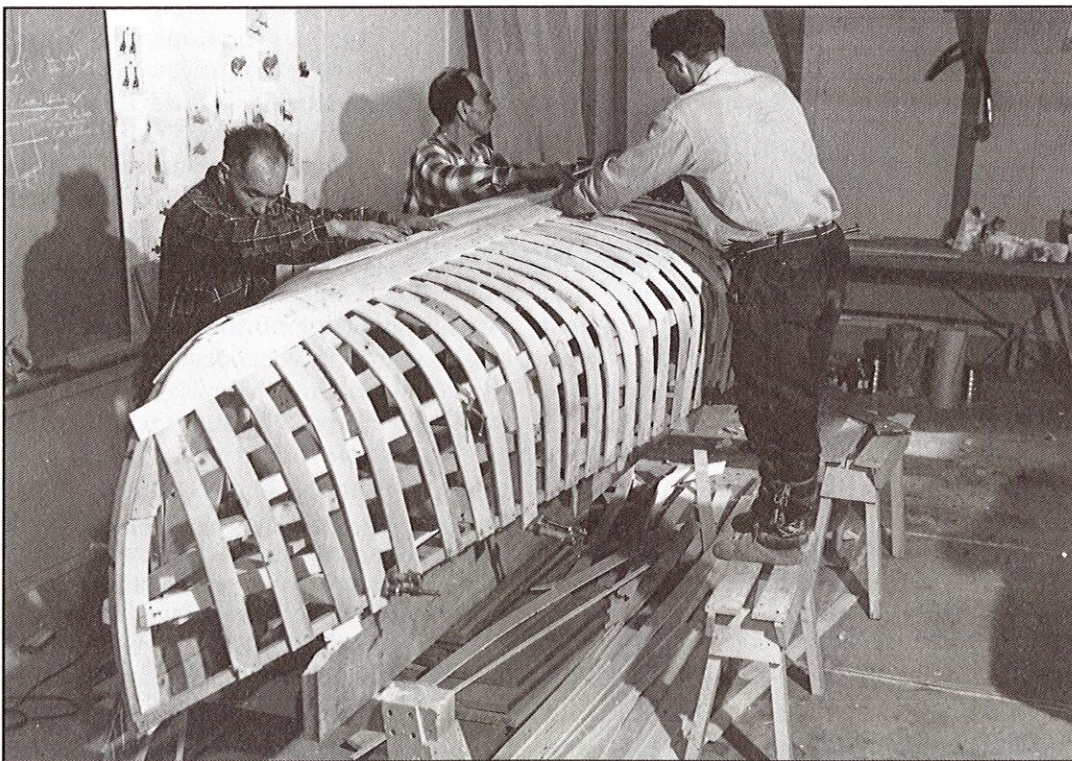
The revolution that Ahenakew had in mind would transform the relationship between Indians and non-Indians, replacing paternalism and subjugation with Indian cultural affirmation and self-determination. It would be a quiet transformation, accomplished through peaceful political methods, rather than violence or militant action.

Ahenakew had formulated these ideas well before the release of the federal government's 1969 White Paper on Indian policy, but the paper confirmed the need for

Indian political action. It recommended phasing out the separate legal category of "status Indian," eliminating the Indian Affairs department, transferring responsibility for delivering Indian services to the provinces, giving title to reserve land to Indians rather than the crown and moving away from treaty obligations.<sup>100</sup> Ahenakew immediately denounced the White Paper: "Right now I think there are really a lot of things in it contrary to the treaties. For that reason there'll be a lot of hollering and all kinds of pressure from the people."<sup>101</sup> His response was confirmed at a provincial gathering of chiefs and band councilors at Prince Albert in July 1969. As one delegate said, "When the Europeans came to our country, they took over our lands and left us nothing but reserves. Now they are trying to take our reserves away from us and still the white man is not satisfied. Now he wants to take over the moon. What next?"<sup>102</sup>

Although the White Paper came from the federal government, the angry reaction it generated spilled over to include the Saskatchewan government. Thatcher endorsed the document, calling it an "excellent start."<sup>103</sup> His policies, after all, ran along the same lines—the blurring of the distinction between Indians and Métis, the desire to take over from the federal government the delivery of services to Indians, and the push for integration. Thus, developments at the federal level once again affected provincial government/FSI relations, just as they had when the Indian Affairs branch launched its community development program and when the FSI received funding through ARDA.

The impact of the White Paper became more concrete in December 1969 when J.C. McIsaac, Saskatchewan's Minister of Education, confirmed that negotiations were underway to transfer responsibility for Indian education from Ottawa to the province. The transfer was scheduled to become effective 1 April 1970. The FSI opposed the agreement, protesting that they had not been consulted and that the proposal was a direct violation of the treaties, which guaranteed that the federal government would maintain schools on reserves, whenever the Indians of the reserve desired it.<sup>104</sup> In addition, the FSI conference in April



Photographer Alan Hill. Saskatchewan Archives Board, Saskatchewan Government Photo Collection, S-B5953.

*Masters of their craft: Saskatchewan natives at work on a canoe, 1962.*



1971 requested the cancellation of an education agreement covering northern Saskatchewan that had been signed in 1968. Under the agreement, a provincially-appointed board controlled the education of all children in the north, whether they were treaty Indians or not. The resolution stated that Indian education was the sole responsibility of the federal government in accordance with the treaties and that responsibility for education in northern Saskatchewan had been transferred without meaningful consultation with the local people.<sup>105</sup> Several of the northern chiefs said they were not even aware that the takeover had occurred.<sup>106</sup>

The FSI established a task force to formulate its own education policy, receiving a \$115,000 federal grant for the purpose.<sup>107</sup> Indian control of Indian education emerged as an important goal. Rodney Soonias, a Cree from Red Pheasant reserve and co-chairman of the task force, pointed out that integrated schooling had, in practice, been a one-way street: "Lip service is paid to Indian students, but it doesn't go very deep. They are told, be proud you're an Indian, and in the next breath, learn your European history." Forcing Indian students into an educational system geared to non-Indians often caused an identity crisis. "If a person doesn't know who he is, if he can't find a peg to hang his hat on, so to speak, he becomes insecure. There is a good chance he will turn to suicide, alcoholism or become a dropout. When this happens, we say these people are deviants from society." In fact, Soonias argued, these people were symptoms of the social and cultural disintegration that was taking place. Integration would not be successful for Indian students until it was a two-way exchange process.<sup>108</sup>

Responding to the problems encountered by Indian students in integrated schools, the FSI established an Indian education and cultural centre in Saskatoon. Its chief aim was to develop a pride in Indian heritage and help "urban-bound Indians" acquire the basic knowledge and skills required to participate in Canadian society without losing their identity.<sup>109</sup> It was based on the principle that education had to take into account the whole Indian person—"his personality, his total culture and his ill-defined relationship with the larger society. We can no longer be content to display impressive statistics on the increased number of carpenters, mechanics, bricklayers and other tradesmen as proof of successful 'integration' programs."<sup>110</sup> Here was a convincing refutation of the Thatcher government's conceptualization of the Indian "problem" in economic terms only. The Indian cultural centre went into operation in September 1970, offering classes in Cree and Indian history and collecting tapes of stories told by Indian elders.<sup>111</sup>

In addition to asserting treaty rights in education, the FSI strongly defended treaty rights to medical care. A treaty Indian, Andrew Swimmer of North Battleford, was charged in 1966 with failing to pay his hospitaliza-

tion and medicare premium to the provincial government. The federal government paid the premium for Indians living on reserves and Indians who had lived off-reserve for less than twelve months. Swimmer, who had resided away from the reserve more than twelve months, maintained that the federal government had a treaty obligation to pay all his medical care costs. The magistrate's court in North Battleford agreed with him, but the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal over-ruled the lower court's decision.<sup>112</sup> The FSI paid for a lawyer to enable Swimmer to take his case to the Supreme Court of Canada, where he was ultimately successful.<sup>113</sup> In the meantime, the FSI asked the provincial government to refrain from charging treaty Indians hospital and medicare premiums.<sup>114</sup> When the government refused, Ahenakew expressed his annoyance: "What burns me is the provincial legislation. If it were not for that we wouldn't be in the Supreme Court."<sup>115</sup> The April 1971 conference of the FSI passed a resolution calling on Indians to turn in their provincial medicare cards and use treaty cards for medical services instead.<sup>116</sup>

The vigorous defence of treaty rights was only one sign of the dynamism of the FSI in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The November 1969 conference approved a motion seeking control of the federal Indian Affairs department's community development program.<sup>117</sup> The federal government responded with a grant to the FSI of \$380,000 for this purpose in 1971-72.<sup>118</sup> In July 1970, the FSI published the first edition of its own newspaper, *The Saskatchewan Indian*, enabling it to keep its members better informed and give them an outlet to express their views.<sup>119</sup> Another FSI initiative, funded by a \$250,000 federal grant, was a recreation program to encourage organized sports on the reserves.<sup>120</sup> The federal government also gave \$18,000 to the FSI to carry out a housing survey.<sup>121</sup> Between 1969 and 1972, the Federation's annual budget mushroomed from \$70,000 to in excess of \$1.5 million, and, by 1972, it employed 119 people to run its programs.<sup>122</sup>

The emergence of the FSI as a strong organization with a large budget was a concern for the provincial government. An unsigned memorandum emanating from the provincial Indian and Métis department, dated September 1969, noted that the FSI was following a policy of "separatism" and special status for Indians.<sup>123</sup> The memo went on to observe that:

... if the FSI received large grants from the provincial government to carry out programs of community development, adult education, job placement, etc. (as had happened in Alberta and to a lesser extent Manitoba), it is evident that the FSI would be strengthened—it would have a large staff and in fact would soon become larger than the Saskatchewan Indian and Métis Department and, eventually, if the federal Indian department is phased out, the province would be left to deal with a large militant organization which would not take kindly to proposals that Indians become nothing more or less than ordinary citizens of the province.<sup>124</sup>



The memo identified the crux of the issue. Who would dominate, the provincial Indian and Métis department or the FSI? Would Saskatchewan Indians enjoy treaty rights and self-determination or would they be treated the same way as all other citizens? The Thatcher government made its decision. By refusing to give the FSI money for program delivery, the government signaled its intention to continue its policy of assimilation and prevent the FSI from superseding the Indian and Métis department. The province continued to give its modest annual grant of \$10,000, the same amount it had given the Federation since 1964. The FSI, for its part, made clear its aversion to provincial government involvement in treaty Indian affairs. As James S. Sinclair, deputy-minister of the provincial Indian and Métis department, commented in August 1970: "It appears that the FSI has little intention of working with the province in any program at present."<sup>125</sup>

The provincial government also questioned the support the federal government was giving the FSI. Allan Guy, the Indian and Métis minister, wrote Robert Stanbury, minister responsible for the federal Department of Secretary of State, noting "with great interest" the approval of very large grants to the FSI. Guy wanted to know "the nature and purpose of these grants and whether a commitment has been made to continue them for several years." He asked for copies of the agreements between the FSI and the federal government.<sup>126</sup> The federal government was not intimidated, however, and its funding of the FSI continued.<sup>127</sup>

By the time the Thatcher government was defeated in the June 1971 election, its Indian policy was in a shambles. The policy had been very much a reflection of the ideas of Premier Thatcher himself. He seemed genuinely concerned about the poor living conditions experienced by many Indian people, and he wanted definite action to alleviate the situation. His solution was to find jobs for Indians enabling them to share in the economic wealth of the province and to integrate with the rest of society. Superficially, the job placement program was a success. Each year large numbers of individuals were placed in jobs both in government and in the private sector. However, the numbers masked the fact that two-thirds of the jobs were temporary, not permanent, and that, whether the jobs were temporary or permanent, most of the individ-

uals placed in them quit after a short time. Integration was a one-way street. Indians were expected to submerge their identity as the price of economic success; non-Indians were not expected to make any accommodation or adjustment other than to "accept" the presence of Indians among them. When Ferd Ewald, the director of the provincial Indian and Métis branch, recommended a shift in policy from job placement to community development, Thatcher refused to change course, forcing Ewald's resignation.

Community development was an approach that encouraged Indian communities to make decisions for themselves. It was based on the principle that development programs would not work unless the people involved in the program believed it belonged to them. Community development workers were not supposed to tell people what to do, but rather help them to be independent and self-determining. After the provincial government rejected community development, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians, with the aid of federal funding, took it up. Community development suited



Saskatchewan Archives Board, Saskatchewan Government Photo Collection, 66-751-02.

*The man who would be Chief. Premier Thatcher receives a blanket from William Francis of Kabkewestakaw Reserve.*

the needs of the FSI as it tried to break free of the paternalistic control of the federal Indian Affairs department and the equally paternalistic policies of the provincial government.

The rallying point for Saskatchewan Indians was treaty rights. This was as true at the beginning of the Thatcher government, when the FSI objected to treaty Indians being lumped together with Métis at the provincial government-sponsored conference in 1964, as it was at the end of the Thatcher government, when the FSI fought for treaty rights to education and medical care. At the same time, however, a "quiet revolution" had occurred. Under the leadership of Walter Deiter and David Ahenakew, the FSI was a more effec-



tive organization than it had been at the beginning of the 1960s. It had a substantial budget, strong leadership, and support at the grassroots level where cultural pride, self-confidence, and self-determination were growing. When the federal government's White Paper was released in 1969, the FSI was ready to mount a powerful defence of treaty rights.

The Thatcher government was one in spirit with the

White Paper. It believed in assimilation, not group rights; provincial responsibility for Indian affairs, not federal jurisdiction; and equality of citizenship, not special status. It was totally out of step with the "quiet revolution," as Saskatchewan treaty Indians affirmed their cultural values, asserted their rights, and declared their freedom to make their own decisions.

## Endnotes

- 1 Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, *Debates*, W.R. Thatcher, 30 March 1965.
- 2 Dale Eisler, *Rumours of Glory: Saskatchewan and the Thatcher Years* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1987), 146.
- 3 Interview, Ferd Ewald, 24 May 1994.
- 4 Saskatchewan Archives Board (SAB), J.R. Barrie Papers, R-10 VII 48a, Conference Between the Province of Saskatchewan and the People of Indian Ancestry, 22-24 September 1964, Premier Thatcher's speech.
- 5 *Ibid.*
- 6 Thatcher's aversion to welfare dependency was so strong that he instructed his Minister of Social Welfare to be "absolutely ruthless" in withholding assistance from the able-bodied. Eisler, *Rumours of Glory*, 142.
- 7 Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 6 March 1957.
- 8 Eisler, *Rumours of Glory*, 39.
- 9 *Ibid.*, 41.
- 10 *Ibid.*, 116-117.
- 11 Regina *Leader-Post*, 7 March 1969.
- 12 For example, a Regina *Leader-Post* editorial of 10 July 1968 blamed Euro-Canadians for "forgetfulness" in their treatment of Aboriginal people, but nothing more: "In the hurry up process of turning the wilderness into farms, villages, towns and cities, the displaced were herded into reserves and almost forgotten. Their descendants, native or Métis, cannot be forgotten any longer." In a recent book, Melvin H. Smith attacks the notion of Euro-Canadian collective guilt: "First and foremost, Canadians have allowed ourselves to be overwhelmed with a collective sense of guilt over alleged past dealings with native peoples. We should not have allowed ourselves to be thus overwhelmed." Melvin H. Smith, *Our Home or Native Land?* (Victoria: Crown Western, 1995), 251-254.
- 13 Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, *Debates*, W.R. Thatcher, 5 March 1969.
- 14 The constitution of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians adopted in 1959, listed "protecting treaties and treaty rights" as the first aim of the organization. SAB, W.S. Lloyd Papers, R-61.4 IX 130a (9-12), "Indian Outlook," May 1963.
- 15 Regina *Leader-Post*, 23 September 1964.
- 16 Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix*, 25 September 1964.
- 17 Barrie Papers, R-10 VII 51a, W. Bellegarde and A. Ahenakew to W.R. Thatcher, 18 December 1964.
- 18 The CCF governments under T.C. Douglas and W.S. Lloyd had followed the same policy. See James M. Pitsula, "The Saskatchewan CCF Government and Treaty Indians, 1944-64," *The Canadian Historical Review* 75 (1994).
- 19 Barrie Papers, R-10 VII 48a, A Submission from the Government of Saskatchewan on the Administration of Indian Affairs, August 1964; *Leader-Post*, 29 October 1964.
- 20 Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, *Debates*, W.R. Thatcher, 30 March 1965.
- 21 Barrie Papers, R-10 VII 53b, W. Churchman, Deputy-Minister of Natural Resources, to Cuelenaere, 22 March 1965. When Ewald began recruiting staff, he received a call from a government official asking for a list of all the applicants. The list was returned with asterisks beside certain names. Ewald was told not to hire any of the persons so designated because they were "socialists." Interview, Ferd Ewald, 24 May 1994.
- 22 *Ibid.*, R-10 VII 50a, Allan Guy, Legislative Secretary to the Minister Department of Natural Resources (DNR), to Cabinet Ministers and government Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), 14 January 1966.
- 23 *Leader-Post*, 26 October 1965.
- 24 *Ibid.*, 18 November 1965.
- 25 Barrie Papers, R-10 VII 50a, Allan Guy to the Minister DNR, to Cabinet ministers and government MLAs, 14 January 1966.
- 26 *Ibid.*, R-10 VII 50a, Ewald to Thatcher, 22 October 1965.
- 27 *Ibid.*, R-10 VII 53c, Thatcher to Cuelenaere, 2 November 1965.
- 28 *Ibid.*, R-10 VII 53c, Ewald to Cuelenaere, 5 November 1965.
- 29 *Leader-Post*, 9 April 1965. The budget of the Indian and Métis branch for 1965-66 was \$475,000.
- 30 Barrie Papers, R-10 VII 50a, Thatcher to Cuelenaere, 18 November 1965.
- 31 *Ibid.*, R-10 VII 53c, Cuelenaere and Guy to Thatcher, 16 November 1965.
- 32 *Ibid.*, R-10 VII 53c, Thatcher to Cuelenaere, 18 November 1965.
- 33 *Ibid.*, R-10 VII 53c, Cuelenaere to Thatcher, 4 January, DRAFT.
- 34 *Ibid.*, R-10 VII 53d, Dave Steuart to Ross Thatcher, 19 May 1967.
- 35 *Ibid.*, R-10 VII 53a, Ewald to Thatcher, 30 March 1966.
- 36 *Ibid.*, R-10 VII 53c, D.G. Steuart to W.R. Parks, F. Ewald, and R. Beeson, 28 October 1966.
- 37 *Ibid.*, R-10 VII 53c, Ewald to Steuart, 29 November 1966.
- 38 *Ibid.*, R-10 VII 53c, F. Ewald to D. Steuart, 29 November 1966.
- 39 *Ibid.*, R-10 VII 47a, Allan Guy to Cabinet Ministers and Government MLAs, 22 November 1965. For a critical view of community development, see Arthur K. Davis, "A Prairie 'Dust Devil,' The Rise and Decline of a Research Institute," *Human Organization* 27 (1968): 63.
- 40 Lloyd Papers, R-16.4 IX 130a (9-12), E. Wood to W.S. Lloyd, J.H. Brockelbank, R.A. Walker, A.E. Blakeney, 3 August 1962. The Lloyd government took some tentative steps towards implementing a community development program when it created the Community Development Branch in the Department of Municipal Affairs on 1 September 1962.
- 41 Barrie Papers, R-10 VII 53c, F. Ewald to D. Steuart, 29 November 1966.
- 42 Dale Eisler, in *Rumours of Glory*, comments repeatedly on Thatcher's "top-down" administrative style. See, for example, pages 141, 145, and 158.
- 43 Interview, Ferd Ewald, 24 May 1994.
- 44 SAB, Saskatchewan Indian and Métis Department Papers, R-354 3.1, Meeting with the Indian and Métis Representatives, 20 December 1966.
- 45 *Ibid.*, R-354 1.1, Dave Boldt to Ross Thatcher, 30 September 1966.
- 46 John Ursan Papers, private collection, W. Gordon to W.H. Spafford, 13 May 1968.
- 47 Publicly, Steuart denied there was any basic disagreement between himself and Ewald. *Leader-Post*, 12 January 1967.
- 48 Interview, James S. Sinclair, 4 August 1993.
- 49 *Leader-Post*, 3 December 1968.
- 50 *Ibid.*, 9 September 1967.
- 51 Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, *Debates*, W.R. Thatcher, 5 March 1969.
- 52 *Ibid.*
- 53 *Ibid.*
- 54 *Leader-Post*, 28 March 1969.
- 55 *Ibid.*



- 56 Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, *Debates*, A.R. Guy, 12 March 1969.
- 57 *Ibid.*, W.R. Thatcher, 12 March 1969.
- 58 *Leader-Post*, 7 March 1969.
- 59 Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, *Debates*, W.R. Thatcher, 12 March 1969.
- 60 In 1969-70, 909 job placements were in government and 977 in the private sector. The corresponding figures for 1970-71 were 892 and 982. *Annual Report*, Saskatchewan Indian and Métis Department, 1969-70; 1970-71.
- 61 In 1969-70, there were 599 placements in permanent jobs and 1287 in temporary jobs. The corresponding figures for 1970-71 were 452 and 1,422. *Annual Report*, Saskatchewan Indian and Métis Department, 1969-70; 1970-71.
- 62 *Annual Report*, Saskatchewan Indian and Métis Department, 1970-71.
- 63 *Ibid.*
- 64 *Ibid.*, 1969-70.
- 65 *Ibid.*, 1970-71.
- 66 SAB, Allan Guy Papers, R-47 I 18, minutes, Saskatchewan Task force on Indian Opportunity, 11 December 1969.
- 67 *Ibid.*, R-47 I 14, J.S. Sinclair to Mike Turgeon, 5 March 1971.
- 68 *Leader-Post*, 5 June 1971.
- 69 Guy Papers, R-47 I 8b, newspaper clipping, *Prince Albert Daily Herald*, 19 April 1971.
- 70 Sally M. Weaver, *Making Canadian Indian Policy: The Hidden Agenda, 1968-1970* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), 28.
- 71 Weaver, 29.
- 72 Peter McFarlane, *Brotherhood to Nationhood: George Manuel and the Making of the Modern Indian Movement* (Toronto, Between The Lines, 1993), 83-88.
- 73 *Leader-Post*, 11 March 1965.
- 74 *Ibid.*, 10 January 1966.
- 75 *Ibid.*, 5 March 1966.
- 76 *Ibid.*, 14 December 1966.
- 77 *Ibid.*, 10 November 1967.
- 78 *Ibid.*, 15 November 1967. This was an interesting recommendation because it indicated that not all Indians were opposed to the extension of provincial government services to Indian people. Indian opinion against provincial involvement seemed to harden after the release of the federal government's White Paper in 1969.
- 79 *Ibid.*, 17 July 1967.
- 80 *Ibid.*
- 81 *Ibid.*, 11 June 1969.
- 82 *Ibid.*, 22 April 1969.
- 83 *Ibid.*, 16 June 1967.
- 84 *Ibid.*, 30 March 1967.
- 85 SAB, T.C. Douglas Papers, R-33.1 XLV 864d (49) 4/6, Provincial Conference of Saskatchewan Indian Chiefs and Councilors, Valley Centres, Fort Qu'Appelle, 30 and 31 October 1958.
- 86 Lloyd Papers, R-61.4 IX 130a (9-12), "Indian Outlook," May 1963.
- 87 R. Woollam Papers (private collection), Provincial Committee on Minority Groups, Minutes, 14 January 1961.
- 88 Lloyd Papers, R-61.4 IX 130b (9-12), Cabinet Minute 2587, 24 September 1963.
- 89 *Leader-Post*, 1 June 1966.
- 90 *Ibid.*, 28 July 1967.
- 91 Barrie Papers, R-10 VII 51a, Walter Deiter to D.G. Steuart, 21 December 1966.
- 92 *Ibid.*, R-10 VII 51a, W.R. Parks to D.G. Steuart, 23 January 1967.
- 93 *Ibid.*, R-10 VII 51a, W.R. Parks to D.G. Steuart, 28 April 1967.
- 94 *Ibid.*, R-10 VII 51a, FSI executive minutes, 16 June 1967.
- 95 SAB, Cy MacDonald Papers, R-64 I 76c, Walter Deiter to C.P. MacDonald, received 19 December 1968.
- 96 *Leader-Post*, 20 January 1968.
- 97 University of Regina Archives, 90-29, Dr. Lloyd I. Barber Personal Papers, Section II, Indian and Native files, Federation of Saskatchewan Indians, Jack Sikand, "David Ahenakew: A Great Canadian."
- 98 *Leader-Post*, 16 May 1968.
- 99 Interview, John Ursan, 9 May 1995.
- 100 *Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy*, 1969.
- 101 *Leader-Post*, 26 June 1969.
- 102 *Ibid.*, 16 July 1969.
- 103 *Ibid.*, 5 August 1969. During the 1971 Saskatchewan election campaign, Frank Howard, NDP member of parliament for Skeena, alleged the complicity of the provincial Liberal government in the White Paper. "Mr. Howard said that the Saskatchewan [Indian and Métis] department was formed because the province had advance word that the federal government was going to try to get out of its responsibilities to the Indians, and because the Saskatchewan Liberals were only too willing to cooperate in treaty-breaking." *Leader-Post*, 15 June 1971. I found no evidence that the Thatcher government helped write or had foreknowledge of the White Paper.
- 104 *Ibid.*, 18 December 1969.
- 105 *Ibid.*, 14 March 1970.
- 106 *Ibid.*, 1 April 1971.
- 107 *Ibid.*, 10 March 1971.
- 108 *Ibid.*, 26 January 1970.
- 109 *Ibid.*, 9 June 1970.
- 110 Guy Papers, R-47 I 19, Saskatchewan Indian Cultural College, a proposal submitted to the Hon. Jean Chrétien by the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians.
- 111 *Leader-Post*, 21 October 1970.
- 112 *Ibid.*, 9 December 1970.
- 113 *Ibid.*, 5 January 1971.
- 114 *Ibid.*, 23 January 1971.
- 115 *Ibid.*, 31 March 1971.
- 116 *Ibid.*, 2 April 1971.
- 117 *Ibid.*, 3 November 1969.
- 118 *Ibid.*, 23 October 1970.
- 119 *Ibid.*, 15 July 1970.
- 120 *Ibid.*, 20 October 1970.
- 121 *Ibid.*, 25 June 1971.
- 122 Noel Dyck, "Representation and Leadership of a Provincial Indian Association," in Adrian Tanner, ed., *The Politics of Indianness: Case Studies of Native Ethnopolitics in Canada* (St. John's: Institute of Social and Economic Research, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1983), 240.
- 123 The Regina *Leader-Post* linked the idea of a separate Indian nation with treaty rights, but treated both concepts derisively. Following a meeting of Saskatchewan Indian chiefs to discuss the White Paper, the newspaper editorialized: "Indeed, many of the [Indian] leaders talked about treaties made long ago when Canada was a sparsely-settled region and some went so far as to talk about a separate Indian nation which would go back to the days before the white men came to this country - an impossible dream." *Leader-Post*, 26 July 1969.
- 124 Guy Papers, R-47 I 9, Comments about grants to FSI and Métis Society of Saskatchewan, September, 1969.
- 125 *Ibid.*, R-47 I 9, J.S. Sinclair to Clarence Estey, 24 August 1970.
- 126 *Ibid.*, R-47 I 9, Allan Guy to Robert Stanbury, 1 December 1970.
- 127 There was no love lost between the Saskatchewan Liberal government and the federal Liberal government. Ideologically, Thatcher was considerably to the right of his federal counterparts. See Dale Eisler, *Rumours of Glory*, 173-186.



# Saskatchewan Archives Board

News and Notes (from page 2)

## *Board Member Honored*

Geology professor William A.S. Sarjeant, member of the Saskatchewan Archives Board and Saskatchewan History Advisory Board, was one of two University of Saskatchewan professors elected this year to a Fellowship of the Royal Society of Canada. (Engineering Dean Peter Nikiforuk was the other). Dr. Sarjeant's citation reads:

William Sarjeant, University of Saskatchewan, has not only published numerous significant articles on fossil vertebrate footprints and fossilized microplankton but has also become a well-known authority on the history of geology. His book on fossil and living dinoflagellates is recognized as a leading text. Publications on acritarchs have received wide acclaim. His international bibliography covers all publications in the Latin Alphabet pertinent to the history of geology from its beginnings to 1984. The only one of its kind, and one which has brief biographies of authors as well as references, it has become an invaluable research tool for geologists and historians alike.

Professor Sarjeant has been a member of the Faculty of the University of Saskatchewan since 1972. He has been awarded the Sue Tyler Friedman medal of the Geological Society of London, the Founders' Medal of the Society for the History of Natural History and the History of Geology Award of the Geological Society of America. He has jointly written three works on the history of Saskatoon, most recently *Saskatoon: A Century in Pictures* (1982) and edits the annual *Saskatoon His-*



Photo: Sgt. Michel Roy, Government House.

*Dr. Sarjeant being congratulated by Governor-General Roméo LeBlanc over his election to a Fellowship of the Royal Society of Canada.*

*tory Review.* Under the pen-name ANTONY SWITHIN, he has published four novels of historical science fantasy, under the series title, *'The Perilous Quest for Lyonesse.'* A second Supplement to his bibliography of *Geologists and the History of Geology*, in three further volumes, is scheduled for publication early in 1996.

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## *New Acquisitions by the Saskatoon Office*

Two interesting manuscript collections have recently become fully open to research use in the Saskatoon office of the Saskatchewan Archives Board.

The Hinde Family Papers document the lives of the family of Joseph and Martha Hinde, who emigrated to Canada from England in 1912. The Hindes settled among fellow Quakers in the Halcyonia district near Borden, Saskatchewan, where their farm expanded into

a large livestock business operating under the name "Valley Springs Ranch." Besides documenting the life of a farm and ranching family through diaries, letters, memoirs and family histories, ranching business records, oral history interviews and photographs, the Hinde family's papers reflect their adherence to and involvement in the Society of Friends. Their Quaker ties remained strong — between Canada and England



— long after their emigration.

The Russell H. (Rusty) Macdonald Papers document the life, work and community activities of this well-known Saskatchewan citizen. After graduating from the University of Saskatchewan in 1938, Macdonald started in the newspaper business as a reporter-photographer with the Regina *Leader-Post*. His career as a journalist was interrupted by his service with the RCAF during World War Two, and again in 1946 when he worked as a veterans' advisor on studies at the University of Saskatchewan.

In 1949, Macdonald joined the *Western Producer* as a feature writer. He eventually became Executive Editor, a position he held from 1953 until his retirement in 1977. During this time, he was instrumental in developing the company's publishing arm, Western Producer-Prairie Books. After his retirement, Macdonald drew on his many years of experience to work as a private consultant on the publishing industry. He also wrote, compiled or contributed to several published books,

some of which were based on his own scenic photography.

Macdonald had been actively involved in student affairs while he studied at the University of Saskatchewan, and this interest evolved into six years of service on the University Senate. Also, he was a keen advocate of improved library services in the province, serving as Chairman of the Saskatchewan Library Development Board and as Chairman of the Saskatoon Public Library Board. He was recognized for his contributions to library advancement when a branch of the Saskatoon Public Library was named in his honour in April 1989. Macdonald currently resides in Victoria.

The Macdonald collection documents Rusty's personal life and family, his military career, and his community and professional activities up to 1989 in a variety of formats including correspondence, scrapbooks, manuscripts, subject files, sound recordings, and an extensive and well-described collection of photographs.



# Cogs in the Machine:

## The Charles Dunning-Jimmy Gardiner Feud

by Robert A. Wardhaugh



Saskatchewan Archives Board, R-B784.

*Dunning's nemesis: "The Relentless Liberal" James Gardiner.*



Saskatchewan Archives Board, R-B4537.

*Gardiner's antagonist: Charles Dunning, ca. 1930.*

On his deathbed, Jimmy Gardiner recalled some advice he once gave Mackenzie King. In the mid-1920s he told the prime minister to take Charles Dunning into the federal cabinet "rather than leave him back in Saskatchewan," because in the larger political arena, he would do less "harm."<sup>1</sup> These reminiscences reflected more than a healthy rivalry between two politicians who had both served the Liberal party as the premier of Saskatchewan and the provincial representative in the federal cabinet. Indeed, they reflected

a surprising degree of dissension that characterized the Saskatchewan Liberal party during its heyday of unrivaled success, an era when the party organization became known as "the machine." The animosity between Charles Dunning and Jimmy Gardiner had its roots in a feud going back to the early days of the province's history. The nature of the feud not only provides insight into the personalities of these two leaders, it also highlights the major issues that confronted Saskatchewan Liberalism. The conflict even helps explain the party's survival and success.

Charles Avery Dunning came to the Saskatchewan district from Leicestershire, England in 1902 at the age of seventeen. The youth worked as a farmhand and eventually staked out a homestead in the Yorkton area. By 1911 Dunning was representing his district for the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association (SGGA), serving as director and vice-president. He also became general manager of the newly-formed Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company; these appointments

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established the young man as a farm and business leader. In 1916 he made the move to politics and entered the Liberal government of W.M. Martin as provincial treasurer. By 1922 he was premier. Four years later the call came from Ottawa, and Dunning joined the federal government of Mackenzie King as minister of railways and canals. Within three years he was minister of finance, a position he took up again in 1935 after the Liberals were returned to power. After falling ill in 1939, Dunning resigned his office and spent the remainder of his career as a business man, financier and chancellor of Queen's University. He died in 1958.

James Garfield Gardiner came west from Ontario to Clearwater, Manitoba in 1901. He moved further west to teach school in Saskatchewan in 1904. After attending university in Manitoba, Gardiner returned to Saskatchewan in 1911 as principal of the local school in Lemberg; he also acquired a nearby farm. The future political heavyweight became involved with the Liberal party and was elected for the provincial constituency of North Qu'Appelle in 1914. In 1922 Gardiner received the highways portfolio. Four years later he succeeded Dunning as premier. His party suffered defeat in 1929, but he led the Liberals back to power in 1934. With the return to office of the federal Liberals under King in 1935, Gardiner went to the federal cabinet as minister of agriculture. After serving briefly as minister of national war services, he maintained his agricultural portfolio until 1957 and retired in 1958. The long-time Liberal died in 1962.

Personality played a large role in the animosity between the two politicians, but the quarrel was conditioned by the changing nature of Saskatchewan Liberalism. Prior to the granting of provincial status in 1905, politics in Saskatchewan were "non-partisan." The Liberal party, however, would soon move to the forefront. In the years following the Autonomy Acts, the party created an organizational "machine" that was unrivaled. The Liberals also took advantage of the popularity of Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier and his Liberal government in Ottawa. But an enemy soon appeared on the horizon that would threaten to divide Liberal ranks. The West was becoming increasingly disgruntled with its place in Confederation, and sectional discontent was leading to the rise of the farmers' movements. The defeat of the Laurier government in 1911 over the prairie dream of reciprocity provided impetus to what had become an agrarian revolt against the traditional political system. A wave of protest spread across the region and province; those not prepared to join seemed about to be overwhelmed.

Both Dunning and Gardiner emerged from farming backgrounds and had been active in the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association, but here their similarities ended. Pressure was mounting for the organized farmers to enter politics; the Liberals would have to decide whether to co-operate with the movement or fight it. The Liberal government in Saskatchewan had always

taken particular notice of agrarian discontent and was careful to cultivate the support of the organized farmers. The SGGA was consulted on agricultural legislation, and efforts were made to have its members enter the government. W.R. Motherwell, the first president of the Grain Growers, became the province's agricultural minister in 1905. George Langley, prominent member of the SGGA and the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company, entered the government in 1912. Charles Dunning entered the provincial government of Premier W.M. Martin in 1916. Dunning's strength lay in administration and the perception that he was non-partisan. The same could not be said of Jimmy Gardiner, who had joined the government as a backbencher two years earlier.

As long as it was the Liberals co-opting farm leaders and not the other way around, Gardiner had no objection. He would not, however, stand idly by while the Liberal citadel was stormed by the agrarian "rebels." The unrest did not appear to be subsiding, and questions were beginning to arise as to how far the Liberal government would go to keep the farmers contented. Gardiner was not prepared to see Liberalism compromised for the sake of political expediency. He also refused to acknowledge any break with the federal party in Ottawa. Being a Liberal in Saskatchewan entailed working for the party at both levels. If Gardiner hoped the issue would dissipate, however, he was to be sorely disappointed by the events of 1917. In that year disagreement turned into open party warfare.

The conscription crisis of 1917 laid the foundation for the feud between Dunning and Gardiner. When Sir Wilfrid Laurier refused to form a coalition with Conservative prime minister, Robert Borden, the majority of the Liberal party members in English Canada deserted their leader. The ensuing Union Government successfully implemented conscription, but the Liberal party was left with a severe wound. Those involved in the dispute would never forget nor forgive the stance taken by their colleagues; a generation of Liberals went to their graves branded as either Laurier or Unionist Liberals.

The Saskatchewan Liberal party was crippled in the federal election of 1917 and the organizational "machine" seemed to disappear in a Unionist sweep. In Saskatchewan, the provincial cabinet was split into the "Calder" and "Motherwell" factions. Dunning and Gardiner found themselves in opposite camps.

J.A. Calder was one of the influential founders of the Saskatchewan Liberal party and is credited with engineering the impressive party organization known as the "machine." When Walter Scott resigned the premiership in 1916, Calder was the likely successor. His close connection to Scott, however, and the lingering shadow of the "Bradshaw Charges" influenced his decision to reject the leadership.<sup>2</sup> In October 1917, he entered the Union Government as minister of immigration and colonization, while Premier W.M. Martin led those in sup-



port of Union, including Dunning, at the provincial level. Gardiner had viewed Calder as a political mentor, but he would not follow him in treason. In the Legislature he warned the Unionists that they would "have to answer for their actions."<sup>3</sup>

The crisis of 1917 did more than demonstrate the stance of Dunning and Gardiner on conscription. Dunning was a Liberal, but there were certain times, under certain conditions, when he was prepared to lay partisanship aside. For Gardiner, this pragmatism was unacceptable. Loyalty to party, principles and leader were non-negotiable for him. While Dunning could support the union government, Gardiner could not.

When the war ended and the crisis had passed, the inevitable return to partisanship in the West began. The Union Government became increasingly identified with its Conservative roots, leaving the Laurier rump to face the return of its prodigal son. With the decline of the Union government, western alienation returned as a political force. A "mockery" had been made of non-partisanship, and western skepticism toward Ottawa and its traditional two-party system re-emerged with vigor.<sup>4</sup>

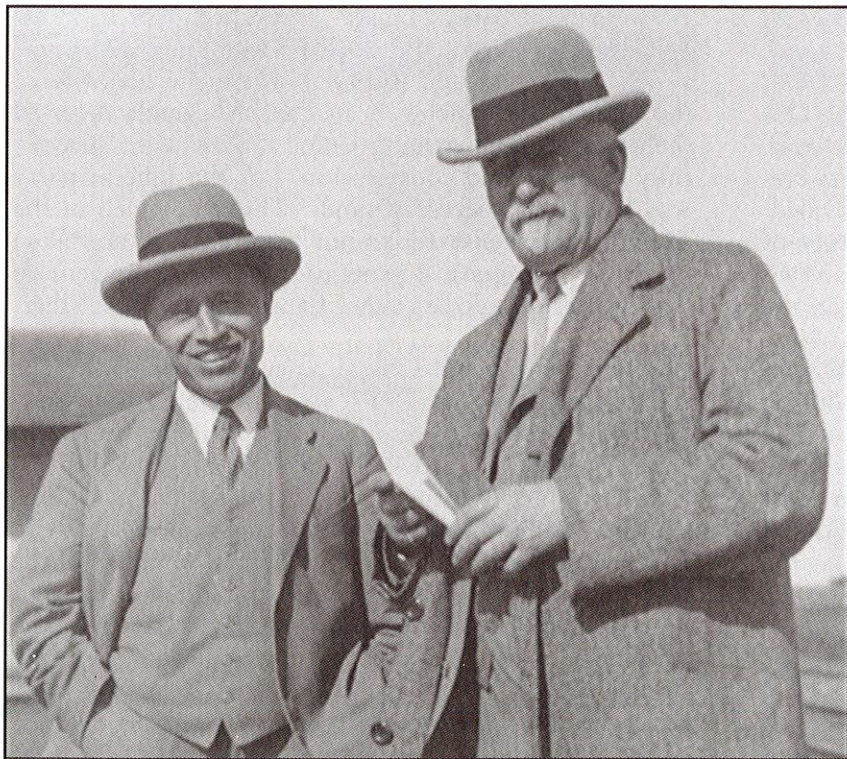
Although the agrarian revolt smashed two-party politics in Ottawa and toppled the provincial governments in Alberta and Manitoba, the Saskatchewan "machine" kept on running. Liberals in the province did not, however, escape unscathed; the disintegration of the coalition had not produced the immediate return of the errant prairie Liberals, and the agrarian unrest joined

with the recent crisis to deepen party divisions. While the Martin-Dunning group worked to neutralize the farmers' movement by disarming potential challenges and adopting popular policies, the Motherwell-Gardiner faction refused to co-operate with men who not only abandoned their party over conscription but were now refusing to return.

Late in 1918 matters came to a head when Motherwell resigned from Martin's cabinet. The official reason was a policy disagreement over the teaching of foreign languages in schools, but the resignation signaled a "larger disenchantment."<sup>5</sup> The provincial party recognized that there were advantages to remaining distant from Ottawa, while the Laurier loyalists continued to advocate close relations. "Walter Scott, while Premier of this province was not only Premier but was also leader of the Saskatchewan liberals on both provincial and Dominion matters," Motherwell informed Martin, and further noted that "... we have grown to look upon the Premier of the province as the leader of the Liberal party therein in all capacities."<sup>6</sup> The premier's concern that partisanship at this time would mean disaster was shared by Dunning. Led by the Grain Growers, the farmers were overjoyed to see Motherwell's resignation, viewing it as the loss of an "old style politician" from a "political clan" that was "steeped in partyism."<sup>7</sup>

The death of Sir Wilfrid Laurier in January 1919, and the ensuing leadership convention, demonstrated the depth of the Liberal division. Sixteen local conventions were held in Saskatchewan to determine the provincial delegation, but the Martin government did everything in its power to send a contingent favorable to the farmers. "Let me make myself clear," the premier told the Weyburn meeting. "While I believe that a re-organized Liberal party with a progressive platform is the best medium of expression for western opinion, I do not intend nor do the people of Saskatchewan intend to slavishly follow the Liberal party or any other party."<sup>8</sup> The way was left clear for the government to pursue a path separate from its federal counterpart, regardless of the convention results. Despite Martin's efforts, the delegation split along the lines taken in 1917. The premier's group supported the former Unionist, W.S. Fielding, while Gardiner and Motherwell backed W.L. Mackenzie King, who had remained loyal to Laurier. The convention selected King.

The warring factions again clashed in Saskatchewan, this time during the 1919 Assiniboia federal by-election. Motherwell and Gardiner were determined during this campaign to fight to keep the farmers out of politics. For Martin and Dunning it posed as an excellent opportunity to forge an alliance with the farmers, thereby ensuring the Liber-



Saskatchewan Archives Board, R-A6042.

*Gardiner and his political comrade-in-arms, W.R. Motherwell, preparing to campaign in the 1919 Assiniboia federal by-election.*



als' survival. Despite the advice of Mackenzie King, whose compromising nature led him to favor co-operation, Motherwell charged into battle as the Liberal candidate. Gardiner further alienated himself from the SGGa by working for Motherwell. Both men understood that their positions could divide the vote and allow a Conservative victory. They disagreed with the rest of the party, however, as to whether this sacrifice was justified:

There would appear to be nothing but an actual object lesson in such an eventuality that would help to drive home to the farmers of this province the unfortunate results that were bound to follow their advent into the political arena at this time. Therefore it would be better in the end and for the future, for us to fight in Assiniboia and lose out, to even a Tory, than not to fight at all.<sup>9</sup>

In the end the federal party lent its support, while its provincial counterpart worked furiously to have Motherwell withdraw.<sup>10</sup> Dunning was so aggravated by the situation that he even threatened to campaign against the uncompromising Liberal.<sup>11</sup> The Liberals were crushed in the October contest, and Motherwell lost his deposit. The party, Martin chided, would suffer greatly from the ill-advised fight. Gardiner could not have agreed more. The by-election demonstrated just how powerful the farmers had become and the type of effort that would be required to defeat them.

After the Assiniboia debacle, the breach between provincial and federal Liberals widened at a remarkable rate. In the Assembly the government increasingly ignored party labels. When Mackenzie King turned to the premier for aid in strengthening the federal party's organization in Saskatchewan, Martin was evasive. He even refused to represent the province on the National Liberal Council.<sup>12</sup> On May 20, 1920, Martin made the break official: "While it may be true that there are Federal questions constantly arising of such vital interest to the Province that one must be prepared to express his views upon them, at the same time Federal business and Provincial business are separate and distinct."<sup>13</sup> King viewed the stance as "a matter of treachery," and Gardiner was in full agreement.<sup>14</sup> The poor standing of the party in the province was indeed due to the 1917 treason. The "so-called leaders" in Saskatchewan were "standing aside," and "loyalty to party + principles" were taking "an extended holiday."<sup>15</sup>

Meanwhile, the Martin government increased its farmer representation by taking in C.M. Hamilton and J.A. Maharg, and by dropping Liberal stalwart W.E. Knowles. In the provincial election of 1921, the party even went so far as to have its members run simply as "government" candidates.<sup>16</sup> Martin won the contest easily, and the farmers were content with a government "that appeared to be as much theirs as any on the Prairies."<sup>17</sup> Co-operation between the Liberals and the farmers was proving more difficult at the federal level,

however, and, much to Gardiner's delight, the traditional Liberal party's organization resurfaced. There was unanimous surprise when Premier Martin made a speech in Regina during the 1921 federal campaign indicating that "party government" was "the only workable system." The premier also mocked the emergence of the Progressives which, he claimed, "resulted in the appearance of the largest number of carpet-baggers ever scattered over these prairies."<sup>18</sup> Several days later Martin continued to reverse his direction when he endorsed Motherwell's candidacy in Regina.

Farmers throughout the province were stunned; Maharg resigned from the provincial cabinet. Motherwell was the only Saskatchewan Liberal elected to the federal House, but it seemed the feuding factions had reunited. J.W. Dafoe of the *Winnipeg Free Press* noted correctly that while Martin had paved the way for closer federal-provincial relations, he had "cooked his goose." Charles Dunning seemed the logical replacement.<sup>19</sup> Motherwell would represent the province in Mackenzie King's cabinet. His well-known political inadequacies, however, rendered Gardiner as the likely liaison between Ottawa and Regina. With Martin and Motherwell gone, the necessity of Liberal-farmer co-operation diminishing, and federal-provincial relations improving, it seemed possible for Dunning and Gardiner to reconcile. Such a possibility, if it ever existed, was quickly squashed. While the factions were disappearing, the personal animosities were not.

On April 5, 1922, Dunning succeeded Martin as premier. Gardiner's rising star was prominent enough that, despite not having served in cabinet, he was talked of as a possible leadership candidate. His stand against the farmers, however, made ultimate power impossible. "Gardiner is decidedly unpopular with the Grain Growers generally," an SGGa official explained. It has even been argued that if the farmers had been better organized they might have kept Gardiner from the new ministry altogether.<sup>20</sup> The Saskatchewan government was gradually moving back to its Liberal foundation. Martin's sudden reversal certainly quickened the pace. Nevertheless, Dunning proceeded with caution. Gardiner was sworn in as the new minister of highways. He was joined in cabinet by two other recognized Liberals, J.W. Uhrich and J.A. Cross.

Gardiner used the new position to aid the cause of Liberalism at all levels. He inherited Calder's organizational "machine" and fine-tuned it to perfection. Dunning had handed his rival a position of considerable influence, but "actually, the choice was not really open to much question." Gardiner had demonstrated a talent and devotion to the task, and he worked tirelessly to rebuild federal Liberal fortunes in the province.<sup>21</sup> The old relationship with Motherwell continued as Gardiner became the federal minister of agriculture's "Saskatchewan agent." Dunning, in the meantime, became the ideal premier. The SGGa opted for direct



political action, but Dunning's qualifications and emphasis on competent administration made him a difficult opponent. He was extremely popular in all quarters. Most viewed the friendly premier as a level-headed politician. By 1924 the Grain Growers had exited politics. In the provincial election the following year, the Dunning government was re-elected with an even stronger majority.

Inside the same caucus the two men had to work together, so, for political reasons, their relationship remained cordial. They corresponded with "cool politeness"; both, however, were ambitious and competitive. In the relatively small arena of Saskatchewan politics, it was inevitable that their personalities would clash. Gardiner's aggressive and combative nature usually placed him in the role of instigator. As his biographers note: "it was Liberal associates who described him as both 'an utterly splendid leader' and 'a truly dreadful man.'" <sup>22</sup> Gardiner never stopped believing that Dunning was a conniving opportunist who was not a Liberal at all. <sup>23</sup> He would allude to rumors that his rival had even opposed the Liberal party in the elections of 1904 and 1908. <sup>24</sup> Dunning had betrayed Laurier in 1917 and, according to Gardiner, would have sought the Conservative leadership if he had failed to obtain the Liberal post. For his part, Dunning handled the quarrel in a manner reflective of his personality and politics. He avoided confrontation whenever possible, pursuing his ambitions in a more subtle manner. He was very personable and was noted for his ability to command respect, even among his enemies. Regardless of his actual feelings, he treated Gardiner with "unfailing courtesy." <sup>25</sup>

From 1922 until 1926 Saskatchewan continued its return to its position as one of the pillars of Canadian Liberalism. Not surprisingly, Dunning and Gardiner quickly came to disagree on the pace and method of this return. For the highways minister, the enemy remained the farmers who, represented by the Progressives, continued to cause havoc in Ottawa. In his battle against the third party, Gardiner went up against the conciliatory approach of Dunning. The premier wished to see a solid Liberal front and to see the Progressives defeated, but he believed this would take time and patience. A federal by-election in Moose Jaw in 1923 forced the issue. Gardiner, along with Motherwell, intended to use the contest to smash the Progressives; therefore, the date for the contest was determined without notifying Dunning. The premier was out of the province during the campaign but "succumbed" to the arguments of Gardiner and Motherwell. <sup>26</sup> Under Gardiner's direction, the provincial Liberals joined ranks with the federal party. Again, as in Assiniboia, the Liberals were soundly defeated. Dunning complained that he should have been consulted and allowed to "guide" the federal party in relations pertaining to the West. <sup>27</sup> The Progressives had to be brought onside through persuasion rather than

force. Once again, the provincial party would draw back from any federal association. Not surprisingly, relations between Dunning and Gardiner deteriorated even further.

The issue of immigration increasingly dominated Saskatchewan politics. While Dunning and Gardiner did not directly quarrel over the question, they did take different approaches. It had been this issue, when Martin moved to enforce English as the language of instruction in the province's schools, that had resulted in Motherwell's resignation in 1918. Late in 1923, Dunning indicated his own views on the situation at a dominion-provincial conference on immigration: "This wide open door business sounds well but I want it to be understood, in my view, that there must be selection ... We want no cesspools in this country." <sup>28</sup> However, in the 1925 provincial campaign, Dunning turned the issue over to his provincial secretary and minister of public health, J.M. Uhrich, who voiced the traditional Liberal position of protection for minorities. It was this position that Gardiner upheld as one of the fundamentals of Liberalism.

The government of Mackenzie King was in trouble by 1925; its lack of popularity led Premier Dunning to keep his distance. A close relationship between Ottawa and Regina, he argued, would "mean our defeat Provincially." <sup>29</sup> The prime minister was annoyed by the continued separation, but he tolerated the attitude in the hopes of enticing Dunning to join the federal cabinet. Motherwell was proving an inadequate western representative, and inroads had to be made on the Prairies. Dunning's popularity among Liberals and Progressives alike was impressive. At the beginning of 1924, the premier, along with T.A. Crerar of Manitoba, was invited to Ottawa. Crerar requested the finance portfolio while Dunning was less assuming. He claimed to be more interested in western policies than cabinet reconstruction. "I confess," King recorded, that "I formed a high opinion of him, of his mind & attitude." Once the prime minister was properly impressed, the Saskatchewan premier indicated that Crerar would not be suitable for finance. Dunning had played a fine Caesar. King was left with the notion that he should eventually be crowned minister of finance. <sup>30</sup> In the meantime, Dunning would not leave his secure position to join the battered federal government. He did, however, express his interest in eventually moving to national politics. This pleased Mackenzie King:

I believe that if Mr. Dunning were there it would inspire almost universal confidence among the rank and file of the Westerners ... I believe they would have confidence that Mr. Dunning with his experience and recognized sagacity would have a very steadying and perhaps restraining influence on any unduly radical tendencies in the West. <sup>31</sup>

By 1925 Dunning was reassuring King that, when a successor was found, he would come to Ottawa. The pre-



mier remained less friendly in public, maintaining that the division in federal-provincial politics remained. King grudgingly accepted the slight as necessary to woo the Progressives. Gardiner, on the other hand, was not so obliging. "There is only one attitude to take toward the Western Progressives," he reiterated to King, "and that is to recognize in them the real opposition to your Government. If I had to make a choice tomorrow between voting and working for Progressive or Conservative candidates, I would have no hesitation in saying I would support the Conservative."<sup>32</sup>

Dunning's victory in the 1925 provincial election opened the way for his move to Ottawa. He met with King in August and agreed to join the cabinet after the upcoming federal contest. The prime minister was annoyed that Dunning would await a victory, concluding he was a "safety first man in politics." King was pleased, nonetheless, with the premier's support during the federal campaign.<sup>33</sup> When the King Liberals held onto power because of Progressive support, Dunning joined the cabinet as minister of railways. Mackenzie King had also been impressed with Jimmy Gardiner. The prime minister was notorious for complaining about a lack of party organization. Thus, Gardiner appeared as a fine model of a party man. "I am looking forward, as you know, to seeing you enter the larger sphere of politics," he informed the Saskatchewan minister.<sup>34</sup> Gardiner traveled to Ottawa in the hopes of being invited into the cabinet. The obvious antagonism between Gardiner and Dunning, however, disturbed King: "The day's conversations have disclosed an unfortunate bitterness between Dunning and Gardiner, over the possibility of both going to Ottawa." Dunning had indicated a preference to have his minister of highways remain in Saskatchewan, at least for the present. "This is selfishness on Dunning's part," concluded King, who felt that Dunning had a "desire to get the stage for and credit to himself."<sup>35</sup> In the end, the prime minister kept Gardiner out of the cabinet, arguing that the province would be over-represented. Dunning was the senior politician; his reputation and popularity could not be ignored. Gardiner, on the other hand, was a "Motherwell man" at a time when antagonism toward the Progressives was unacceptable.

The decision embittered Gardiner who had to tolerate the additional slight of receiving the news through Dunning. He later recalled telling King's emissary, Andrew Haydon, that Dunning was not a Liberal, and that the prime minister "dare not depend on a man like that."<sup>36</sup> Gardiner was not surprised when rumors began to circulate soon after the election that Dunning would lead a party revolt to overthrow King and steal the leadership. In reality, discussions of this nature were taking place and, while he was not at the forefront, Dunning was aware of their existence. In his usual unassuming style he informed the plotters that to ensure success the initiative to overthrow King would have to come from Quebec. He agreed that the prime minister "was a terri-

ble load and that he should go," but he wanted to avoid "even the appearance of a conspiracy."<sup>37</sup> The episode never left the realm of rumor, but to Gardiner it demonstrated what most people failed to realize—beneath Dunning's exterior lay an opportunist bent on success. "He thinks Dunning is very ambitious," King recorded after talking to Gardiner, "and that he would conspire against myself for the Leadership of the Liberal party."<sup>38</sup>

Dunning may have wished to keep Gardiner away from Ottawa, but he did not want him in the premier's office either. Charles M. Hamilton, the minister of agriculture, was Dunning's first choice for the position. The provincial caucus, however, unanimously chose Gardiner. It did not take the new premier long to respond in kind by purging the party of Dunning's influence. The *Western Producer* predicted that Archie McNab and J.A. Cross, "as Dunning men," would not remain in the cabinet; the prophecy proved accurate. Dunning angrily told a *Free Press* reporter that the purge was a "personal affront."<sup>39</sup>

The new Saskatchewan caucus was "solidly Liberal, with Gardiner defining Liberalism."<sup>40</sup> Inter-party relations were harmonious with the Progressives clearly marked as the enemy. In the 1926 federal campaign the premier helped the King Liberals gain a majority, working for both the prime minister in Prince Albert and Motherwell in Melville. Gardiner even persuaded Dunning to spend several days in the latter's own Regina seat. The 1926 victory once again led Mackenzie King to consider bringing Gardiner to Ottawa. The move was inevitable. Dunning now suggested that his rival replace Motherwell. Once again King decided to wait. Gardiner was seen as "the ablest and best of all the men in the West," but at present it remained the best strategy to keep the two Saskatchewan politicians apart so they could move in their own "orbits."<sup>41</sup>

But the feud would not subside. During his years as premier from 1926 until 1929, and then as leader of the opposition from 1929 until 1934, Gardiner jealously guarded his "orbit," remaining suspicious of Dunning's influence in the province. He believed the federal minister was attempting to weaken his position, not only in Saskatchewan, but throughout the Prairie region. When Gardiner used his influence in 1927 to discourage the Manitoba Liberals from forming a coalition with the United Farmers, he complained that the federal party was undermining his efforts. Not surprisingly, Dunning took the brunt of the attack. "I am growing tired of having the political situation in the west in the hands of a man who treats us like a group of school boys," he told King.<sup>42</sup> The prime minister was surprised and annoyed that Gardiner still remained at odds with Dunning. The attitude, he recorded, was "unfair & bitter & the Western situation is anything but a happy one. Jealousies are at the bottom of it."<sup>43</sup> King had been under the impression that "all past differences had been wiped out." He told the angry premier that Dunning had no intention of controlling the West. In fact,



King wanted Gardiner in Ottawa “for that very purpose.”<sup>44</sup>

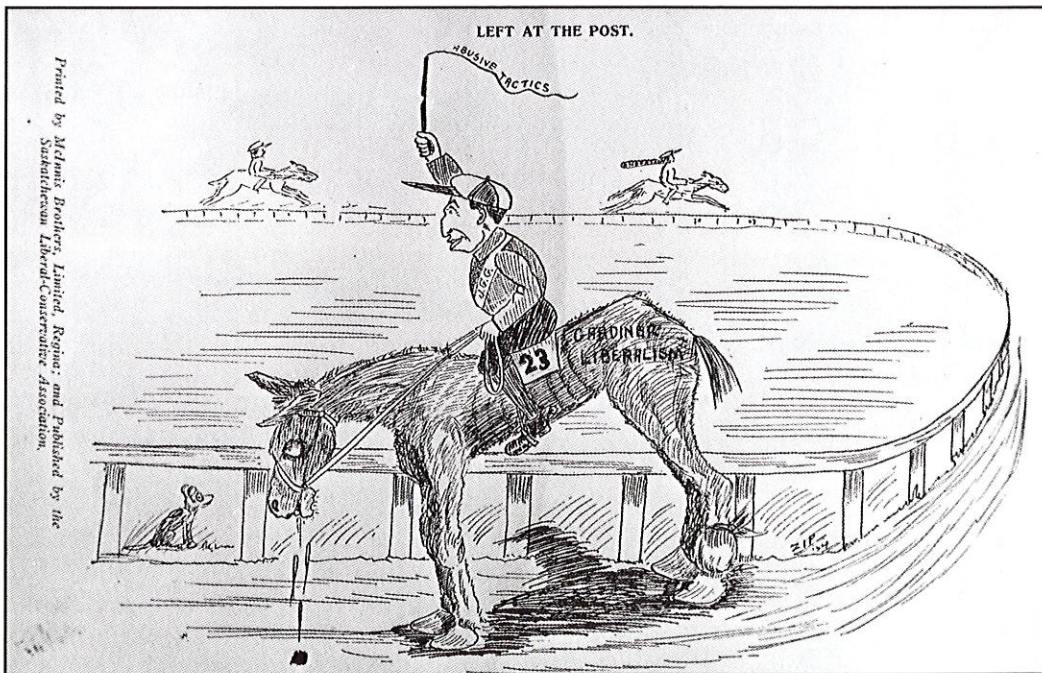
The ethnic question emerged during the 1929 provincial election. Gardiner, true to form, followed the “Scott-Motherwell” line regarding immigration, settlement, education, and religion. But in a style that was all his own, he directly faced the bigoted issues that had crept into the contest. The feisty campaigner even went head-to-head with the Ku Klux Klan. The Tories used Dunning’s “we want no cesspools” speech against the Liberals to demonstrate the party’s inconsistency. That summer the government was defeated by a Progressive-Conservative coalition under J.T.M. Anderson; King believed the Dunning-Gardiner feud was partly responsible. The premier had brought on the election despite the advice of Dunning. As a result, the federal Liberals were still in session and could not lend their aid.<sup>45</sup>

In the meantime, Mackenzie King had been waiting to move Dunning to the finance portfolio. The opportunity presented itself at the end of 1929. A biographer of King remarks that the prime minister “did not like Charles Dunning,” but this seems an exaggeration.<sup>46</sup> The threat Dunning posed to King’s leadership had now passed, and the prime minister could never forget the risk the Saskatchewan politician took by joining the vulnerable government in 1925. The federal Liberal leader complained about his colleague’s arrogance, vanity and self-pity, and concluded he was a hypochondriac. It was not unlike King, however, to criticize his colleagues. In 1929 he was well aware of Dunning’s merits, including his ability, energy and experience. The move of the prime minister’s former rival to the coveted cabinet

position would also allow Gardiner’s entry. The necessity of placating the Progressives was diminishing, so the premier’s presence would no longer be as disruptive. As finance minister, Dunning would have increasing difficulty representing the West, leaving this “orbit” to Gardiner.<sup>47</sup> Dunning’s popularity had declined on the Prairies, and he was being seen less as a western spokesman. The slippage continued in the 1930 federal election when the King government was defeated, and the new finance minister lost his seat in Regina. Dunning exited politics and turned to his eastern business interests, including a post with the Canadian Pacific Railway. “Whether he realizes it or not,” J.W. Dafoe observed, “he has made his choice for the present and perhaps all time.”<sup>48</sup> Dunning had become an easterner.

Gardiner drove the Liberal “machine” back to power in 1934. Again, King informed the premier that he would be expected in Ottawa once the federal Liberals had regained power, but Gardiner, “remembering his high hopes of 1926 when Charles Dunning had been chosen over him,” responded that he would have to spend some time with his new government.<sup>49</sup> By the time of the federal election and Liberal victory in October 1935, he was finally ready. If Gardiner believed the feud had ended with Dunning’s retirement from politics in 1930, he was to be disappointed. King had been pressuring Dunning to return. While the retired politician did wish to come back, he did not want to sacrifice his business interests. He was aware that the West would object to his eastern affiliation, and that Gardiner would view him as a rival. King planned on avoiding these obstacles by having Dunning as an eastern minister representing an eastern constituency.

Amid the complex array of considerations during the 1935 cabinet negotiations, the prime minister was astonished that the Dunning-Gardiner feud became the major stumbling block. He assumed that by having Dunning in the East the dilemma would be solved, but he was underestimating Gardiner’s competitive tenacity. As soon as the Saskatchewan premier arrived, Dunning became an issue. “Gardiner’s countenance at once took on a very strong and defiant look,” King noted. The premier went over Dunning’s career, indicating that he had always “taken the easy course” and had been “pretty selfish generally.”



Saskatchewan Archives Board, R-B2229-4.

A Saskatchewan Liberal-Conservative Association cartoon mocking Gardiner in the aftermath of his 1929 provincial election defeat.





Saskatchewan Archives Board, R-B4062.

*Colleagues in name only: Dunning (front row, second from left) and Gardiner (second row, fourth from left) with Prime Minister King (seated in centre) ca. 1930s.*

The new federal Liberal was annoyed that Dunning had entered the recent campaign only in the late stages, “as the savior of the situation in western Canada, when the battle itself had been won.” He always wanted “to see how things were going to go before he would take any part.” Financial help had been provided to western candidates without Gardiner’s knowledge so Dunning could have “a string on these men.” The premier even questioned Dunning’s loyalty. Gardiner claimed that he would have to “think pretty carefully” before entering a government alongside his bitter rival.

Mackenzie King realized Gardiner was going to “fight with his back to the wall” and if possible use his own entry to keep his antagonist out of cabinet. The prime minister assured Gardiner that Dunning would only come in as an eastern minister. The “field” in the West would be left to the premier. In private, King agreed there was “justification” for Gardiner’s criticisms: Dunning had been “selfish, and very ambitious,” and “had not always played the game as he should.” The prime minister’s hope of avoiding the quarrel by separating the two men was proving problematical. The Saskatchewan premier did not want a “minor” western portfolio such as agriculture while Dunning received a “major” department. Gardiner felt “just as able” for the finance portfolio.

The tenacity of the feud was disconcerting, but King

was determined to have Dunning for finance and Gardiner for agriculture. The premier indicated that while his rival’s entry was not pleasing, he would accept King’s decision. His main objection, he argued, was Dunning’s constant “intriguing to get his own following in Saskatchewan; that he would be interfering in the administration of other people’s affairs.” The prime minister again reminded Gardiner that the two men would be working in their “own yards.” He indicated that as far as he knew, Dunning had “never spoken unkindly about him.” If Gardiner was invited into cabinet and Dunning was not, their personal animosity could become a public embarrassment. For his part, Dunning handled the issue in his usual conciliatory manner. He agreed that after sitting out the campaign, he did not “deserve recognition,” and he promised to leave the west to Gardiner.

The cabinet negotiations provided Mackenzie King with a first-hand view of the feud. He noted that it was an “unpleasant feature” and would “make difficulties later on.” While Dunning’s more amiable personality won the prime minister’s sympathy, King was critical of both men by the end of the discussion. He claimed to sense on behalf of Gardiner:

a desire to get closer contact with the big interests, realizing a sort of political power in that connection. I think, too, he has the instincts of a political boss,



and rather likes having a machine he can control. Dunning set this example when he was in office in Saskatchewan.<sup>50</sup>

Dunning accepted the finance portfolio and an eastern seat, while Gardiner took agriculture and a seat in Assiniboia. The Saskatchewan caucus chose W.J. Patterson as party leader and premier when T.C. Davis, Gardiner's first choice, refused the nomination.

For the next several years, despite the "separate yards," the two cabinet ministers quarreled incessantly. One complicated source of conflict in 1935 was how to handle R.B. Bennett's Wheat Board. King placed both Dunning and Gardiner on the cabinet wheat committee. During the cabinet negotiations Gardiner expressed interest in Motherwell's constituency of Melville, but the seventy-five year old politician was not willing to part with it unless he was given one last wish—the transfer of the Board of Grain Commissioners from trade and commerce to agriculture. Gardiner forwarded this request to King, who rejected it on Dunning's advice. Now Gardiner and Dunning were disagreeing on a strategy to handle the Wheat Board. They both agreed that overt government intervention was undesirable, but Gardiner was more sensitive to the plight of the Prairie farmers who generally favored the Board's continuance.

In 1936 the issue of the Wheat Board continued to divide the federal cabinet. By August the open market price was higher than the Board price, and Gardiner believed this was the time to get out of government marketing. Dunning, however, reminded King that eliminating the Board could provide the growing Co-operative Commonwealth Federation with a potent issue in the West. King also favored eliminating the Board and was annoyed that his finance minister disagreed with him:

Dunning does not like being over-ruled.- He has beneath all a nature that is 'hostile', aggressive, & which causes antagonism. He also has a way of taking things in his own hands, and 'telling' others what to do. Gardiner in most things has better judgement.<sup>51</sup>

When Dunning released a government relief plan to the press, King noted that the action was "very wrong," and that Dunning was "stealing credit" from Gardiner.<sup>52</sup>

The two ministers disagreed over the issue of bankruptcy in the prairie provinces. Dunning believed the provincial governments had to balance their own budgets, while Gardiner advocated increased subsidies to alleviate their financial condition. The finance minister's hard-nosed attitude of fiscal restraint in the face of the Depression angered many westerners and reinforced their belief that he had truly become an easterner. In June 1938, Saskatchewan Liberals accused Dunning of changing the Liberal tariff policy. They charged him

with becoming a Tory, yielding to his Montreal interests and sacrificing his western sympathies. Dunning was so upset by the attacks that he threatened to resign. He told King that the "thing which had gnawed at his soul" in the last few years was the constant claims, "which he attributed to Gardiner," that he was "standing in the way of the West receiving the assistance they should." King was again beginning to alter his stance towards the two ministers: "I really feel about Gardiner that he is more and more of a machine politician, and that Dunning was perhaps right in his estimate of his tendencies in that direction. My opinion of him is not what it was some time ago."<sup>53</sup>

The feud only came to an end when Charles Dunning left politics. The finance minister's health had been impaired for some time, and by the late 1930s it had become a major concern. For nearly a year before the outbreak of war in 1939 he was absent from his office. Finally, the overworked cabinet minister collapsed in the House during the 1938 budget debate. He did not regain his health and in 1939 was forced to resign. Gardiner continued his career as minister of agriculture until the 1957 Liberal defeat.

There can be little doubt that most of the blame for the long feud lies with Jimmy Gardiner. The "relentless Liberal" was indeed just that, and while his determination and ambition were admired, most would agree that he went too far. He was, as his contemporaries concluded, a "lone wolf" and an "odd man out."<sup>54</sup> He was a great leader but a difficult team player. Jack Pickersgill has recently pointed out that

his narrow sectarian Liberalism and his machine politics had no appeal for me . . . I concluded he was a poor judge of issues and an arrogant leader of people. But his forceful personality and his dogged determination ensured him long political survival.<sup>55</sup>

Gardiner, of course, would have shrugged off the criticism as an expected attack by a half-hearted Liberal from Manitoba who had favored co-operation with the Progressives, and who would probably have deserted Laurier in 1917. But it would be unfair to place all the blame on Gardiner. On the surface Dunning was the more personable individual, but he also injected the feud with his own competitive, albeit unassuming and subtle, ambition.

The depth and bitterness of the Dunning-Gardiner feud is quite astonishing in view of the fact that the political "machine" continued to run the province of Saskatchewan with such effectiveness and longevity. Strange as it may seem, however, it was this dissension that produced a diversity in leadership that allowed the Liberal party to survive and even prosper during the first half of the twentieth century.



# Endnotes

- 1 Glenbow Alberta Institute, interviews of Jimmy Gardiner by Una Maclean Evans, December 29 - January 6, 1961-2.
- 2 In 1916 a series of charges were brought against the Scott government by Conservative member for Prince Albert, J.E. Bradshaw. The charges concerned liquor and highways, and involved bribery, selling of influence by MLAs, fraudulent contracts, and government graft and incompetence. A royal commission exonerated all cabinet ministers but did find four Liberal MLAs guilty of accepting bribes or using their influence to secure favors for liquor lobbyists. Fraud and department irregularities were also discovered in the civil service. David E. Smith, *Prairie Liberalism: The Liberal Party in Saskatchewan, 1905-71* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975), 51-3.
- 3 As quoted in Norman Ward and David E. Smith, *Jimmy Gardiner: Relentless Liberal* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 28.
- 4 Smith, *Prairie Liberalism*, 64.
- 5 Ibid., 77.
- 6 As quoted in Ibid.
- 7 Ibid., 78.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 National Archives of Canada (NAC), W.L.M. King Papers, J1 Series, reel 1938, volume 48, 41983-4, W.R. Motherwell to W.M. Martin, September 10, 1919.
- 10 Ibid., reel 1937, 41748-9, Martin to King, September 30, 1919.
- 11 Smith, *Prairie Liberalism*, 80.
- 12 NAC, King Papers, reel 1935, volume 48, 41738-59, Martin-King correspondence, September 3-December 11, 1919.
- 13 As quoted in Smith, *Prairie Liberalism*, 85.
- 14 NAC, King Diaries, April 23, 1920. In order to capture the full spirit of King's Diary, his original words have been left unchanged.
- 15 NAC, King Papers, reel 1941, volume 54, 46504-6, J.G. Gardiner to King, March 1, 1920; reel 1943, volume 55, Motherwell to King, February 26, 1920.
- 16 Smith, *Prairie Liberalism*, 87.
- 17 Ibid., 89.
- 18 As quoted in Ibid., 91.
- 19 University of Manitoba Archives (UMA), John W. Dafoe Papers, box 4, file 4, Dafoe to C. Sifton, December 7, 1921.
- 20 As quoted in Ward and Smith, *Jimmy Gardiner*, 40.
- 21 Smith, *Prairie Liberalism*, 167.
- 22 Ward and Smith, *Jimmy Gardiner*, x.
- 23 Ibid., 41.
- 24 Smith, *Prairie Liberalism*, 154.
- 25 Ward and Smith, *Jimmy Gardiner*, 41.
- 26 Smith, *Prairie Liberalism*, 176.
- 27 NAC, King Papers, reel 2252, volume 92, 72531-6, Dunning to King, July 27, 1923.
- 28 As quoted in Ward and Smith, *Jimmy Gardiner*, 134.
- 29 NAC, King Papers, reel 2252, volume 92, 72531-6, Dunning to King, July 27, 1923.
- 30 King Diaries, January 10, 1924.
- 31 NAC, King Papers, reel 2266, volume 113, 86562-3, King to Ernest Lapointe, May 30, 1924.
- 32 Ibid., reel 2265, volume 110, 84871-3, Gardiner to King, November 15, 1924.
- 33 King Diaries, October 23, 1925; September 29, 1925.
- 34 NAC, King Papers, reel 2276, volume 130, 97661-3, King to Gardiner, December 3, 1925.
- 35 King Diaries, January 2-3, 1926.
- 36 Glenbow Tapes.
- 37 As quoted in Peter Regenstreif, "A Threat to Leadership: C.A. Dunning and Mackenzie King," *Dalhousie Review* (April 1974), 272-89.
- 38 King Diaries, January 21, 1926.
- 39 As quoted in Ward and Smith, *Jimmy Gardiner*, 60-1.
- 40 Ibid., 61.
- 41 King Diaries, September 20-October 4, 1926.
- 42 NAC, King Papers, reel 2303, volume 181, 129730-6, Gardiner to King, January 17, 1928.
- 43 King Diaries, February 27, 1928.
- 44 NAC, King Papers, reel 2303, volume 181, 129737-41, King to Gardiner, March 5, 1928.
- 45 King Diaries, June 7, 1929.
- 46 H. Blair Neatby, *William Lyon Mackenzie King, 1924-1932: The Lonely Heights* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963), 296.
- 47 Saskatchewan Archives Board, James G. Gardiner Papers, reel 10, 17610-2, King to Gardiner, October 29, 1929.
- 48 UMA, Dafoe Papers, box 2, file 2, Dafoe to Dexter, November 3, 1930.
- 49 Ward and Smith, *Jimmy Gardiner*, 190; King Diaries, July 31, 1934.
- 50 King Diaries, October 17-23, 1935.
- 51 Ibid., August 19, 1936.
- 52 Ibid., August 27, 1936.
- 53 Ibid., June 22, 1938; August 11, 1939.
- 54 Ward and Smith, *Jimmy Gardiner*, 215.
- 55 Jack Pickersgill, *Seeing Canada Whole: A Memoir* (Markham: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1994), 165.

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# “In Union is Strength”:

## The University of Saskatchewan Employees’ Union Strike of 1974

by Glen Makahonuk

On 26 September 1974, 1733 employees of the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina carried out their first strike to back contract demands for improved wages and benefits.<sup>1</sup> The strike would last until 11 October 1974 when a settlement was finally reached by means of conciliation. The strike had large repercussions. The *Labour Gazette* reported 24,360 days lost, making it the largest strike in the education sector in Canada in 1974.<sup>2</sup> The Saskatchewan Department of Labour reported that of the thirty-seven strikes fought in the province in 1974, the University employees’ strike was the largest one in the public sector.<sup>4</sup> Yet, despite the magnitude of this strike, little is known about it.

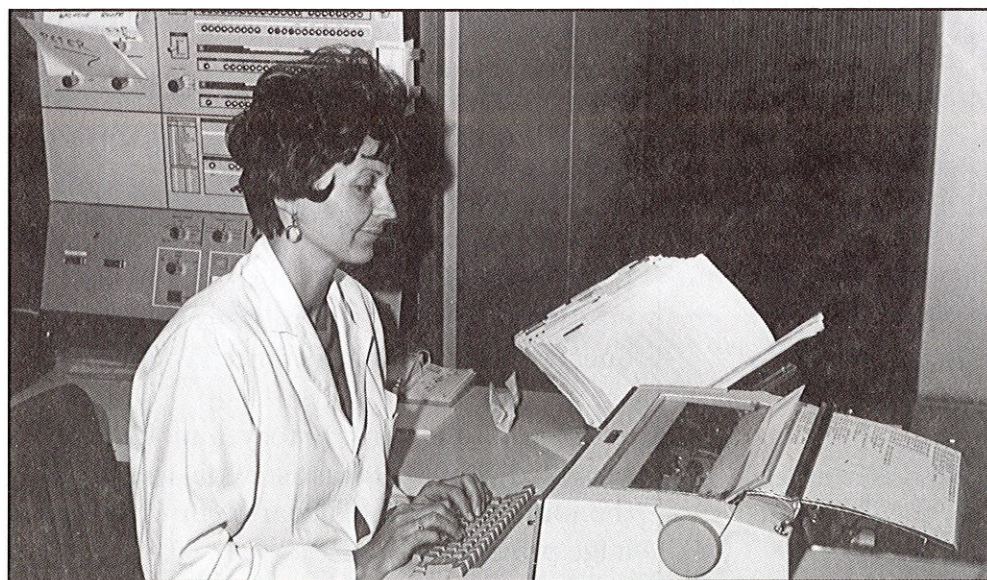
The 1974 strike is interesting for several reasons. It was the first in the history of the University of Saskatchewan. It also occurred thirty years after the union had first been organized, at a time during the mid 1970s when a major strike wave was taking place throughout Canada. In terms of both the number of strikes (1,218)<sup>3</sup> and the number of workers involved (580,912), 1974 marked a strike wave that was even larger than previous ones identified by labour historians Gregory Kealey and Douglas Cruikshank.<sup>5</sup> The strike also represented a change in the attitude of the workers towards management and the labour relations system at the University. As Tom Langford, Professor of Sociology at the University of Calgary, has explained, “the labour relations context has a major impact on changes in consciousness experienced by striking workers because it conditions the type of workers who enter the strike, the relative pow-

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ers of union and management, and the economic/political intentions of the adversarial organizations.”<sup>6</sup> In other words, each strike is unique (even though there may be some common issues) and is worthy of study, especially when it impacts upon a major sector of society. This article will examine the University of Saskatchewan Employees’ Union (USEU) 1974 strike and its outcome, which resulted in the formation of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), Local 1975.

The University of Saskatchewan was established in 1907 primarily to provide, according to the *University of Saskatchewan Act*, “post-secondary instruction and research in the humanities, sciences, social sciences and other areas of human intellectual, cultural, social and physical development ... .” Although the University was foremost an education and research institution, one must not underestimate its role as an employer and consumer in the economies of both Saskatoon and Saskatchewan. At the time of the strike, the University provided somewhere between \$81,700,000 to \$114,500,000, or fifteen to twenty-two percent of the gross income of the City of Saskatoon, and employed, directly or indirectly, several thousand support staff, faculty, researchers, sessionals, students and others.<sup>7</sup>



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*Liz Murray, shop steward, working in the lab building in the early 1970's.*



The University Studies Group estimated that the University employed approximately fourteen to twenty percent of the labour force in Saskatoon.

The labour force at the university, excluding faculty and administration, consisted of caretakers, animal attendants, technicians, instrument makers, groundworkers, security patrol persons, farm laborers, gardeners, cooks, cafeteria workers, power plant workers, maintenance workers, tradesmen, library workers, clerks, clerk stenographers, and other similar types of workers. Approximately fifty-nine percent of these workers were women in the lower paying jobs. Indeed, the University paid the women workers quite poorly in comparison to faculty and administrators. Furthermore, wages seldom kept up to the rising cost of living.<sup>8</sup>

This was a common situation that existed even as early as the 1940s, as one employee explained in a letter to Acting President Walter P. Thompson:

in view of the steadily rising cost-of-living and the increasing burden of taxation, many of the employees of this University find themselves unable to meet the necessary obligations of life. We find ourselves in the paradoxical position of buying less and less while spending more and more.<sup>9</sup>

Prior to the formation of the union in 1945, fringe benefits were non-existent, the workers did not have a grievance procedure to resolve disputes or problems, and management was able to hire and fire whomever it pleased and pay its employees whatever it wanted. The pay policy was based on the authorizations that came from the Board of Governors. As Thompson explained, the "Board of Governors did not authorize ... me to increase the pay of every employee. They asked us to go over the payroll and make increases wherever they deemed necessary."<sup>10</sup> Employees who were married, for example, received \$100 a month in 1943.<sup>11</sup> In comparison to other workers in the city who received an average wage of \$31.00 per week (or \$124 per month), University workers were receiving twenty-four percent less pay.<sup>12</sup> Thompson based his interpretation on the *University of Saskatchewan Act, Sections 76 and 77*:

... it is the duty of the President to have general supervision over and direction of the officers and servants employed in and connected with the work of the University. Further, that it is his duty to suspend any officer or servant of the University and to report such action to the Board of Governors; and further, to make recommendations to the Board of Governors respecting the appointment, promotion or removal of any officers or servants of the University.<sup>13</sup>

Despite the inequitable labour conditions, no attempt at unionization was made prior to 1944, even by the University of Saskatchewan Employees Association (USEA) which had been in existence since 1930.<sup>14</sup> It had a membership of approximately twenty-five percent of the employees on campus, but it did not represent them in terms of collective bargaining or grievances. The



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*University President Walter P. Thompson at his retirement in 1959.*

objectives of the Association, according to Article 2 of its 1931 Constitution, were to "promote and stimulate a fraternal spirit among its members and to advance the general interests and welfare of the employees of the University of Saskatchewan."<sup>15</sup> In fact, there were no references to collective bargaining, wages or working conditions in its Constitution, or any provision for any of its committees to deal with such matters. It is important to note that the USEA did not develop into a union like other public sector associations did. For example, the Saskatchewan Civil Service Association, which represented employees of the Saskatchewan government, eventually became the Saskatchewan Government Employees' Union in 1980; and the Manitoba Civil Service Association, which represented employees of the Manitoba government, underwent a transformation in 1992 and became the Manitoba Government Employees' Union.<sup>16</sup>

The initiative for a union to represent university employees came from eight power plant workers: W.F. Lake, P.S. Hordern, William Wright, C. Bennett, H. Johnson, F. Neault, D. Sutherland and J.E. Wright. They had been influenced by the general growth in unionization in Saskatchewan, which had occurred as a result of the passage of the *Trade Union Act* in September 1944 by T.C. Douglas' Co-operative Commonwealth Federation government.<sup>17</sup> Between 1943 and 1945 trade union membership in the province grew from 11,124 to 19,290, an increase of seventy-three percent.<sup>18</sup>

The power plant workers had also heard about the organizing drive that the Canadian Congress of Labour (CCL) had launched amongst industrial workers and non-craft workers in the 1940s. As historian Bryan Palmer has noted, the "original 448 branches expanded



to over 1000 between 1940 and 1946, and membership grew from 100,000 to 315,000 in the same period.”<sup>19</sup> Accordingly, the eight power plant workers contacted the CCL to ask for an organizer who could explain the benefits of forming a union, especially for public sector workers who were employed at a university.

The CCL sent one of its organizers, Alex McAuslane, to a meeting of the University power plant workers on 11 September 1944. After hearing McAuslane’s presentation, the workers all decided to form a union and “affiliate with the CCL ... .”<sup>20</sup> They collected fifteen dollars to pay for a charter and elected Fred Neault as Secretary-Treasurer pro tem and W.F. Lake as President. It was also decided that they “would bring the question of forming a local of the CCL of all employees of the University before the employees association at [the] next regular meeting on 28 September 1944.”<sup>21</sup>

Unfortunately, at the 28 September meeting of the Association, W.F. Lake’s motion that “the Association ... sponsor a meeting of all employees of the University to hear and discuss the principles and advantages of a trade union was defeated.”<sup>22</sup> The representatives of the Association argued that they were not in favor of becoming a union which would engage in collective bargaining, grievance handling, or, potentially, striking. Instead, they wanted to maintain a social club image. In response to this anti-union message, W.F. Lake and the other union members decided to hold their own meeting of all employees at the University on 8 October. Dr. Carlyle King, a professor of English and President of the Saskatchewan CCF, was invited to attend the meeting in Convocation Hall in order to explain the benefits of collective bargaining and the meaning of the new Trade Union Act.<sup>23</sup>

The meeting had its desired effect. A number of the employees in attendance immediately joined the union, and a motion was passed to send a notice to the Saskatoon *Daily Star-Phoenix* announcing the union’s organizing drive. The members also instructed President Lake to send an application for certification of their union to the Saskatchewan Labour Relations Board (LRB). Most importantly, they wanted “an investigation of the Employees Association under the Trade Union Act” to be carried out.<sup>24</sup>

Lake complied with his instructions and in November 1944 sent an application to the LRB. On the application, the union president stated that the University of Saskatchewan Employees’ Union, which consisted of twenty-seven members, was seeking to represent “all employees of the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon ... and the Regina College Unit except the teaching staff.”<sup>25</sup> In March 1945 Lake followed up his application with a letter to the Chair of the LRB, W.K. Bryden, requesting certification of the USEU as the bargaining representative for the following University of Saskatchewan workers: the fifteen workers at the power house which supplied heat and gas, and generated elec-

tric power; the four carpenters who did all the carpenter repair work; the two technicians in the Cereal Research Department; the one technician in Soils Research engaged in surveying and analyzing of soils; and the one technician in the Agricultural Engineering Department engaged in the maintenance and testing of work in the motor mechanics laboratory.<sup>26</sup> Lake was quite specific in this request because these were the only employees who had joined the union in order to bargain collectively with the University. He believed that they had the democratic right to bargain collectively and that this right “should not be jeopardized by the fact that other employees of that employer do not at present wish to bargain collectively.”<sup>27</sup>

At the same time that the formal application had been made to the LRB, the USEU contacted the Saskatoon and District Labour Council (SDLC) to seek assistance in their organizing drive. The SDLC responded by sending a letter on 21 February 1945 to Dr. J.S. Thomson, President of the University of Saskatchewan, requesting that he issue a statement to the employees explaining that he had no objections to them joining a union.<sup>28</sup> Thomson’s reply was somewhat vague; he did not say that he would endorse the USEU, only that he would send a notice to the employees giving them information concerning their statutory rights under the *Trade Union Act* of 1944.<sup>29</sup>

Actually, it was in Thomson’s letter of 15 March 1945 to the Chair of the Saskatchewan LRB, that he outlined his relationship with the University of Saskatchewan’s Employees Association and listed the people employed by the University. In 1945 the University (including Regina College) employed 423 persons in the following categories: forty-eight office staff, seven storekeepers, twenty-nine janitors, twenty-seven residence staff, ninety-one technicians and laboratory assistants, thirteen Library workers, twenty-four employees from the field husbandry and farm departments, fifteen power house workers, twenty-four workshop laborers, two grounds workers, 133 academic staff and ten administrative officers.<sup>30</sup> Thomson then went on to state that he had “always entered into relations with this body in good faith that it actually is representative of the employees of the University, and so far as [his] knowledge goes, this has been to the satisfaction of all concerned.”<sup>31</sup> Thomson did not believe that the union had the backing of the employees. He requested that all employees vote by secret ballot to determine this question.

Thomson’s position on the vote was similar to most employers who had a choice between a friendly employees’ association and a real trade union. The University president certainly did not want to deal with a trade union which aimed at bargaining collectively, and could potentially initiate a strike, in order to achieve a written collective agreement with the University.<sup>32</sup> Indeed, he was prepared to put up as many road blocks as possible



in order to keep the union out and to maintain the past practice of no collective bargaining. Even the secretary of the Employees' Association admitted to the Saskatchewan Labour Relations Board that during its fifteen year history the Association had never attempted to negotiate a collective agreement with the University. Furthermore, the Association did not attempt to establish any machinery for handling grievances, or "to take up with the employer the grievances of its members."<sup>33</sup> As W.K. Bryden explained, "the negotiations from time to time for the settlement of disputes and grievances of employees is ... an integral part of bargaining collectively."<sup>34</sup>

Since collective bargaining was not one of the Employees' Association's functions, the LRB could not recognize it as a labour organization as defined by the Trade Union Act. Consequently, the LRB dismissed both the application of the Association and Thomson's request for a vote of the University employees.<sup>35</sup> Instead, the LRB issued an order on 10 April 1945 which stated:

1. The employees of the Power House of the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, except the foreman, constitute an appropriate unit of employees for the purpose of bargaining collectively.
2. The University of Saskatchewan Employees' Union, Saskatoon, represents a majority of the employees in the appropriate unit of employees referred to in paragraph 1 hereof.
3. The University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, shall bargain collectively with the University of Saskatchewan Employees' Union in respect to the employees in the appropriate unit of employees referred to in paragraph 1 hereof.<sup>36</sup>

Upon hearing of the LRB's decision, W.F. Lake notified J.S. Thomson about commencing negotiations. The union had already elected President Lake and Vice-President J.E. Wright as its bargaining committee and had drafted its demands, which included: union recognition; union security with dues check off; leaves of absence; use of University premises to hold union meetings; a formal grievance procedure, with the Grievance Committee having the right to demand that the matter be considered by the Board of Governors; seniority rights; job security; occupational health and safety;

annual paid vacations; regular hours of work; and overtime pay. One of the unique demands that addressed the current wartime conditions was the provision that guaranteed job security, seniority and other rights to employees who were serving, or who had served, in the armed forces during World War II.<sup>37</sup>

When the union negotiating committee presented its demands to the university administration in May 1945,



Workers at Duplicating plant: Ivan Jorgenson, John Gropp and James Epp.

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it soon realized that negotiations would be a long drawn-out affair. The university was still concerned about maintaining its authority and management prerogatives while limiting the rights and benefits of the workers. As well, there were the ongoing amendments to certification orders which not only changed the number of employees in the union but also added new classifications and wage rates which had to be negotiated. By its first annual meeting, held on 9 January 1946, the union had expanded to include all field husbandry employees, the poultry and cereal department workers, the University farm workers, maintenance and service workers, janitors, waitresses, cooks, kitchen help, store clerks, mechanics, plumbers, painters, blacksmiths, electricians, carpenters, machinists, truck drivers, cleaning women, night watchmen, gardeners, groundworkers and clerks.<sup>38</sup> Because of these new members, it was necessary for Lake to discuss the clauses of the proposed collective agreement with them.<sup>39</sup>

Finally, after seven months of negotiations, the union was able to achieve its first collective agreement on 25 January 1946. The union, without taking strike action,



had achieved most of its demands.<sup>40</sup> The wages, however, were far from extravagant. For example, after two years of employment, poultry assistants received \$110 per month, plumbers \$170, storekeepers \$150-\$160, caretakers \$125, gardeners \$130, and cooks \$120-\$136. In comparison to the average wage in Saskatchewan of \$31.60 per week (or \$126.40 per month), the University workers were quite close to the average in most classifications.<sup>41</sup> Nevertheless, the collective agreement had laid the groundwork for future improvements in the workers' wages, benefits, and working conditions.

Prior to the 1974 strike, it appears that collective bargaining followed a pattern based on compromise. At each round of negotiations the union, which had become chartered as Local 54 of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) in 1956, formulated a set of demands for improved wages, benefits, and working conditions and then presented them to management. Although the union did not achieve every one of its demands at each round, it did make improvements. For example, in the 1966-67 talks, the union had been successful in achieving a provision for job protection and retraining. Article 18.01 of the *USEU, Local 54 Collective Agreement, 1966-67* stated:

As a result of the University introducing new equipment or major changes in operating methods or merger or dissolution of departments, certain job classifications will no longer be required; the University will endeavour to anticipate such changes and conduct a program of retraining and transfer of the employees affected prior to such change. The Employees' Union agrees to cooperate in such a program of transfer and retraining. The University agrees to notify the Union and the Employee(s) at least sixty (60) days before any reduction in permanent staff takes place.

Owing to improvements in each round of negotiations, the union did not feel it was necessary to prepare for strike action. This was not uncommon, since most unions "settle[d] contract negotiations—more than nine out of ten—without having to resort to strike action."<sup>42</sup>

The majority of the University employees voted to accept the proposed changes to the collective agreement after each round. The practice would be to have the president of the Union send notification to management that the membership had ratified the Collective Agreement. Even in the round prior to the 1974 strike, Elaine Von Oder, President of USEU Local 54, CLC, had sent a letter to J.A. Pringle, Controller and Treasurer of the University of Saskatchewan, notifying him that the "membership have voted on the acceptance of the proposed contract for July 1, 1973 to June 30, 1974."<sup>43</sup> This trend, however, soon changed.

The nature of the labour relations had started changing in late 1973 and early 1974 when the University underwent major restructuring under Allan Blakeney's New Democratic Party government. Although Blakeney

"personally favoured one university because of the warm relationships he had seen between W.P. Thompson and Douglas and Lloyd and because it would cost less," there were various entities pushing to create two separate universities.<sup>44</sup> As early as 10 November 1972, Gordon MacMurchy, the Minister of Education, had asked cabinet to support a proposal:

... which would provide for the establishment of two separate universities and allow a bill for university reorganization to go forward in 1973. The step was necessary, MacMurchy said, because the present system did not provide rationalization, moved too slowly, and lacked a means of assessing accountability. The system maintained ... an illusion that academic and financial decision-making were separate things.<sup>45</sup>

In budgeting for the 1974-75 year, the University administration "had considered a 12% [wage] settlement ... adequate," even though it knew that the "Consumer Price Index had gone up by 19.8%."<sup>46</sup> Management was entering the 1974 round of negotiations intending to try to force the union to accept the lowest wage offer possible and to prevent union input into management decisions.<sup>47</sup>

The union, on the other hand, was preparing proposals which aimed for substantial improvements. These included a demand for a one year contract as a hedge against inflation; group insurance payments to be made by the University on behalf of the employees; establishment of a day care centre on each campus; an eye glass plan and free dental care for all employees after one year of service; and union input into the posting of jobs and job classification levels. The input into job classification was an important issue because it was one way to prevent management from manipulating job duties and pay scales. The demand for revised wages had three parts: (1) the union wanted a minimum \$125 per month across-the-board increase effective 1 July 1974 for all groups except technicians and tradesmen; (2) tradesmen were seeking a ten percent increase in order to reach parity with the Saskatchewan construction wage rates; and (3) the technicians wanted a formula which would give them parity with the technicians at the National Research Council, Canada Agriculture, Saskatchewan Research Council and the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration. This formula would result in a \$75 per month increase for Tech I's and II's, a \$125 per month increase for Tech III's, and a \$200 per month increase for Tech IV's.<sup>48</sup>

The union was demanding a significant increase in wages because of high inflation and because a number of its classifications, which were filled by women, were receiving wages below, or just slightly above, the provincial minimum wage of approximately \$387 per month.<sup>49</sup> Some of the job classifications below the minimum wage were the Cook I, Cafeteria Worker I and Housekeeper; each received \$360 per month. The classifications slightly above the minimum wage were:



Cafeteria Worker II \$392 per month; Cashier \$392; Seamstress \$408; Bindery Worker I \$400; Photoprinter Assistant I \$416; Library Assistant I \$401; Dental Assistant I \$416; Clerk I \$401; Clerk Steno I \$416. Even the higher classifications like the Library Assistant IV's who had to be graduates from a recognized university only received \$564 per month. These classifications had created an internal dual labour market structure, or, in other words, a primary and a secondary market.<sup>50</sup> The primary market comprised the higher level classifications which required formal apprenticeship programs, extensive training or post-secondary education. They had employment stability, opportunities for advancement, equity, and due process in the administration of work rules. Examples of these classifications were the technicians, instrument makers, plumbers, electricians, service mechanics, carpenters, steam fitters, senior draftspersons, and senior engineers. These positions received higher wages than those in the secondary market which consisted of semi-skilled or unskilled workers such as cooks, cafeteria workers, cashiers, food service porters, storekeepers, clerks, laborers, truck drivers, caretakers, groundworkers and duplicating equipment operators. These positions also had poorer working conditions, higher labour turnover, limited advancement opportunities and, often, arbitrary and capricious supervision. Most primary market positions were held by men, except for the technicians; and in the secondary market most positions were held by women, except for the laborers, truck drivers and caretakers. Since the majority of members were women in the lower paid classifications who suffered from economic hardship because of the inequalities in the wage scales, and because of the "rampant inflation," the key bargaining issue became the wage increase. The union viewed the wage demand as an important step in addressing economic inequalities. As the union's Vice-President Tom Young summarized it, "we feel that before taking any drastic action, such as a strike, we must have a good and just cause and we feel that [we do]."<sup>51</sup>

The negotiating committees for both the union and management met in June to exchange proposals and to state their respective positions. From the start, the union got the message it was going to be tough bargaining. After several more meetings in July, the union negotiating committee realized that an impasse would soon be reached and that job action would be necessary. On 9 July the union held a demonstration to protest the University's wage offer of a \$60 per month increase.<sup>52</sup> This action was a classic labour tactic. Often, workers use demonstrations and the threat of a strike to pressure employers into making concessions that they would normally refuse to make. "The act of striking," as Richard Hyman, Senior Lecturer in Industrial Relations at the University of Warwick, has explained, "is merely one point in a chain of events: it may be interpreted ... as a natural response to the obsti-

nacy or provocation of the employer ..."<sup>53</sup>

On 22 July 1974 a Strike Information Committee was established to investigate the various aspects of conducting a strike and to gather information for the membership. The Committee set up a number of sub-committees:

1. Committee to contact the CLC to find out regulations concerning work stoppages, available funds for members etc. [It] will also investigate the best way of setting up picket lines on the campus.

2. Committee to find out proper "walk out" procedures for such groups as the Heating Plant, technicians in University hospital and [workers] dealing with animals.

3. Committee to . . . investigate the policies of department stores, CMHC and finance companies in regard to giving . . . members extensions in bill paying in the event of a strike.

4. Publicity Committee to keep the public properly informed of negotiations.

5. Education Committee to inform the members about voting on a walk-out, and getting guest speakers from other unions, CLC etc.<sup>54</sup>

As well, the Strike Information Committee instructed the shop stewards to find out the members' opinions about negotiations and the possibility of engaging in a strike. They would meet again in early August to discuss their findings.

On 6 August 1974 Tom Young wrote a letter to the Secretary-Treasurer of the CLC asking him for information about calling a strike and about the strike benefits available to union members.<sup>55</sup> David Montgomery informed him that the benefits were \$20 per week for a single person, \$25 per week for a married person and \$2 per week for a dependent child. However, it was understood that this assistance would not be paid from the CLC defence fund for the first two weeks of a strike. They would only be "paid for the third and subsequent weeks if necessary ..."<sup>56</sup>

With this and the other information that the Strike Information Committee had gathered, they prepared a two-page document, entitled "EVERYTHING YOU HAVE ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT STRIKING BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK," and distributed it to the members. The document contained information about the legal right to strike, strike pay, how to deal with creditors regarding reduced or deferred payments, picket duty, and union solidarity.<sup>57</sup> The document also gave notification of the call for a "study session" to back contract demands. It should be noted that a study session of up to two days duration (i.e. a temporary withdrawal of work to study management's offer) was not considered a strike under the *Trade Union Act of 1972*. This meant a study session could be called at any time without having an official strike vote taken.

Accordingly, the union called a number of study sessions. At midnight on 11 August the heating plant workers at the University of Regina walked off the job



for a twenty-four-hour period. They were followed by the maintenance men at eight the next morning. Lloyd Felske, a heating plant worker, told a Regina *Leader-Post* reporter the reason he walked out: "we need a better wage offer to keep up with the rate of inflation and cost of living."<sup>58</sup> These demonstrations and study sessions seemed to have some effect on the administration, who raised their offer to \$65 a month across the board in a one-year contract. The increase was \$5 more than the wage increase negotiated by the union in the previous contract which had expired on 30 June 1974.<sup>59</sup> That, however, was as far as the University was prepared to go on the wage offer.

In a report to Deans and Department Heads, J.A. Pringle explained that the University had offered approximately a fourteen and a half percent increase on the wage scales, while the union was still demanding twenty-four percent on scale, which was more than they had budgeted for the 1974-75 year. There were also a number of other unresolved issues pertaining to job classification:

In the one instance, the question of giving the Union some involvement in the general writing of these classifications could probably be agreed upon, providing that the Union does not insist on being involved in "finalizing" the job classification. We consider this very much to be a necessity for the management of the University. The other matter regarding classification, is that the Union is demanding that when a job becomes vacant we must fill it with somebody of the same classification. To agree to such a clause would mean that we could never do any reorganization without the consent of the Union. We are not likely to reach agreement on these two matters.<sup>60</sup>

With negotiations at an impasse, the union organized a study session on 6 September to discuss holding a strike vote on the 16th in Saskatoon and on the 17th in Regina.<sup>61</sup> In addition, a special issue of the union's newsletter, *The Skopin*, was distributed to the members notifying them that they "are now at the point in negotiations where every union member becomes directly involved ... . On this question every member should be heard."<sup>62</sup> The union also issued a general notice to the students and campus community explaining the problems that it was having in negotiations. The union wanted to make sure that its dispute was with the "University management and not with anyone else. We hope you will in turn be sympathetic to our cause, if possible support us."<sup>63</sup> The vote was conducted and the results were: 1237 in favour of striking, 361 against and one spoiled.<sup>64</sup> This was a convincing indication that the members were prepared to strike to back contract demands.

No strike date, however, was set. Instead, the union's president Elaine Von Oder notified the University administration that although the membership had authorized strike action, the union was still willing to negotiate and, if need be, use conciliation services.<sup>65</sup> As

soon as the administration received notification of the strike vote, the Acting President, Dr. R. W. Begg, sent a memo to deans, department heads and directors pointing out that "it is imperative that a plan of action be established should a strike occur." He called for their "cooperation in keeping the University operating as effectively as possible during what may be a very difficult time."<sup>66</sup> While managers were making their plans in the event of a strike, the management negotiations committee notified the union that they were prepared to meet with a conciliator on 20, 21 and 22 September.

During these three days both parties met in separate rooms at the Imperial 400 Motel in Saskatoon, while the Department of Labour conciliator, Graham Mitchell, walked back and forth between them with offers and counter offers. Finally, on the last day management gave its final wage offer of an increase of \$100 per month during the first year, and \$35 or five percent, whichever was greater, for an additional six months. The eighteen month agreement was to expire 31 December.<sup>67</sup>

The union considered this to be an unreasonable wage offer, especially in the final six months of the proposed contract. Its members also believed that management refused to accept the union's position because it wanted a confrontation. Prior to management making its last offer, it had

announced that a strike by Union employees would not be as costly to the Universities as to a commercial enterprise. The workers would not be paid during the period of a strike which would be a financial saving. It could mean an extended period for classes, which was inferred at no problem or added cost to the Universities.<sup>68</sup>

On 19 September, J.A. Pringle had sent a four-page memo to deans, department heads, and administrative officers pointing out that: "In the event a strike should occur many services normally provided will be seriously affected. However, our intention is to attempt to continue to operate the University and to continue classes."<sup>69</sup> He then outlined the services which would be affected, including caretaking, heating plant, maintenance, stores, residences and food services, mail, supply and services, physical education services, safety and security, and vehicles. Those Pringle wrote to were encouraged "to assist in any method possible" such as "organiz[ing] staff and students to assist in the cleaning of some areas."<sup>70</sup> In other words, the University was preparing to have a "scab" or "strikebreaker" work force ready to try to break the strike.<sup>71</sup>

The union negotiating committee, realizing the gravity of the situation, decided to take management's last offer back to the membership to vote on. Even though the union had the mandate to call a strike, it wanted to make sure the members had one more opportunity to reconsider. At a special membership meeting held on 25 September at both universities, the union conducted a



two-question ballot: "Are you in favour of accepting the University's last offer?"; and, "Are you in favour of strike action?" The results of the vote were that sixty-seven percent of the members rejected management's last offer, and seventy-one percent opted in favour of a strike to back union demands.<sup>72</sup>

At noon the next day, union members walked off the job and set up picket lines throughout both campuses. Picketers were given a set of "rules" to conduct their picketing. In essence, the rules stated that the picketers were to wear their "signs," patrol their assigned areas, and inform any person attempting to cross the picket line that a legal strike was on and that they should respect it.<sup>73</sup> In addition to the picketing, the union pre-



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*Tom Young, Vice-President USEU CLC Local 54, addressing university workers on strike in front of Marquis Hall.*

pared a number of information sheets, and "stickers" which had messages like: "IN UNION IS STRENGTH," "Students: Faculty: Union Solidarity NOW," and "I'M A UNION PERSON." One of the information sheets gave advice on obtaining financial assistance, receiving strike benefits, and finding strike headquarters and mobile stations. It also warned that any member who crossed a picket line would be subjected to the trial procedure as stated in the Union's *Constitution*.<sup>74</sup> To discourage "scabbing," the union produced another information sheet with Jack London's famous derogatory definition of a "scab":

After God had finished the rattlesnake, the toad, the vampire, He had some awful substance left with which he made a scab.

A scab is a two-legged animal with a cork-screw soul, a water-logged brain, a combination backbone of jelly and glue. Where others have hearts, he carries a tumor of rotten principles.

When a scab comes down the street, men turn their backs and angels weep in heaven, and the Devil shuts the gates of Hell to keep him out.

No man has a right to scab so long as there is a pool of water to drown his carcass in, or a rope long enough to hang his body with. Judas Iscariot was a gentleman compared with a scab.

For betraying his master, he had character enough

to hang himself. A scab has not.

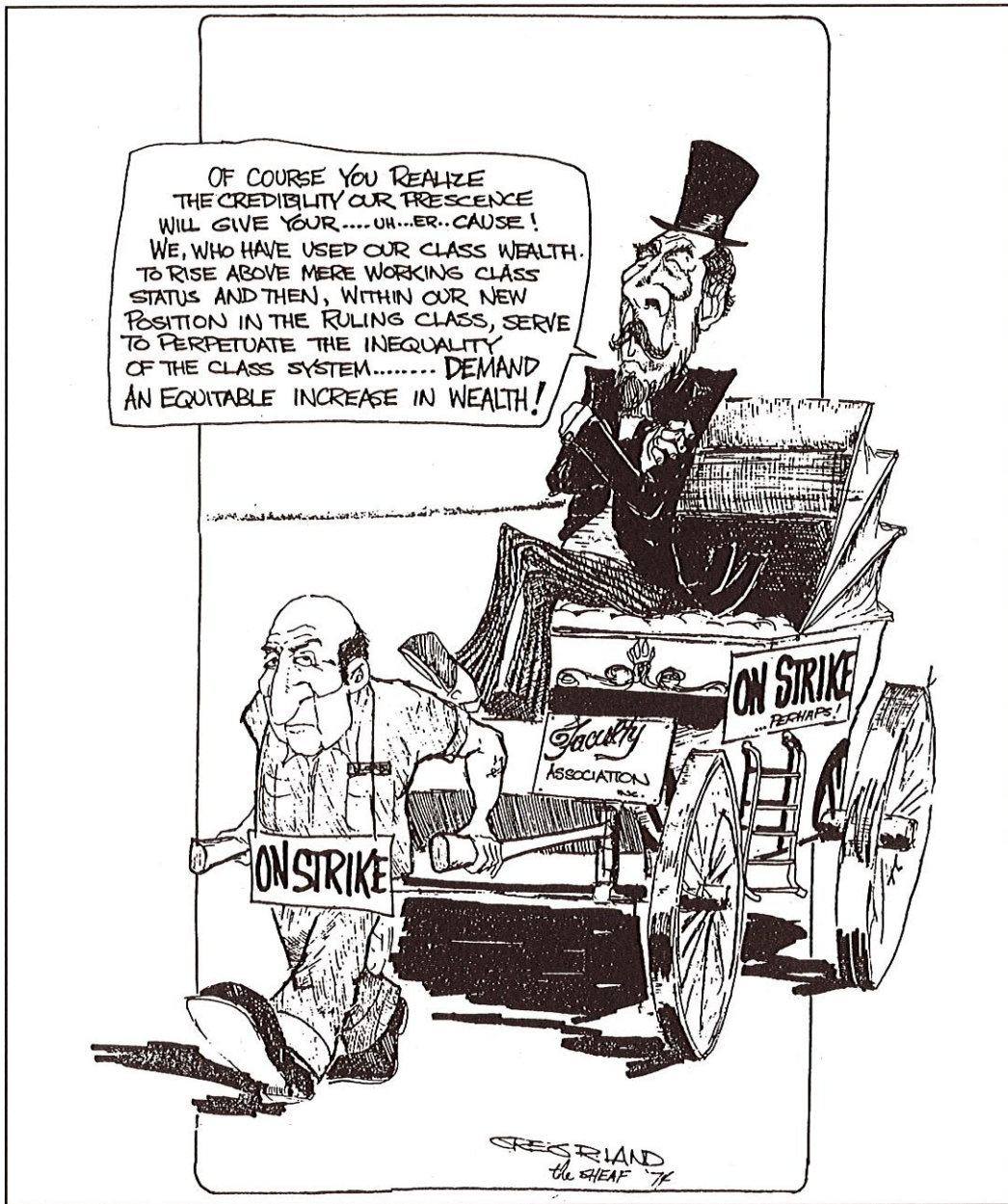
Essau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. Judas Iscariot sold his Savior for thirty pieces of silver. Benedict Arnold sold his country for a promise of a commission in the British Army. The modern strikebreaker sells his birthright, his country, his wife, his children, and his fellow men for an unfulfilled promise from his employer, trust or corporation. Essau was a traitor to himself, Judas Iscariot was a traitor to his God; Benedict Arnold was a traitor to his country, a strikebreaker is a traitor to his God, his country, his wife, his family and his class.<sup>75</sup>

To gain more support for its strike, the union called upon the University of Saskatchewan Students' Union (USSU) and trade unions in the city. Although the Student Council had originally passed a motion urging students to honor picket lines, its members decided, on 27 September, to change the motion. In an interview with the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* the President of the USSU said "the motion was changed because council realized the students can demonstrate the need for union employees to the administration only by continuing to use the facilities."<sup>76</sup> Some students shared the view of a first-year education student, who stated that "the students can help the union more if they are here to mess up the campus."<sup>77</sup> Another group of sympathetic students formed an Ad Hoc committee which held a noon-hour rally on 27 September to show support for the union's demands. At the University of Regina the Student's Strike Support Committee was organized to hand out pamphlets and posters to students, carry out fundraising, and supply picket support.<sup>78</sup>

Letters of support, picket line support and financial donations came from organizations such as the Saskatchewan Action Committee on the Status of Women and the Canadian Labour Congress, and from unions such as the Association of Canadian Television and Radio Artists, the Service Employees' International Union Local 333 and the Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 1594, which represented the Regina Public Library workers.<sup>79</sup> Murray Zook, Secretary-Treasurer of USEU Local 54, CLC, reported that twenty-six unions had contributed \$4621 to the strike fund.<sup>80</sup> However, the University of Saskatchewan Faculty Association decided not to support the union, or to honor picket lines because it would have meant closing the University.<sup>81</sup> Instead, it was left to individual professors to determine if they would honor the picket lines—some did.

Meanwhile, as the picketing and demonstrations were taking place, the negotiating committees for both the union and the universities met with the Deputy Minister of Labour, Bob Mitchell, in Regina on 27 September. Bob Mitchell contacted labour conciliator Graham Mitchell to assist him in trying to get both parties to reconsider their respective positions. While the conciliation talks continued, the Acting President of the University of Saskatchewan, Dr. R.W. Begg, issued a public





University of Saskatchewan Archives, *The Sheaf*, 1974.

notice to all students and faculty about the strike. He wanted to notify them that the University would continue to operate even if it had to hire so-called “replacement workers.”

The University intends to continue offering its teaching program during the present labour dispute and to meet its obligations to students, faculty and the public. In doing so, it will act within the law and within accepted standards of industrial relations practice. Since the start of the strike, virtually all work done to maintain essential services has been carried out by management personnel, many of whom have put in long hours of overtime. Their efforts have been successful due in large measure to the cooperation of students and faculty. The hiring of temporary help during a strike is permissible by law and a limited number have been employed to maintain health services and animal care. More may be required if the

strike continues for long, but they will be appointed only after very careful consideration and with the consent of the Personnel Office.<sup>82</sup>

The conciliation talks broke off on 27 September with an understanding that they would resume after both parties had time to consider their respective proposals. Apparently, management needed the time to reconsider its position because the picketing had become quite effective in disrupting normal operations. Dr. Begg’s decision to keep the University operating was communicated to the union on 2 October when J.A. Pringle sent a letter to Elaine Von Oder ordering the members of USEU Local 54 not to enter University property until further notice. Any union member found violating this instruction, warned Pringle, “will be considered a trespasser.”<sup>83</sup>

The next day the University had its solicitors draft a “Statement of Claim” so that an injunction could be issued against the union. The statement accused the Executive and the members of the union of engaging in unlawful picketing activities

on the University’s property in the following ways:

- (a) They have continuously blocked roadways and walkways within the University Campus, preventing free and unimpeded passage of persons on University business;
- (b) They have blocked entrance ways, front and rear, of buildings on the University Campus, impeding free passage through those entrance ways;
- (c) They have generally impeded the flow of traffic on the University Campus;
- (d) They have attempted to harass and intimidate persons lawfully engaged in administrative duties for the Plaintiff by following such persons around and calling names such as “scab” and “scab worker.”<sup>84</sup>

The University also issued a claim against the Executive members and union stating that their picketing constituted unlawful trespass; it called for general damages



in excess of \$5000, a restraining order which prevented intimidation of administrative personnel, trespassing, picketing, watching or besetting on the University campus, the limiting of picketing to three persons at any one entrance to the University, and a permanent injunction.<sup>85</sup> Based on this complaint, the Court of Queen's Bench issued an injunction against each of the Executive members and the union.

In response to the court's decision, the Executive, Negotiating Committee and Public Relations Committee held a special meeting on 6 October 1974. It was decided that the union's lawyer would go to Court of Queen's Bench the next day to appeal the injunction.<sup>86</sup> The union would also issue a press release stating its position on lawful picketing and the unfairness of the injunction. The Public Relations Committee sent the following notice to all picketers:

Do not lose heart from recent Administration attempts at intimidation. We are appealing the injunction and will be in court Monday morning fighting this injunction to the hilt. We also feel that we've got management "on the ropes" if anything is to be gathered from recent Administrative Action.

In fact, Bob Mitchell, Deputy Minister of Labour, has called a negotiation meeting for this morning (Monday).

Our negotiating team is committed to resolving this strike, but not by selling the membership down the road. We will not settle on something that does not recognize the resoluteness with which the membership has stood by their demands. To give in now on our major demands, would be to say that we have been on strike for nothing. Management must recognize that we have taken strike action at great effort and expense to ourselves, and will not now sell out cheaply.

A new "Strike Headquarters" with increased space and phone facilities should be announced later today. Also, any information on the injunction appeal or negotiations will be re-layed to you immediately. HANG IN THERE!<sup>87</sup>

Meanwhile, the union's negotiating committee met again in Regina on 7 October with the University's negotiating committee and the Deputy Minister Bob Mitchell, who was now acting as the conciliator. Management must have obtained authorization from the Board of Governors to settle the strike with a better offer, because after two full days of continuous contract talks and conciliation efforts, a tentative agreement was reached. It included a minimum \$160 per month across-the-board wage increase to be paid in three steps during an eighteen month agreement (\$80 retroactive to 1 July 1974, an additional \$25 a month increase on 1 January 1975, and \$55, or nine percent, on 1 July 1975); a cost-of-living adjustment whereby wages would be tied to the consumer price index once it increased more than nine percent, effective 1 July 1975; an additional wage adjustment of \$10 a month to Tech I's, II's, III's and Instrument Makers I's and II's; four weeks vacation after six years of employment; a joint

union management review and appeal board on job classifications; a day care arrangement with management providing the facilities; double time after the first three hours of overtime; and the establishment of the trades wage rates at ninety-one percent of the Saskatoon construction rates.<sup>88</sup>

The ratification vote was conducted on 10 October at both universities with 1001 voting in favour and 160 against.<sup>89</sup> The workers returned to work on 11 October, thus ending the fifteen-day strike. The new collective agreement became effective 1 November, 1974.

Although the strike had come to an end with a victory for the union, an important development took place in its aftermath. The strike acted as the catalyst to transform the union into a more militant organization, with a better understanding of class consciousness.<sup>90</sup> In fact, in the opinion of Al Ens, former Executive Member at Large and now a CUPE representative, if the strike had not occurred, the transformation would have probably taken much longer to develop.<sup>91</sup> Part of the push for the change came about as a result of the CLC's failure to provide the financial, physical and moral assistance the union members expected. Even the CLC representative assigned to the Local was not seen on the picket line walking with the workers. Some believed that they were left to fight their own battle. A similar criticism had been raised by the Canadian Union of Public Employees about unions directly affiliated to the CLC. CUPE was of the opinion that it offered greater union strength to public employees than was possible with direct association affiliation like USEU, Local 54, CLC. In fact, CUPE believed it had "far more experience and success in organizing and developing militant trade unionism among public employees than any other group or organization, including the CLC itself."<sup>92</sup> It seems that a significant number of members wanted to see USEU Local 54, CLC transfer its affiliation to one of the militant public sector unions like CUPE. As Bryan Palmer has pointed out, by the 1970s many of the workers in the public sector were embracing a new militancy and were showing an increased interest in the public sector unions such as the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, the Public Service Alliance of Canada and the Canadian Union of Public Employees. CUPE, in particular, was "attracting thousands to its ranks every year" because of its militant trade unionism.<sup>93</sup> Furthermore, women's activist Julie White in *Sisters and Solidarity* points out that women concerned with labour force issues were "no longer discussing whether unions have something to contribute, but rather how much and how best to do it."<sup>94</sup> Unions provided working people with a mechanism to place their concerns directly before the employer, and insisted upon a response. Some of these concerns included wages and working conditions, while others involved sexism, sexual harassment, pay equity, maternity leave, employment equity, and child care.<sup>95</sup> CUPE was starting to address



these issues by the mid-1970s as Judy Darcy, its national president, notes:

By 1975 the union had emerged as a national voice for public sector workers and social issues. In the ensuing years the union championed economic and workplace justice for public sector employees as both a basic right for workers and an essential ingredient in maintaining high-quality public services.<sup>96</sup>

Consequently, at the USEU, Local 54's membership meeting held in February 1975, a motion was passed to start the process of having the union seek affiliation with another labour organization.<sup>97</sup> The Local's new President, Mike Stefanyshin, was instructed to send notification to the Canadian Labour Congress, "that USEU, Local 54, CLC wishes to explore the possibility of transferring to an affiliate."<sup>98</sup> An Affiliation Committee was elected with the mandate to inform the membership about the services and benefits each would provide. After an in-depth investigation, the Affiliation Committee recommended inviting the following unions to a membership meeting: from within the CLC were the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU) and Service Employees International Union (SEIU), those outside the CLC included the Saskatchewan Government Employees Association, the Association of University and College Employees, Confederation of Canadian Unions, Canadian Association of Industrial, Mechanical and Allied Workers, Retail Wholesale Department Store Union (Saskatchewan Section), and Saskatchewan Union of Nurses.<sup>99</sup>

The recommendation to invite non-CLC unions caused a great deal of turmoil amongst the leadership of USEU, Local 54. The majority of the executive wanted to confine the invitations to those unions within the CLC, while two executive members and the Affiliation Committee recommended the inclusion of the others.<sup>100</sup>

As soon as the CLC received USEU, Local 54's notification of its plan to transfer its application, the CLC got its provincial body, the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour (SFL), to investigate. On 21 March 1975, a

meeting was held by Wes Norheim, CLC Regional Director, Fred Trotter, Western Vice-President of OPEIU, Ray Sedgwick, CLC Representative for USEU, Local 54, George Wall, International Representative of SEIU and Gordon Quaale, Acting Regional Director of CUPE, to discuss the transfer proceedings of USEU, Local 54. Norheim and Sedgwick raised some concerns about USEU, Local 54's Affiliation Committee's decision to invite unions outside of the CLC to speak to the members. Consequently, they came to the conclusion that they would encourage the members of USEU, Local 54 to seek transfer to a CLC affiliate. Plans were then drawn up as to how the transfer was to take place in an orderly fashion.<sup>101</sup>

While the top labour representatives were carrying out their plans, USEU, Local 54's Affiliation Committee, was in the process of sending out letters to the various unions to see if they would address the membership at the May 1975 general meeting.<sup>102</sup> In addition, the Affiliation Committee issued an information sheet explaining that both CLC affiliates and non-CLC unions should be allowed to speak to the membership. It was fighting for democracy and for the right of its members to choose. The information sheet also accused some executive members of carrying out "stalling tactics," because they had "cancelled the speakers from non-CLC unions scheduled for [the] May 6th meeting."<sup>103</sup>

In response to the issuance of this information sheet, the USEU Local 54 Executive passed a motion "to dismiss the members of the Affiliation Committee."<sup>104</sup> The



Credit Line: CUPE 1975.

*Female employees had much to gain from the strike. Although they made up approximately fifty-nine percent of the workers on campus, women were found primarily in the lowest paying jobs.*



executive also sent a letter to the membership trying to explain its decision to dismiss the Affiliation Committee. In essence, it stated that as a local of the CLC, the members should be looking at those unions "within the confines of the CLC to make us a stronger and more flexible union ..."<sup>105</sup>

Although most members seemed to accept the Executive's explanation, there were a few who were very critical of it. Even Al Ens, one of the Executive Members at Large, wanted the membership to have the opportunity to look at all the unions. One Clerk Steno sent a letter to the Executive stating that "things are getting a little too out of hand. How are we going to decide between affiliation and staying directly chartered with the CLC? What is so wrong in hearing other views?"<sup>106</sup> These criticisms, however, had little impact on the Executive's decision. The Executive had been convinced by the arguments presented by the representatives of the CLC and the SFL to look only at those unions affiliated to the CLC.

The only unions which were invited to speak to the membership were the Service Employees International Union, the Canadian Union of Public Employees, and the Office and Professional Employees' International Union. Each union presented a submission explaining the services and benefits it could provide to the University employees. The affiliation vote was conducted in June with the majority selecting CUPE.<sup>107</sup> Wes Norheim, CLC Regional Director, issued a press release announcing that the 1700 members of USEU Local 54, CLC had made the decision to transfer to CUPE. The effective date of the transfer was set for 1 August 1975. Local 54 chose Charter No. 1975 as its new local number within CUPE; and the name of the union was amended to read the University Employees' Union Local 1975, Canadian Union of Public Employees.<sup>108</sup>

The USEU Local 54's 1974 strike marked a major watershed in its history. From its original struggle to

obtain recognition in 1944, the union went twenty-nine years without resorting to strike action to back contract demands. However, it would be inaccurate to conclude that the lack of strike action indicated a state of harmonious relations between union and management. There was a significant amount of discontent and dissatisfaction with the low wages and with the treatment the workers had received from management over the years. Indeed, by 1974 the workers were feeling the frustrations caused by low wages, inflation, management manipulation of the job classifications and a host of other exploitative employer practices. Although these grievances had caused deep dissatisfaction amongst the workers, the real issue in the strike was money. This is not uncommon. As Ed Finn has explained: "When employees' grievances derive from their very status as employees, a strike flowing out of such deprivations cannot be resolved unless it is reduced to monetary terms."<sup>109</sup>

The 1974 strike also was the catalyst for the union's transformation. A significant number of members wanted a new type of union which would be able to respond to the major economic, social and political changes taking place during the 1970s. CUPE, with its form of militant trade unionism, became the means to improve the members' wages, benefits and working conditions through collective bargaining, and, if need be, the strike.

Finally, the actual strike was a test of power between union and management. The management of the two universities believed that with its economic and political power it could easily defeat the union and force it to settle on the management's terms. The union realized that in a test of power over the determination of wages, benefits, job security and working conditions, its power lay in the unity of its members. Its leaders believed their strike was the only way to achieve fairness and justice, and hoped this lesson would not be forgotten.

## Endnotes

- 1 Canada, Department of Labour, *The Labour Gazette*, Vol. 75, No. 2 (February 1975), 143. The Saskatchewan Department of Labour, however, reported that 1620 workers were involved in the strike and that the total number of days lost were 17,820. See *Annual Report* (Regina: Queen's Printer, 1975), 60.
- 2 Ibid. Only four strikes occurred in the education sector in Canada in 1974.
- 3 See Series E 190-197 Number of strikes and lockouts, employers and workers involved and time loss, Canada, 1901-1975. F.H. Leacy (ed.), *Historical Statistics of Canada* (Ottawa, 1983).
- 4 Sask. Dept. of Labour, *Annual Report, 1975* (Regina: Queen's Printer, 1975), 58-60.
- 5 See Series E 190-197 Number of strikes and lockouts, employers and workers involved and time loss, Canada, 1901 to 1975, *Historical Statistics of Canada*. And, for a discussion about previous strike waves in Canada's history, see Gregory Kealey with Douglas Cruikshank, "Strikes in Canada, 1891-1950", *Workers and Canadian History* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995), 345-418.
- 6 Tom Langford, "Strikes and Class Consciousness," *Labour/Le Travail*, Vol. 33 (spring 1994), 115.
- 7 University of Saskatchewan Archives (hereafter referred to as USA), University Studies Group, *The Economic Impact of the University of Saskatchewan on the City of Saskatoon* (Saskatoon, 1975).
- 8 For an examination of the cost of living indices, see M.C. Urquhart and K.A.H. Buckley (eds.), *Historical Statistics of Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), 293, 304.
- 9 USA, Presidential Papers, RG 152 Series II B-95, Labour Relations, 1943-1949, W.A.D. Titchmarsh to Acting President Thompson, May 1, 1943.
- 10 Ibid., Acting President Thompson to W.A.D. Titchmarsh, May 21, 1943.
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 Saskatchewan, Department of Labour, *Annual Report, 1944* (Regina: King's Printer, 1945), 24.
- 13 USA, Presidential Papers, RG 152 Series II B-95, Labour Relations, 1943-1949, James S. Thomson to W.K. Bryden, Chair Sask. Labour Relation Board, March 15, 1945.
- 14 Ibid., W.K. Bryden, Saskatchewan Labour Relations Board. "In the Matter of the University of Saskatchewan Employees' Association, Applicant. And In the Matter of an application for



- order to be made, (a) determining that the employees of the University of Saskatchewan, except teaching staff and executive employees, constitute an appropriate unit of employees for the purpose of bargaining collectively, (b) determining that the applicant Association represents a majority of the employees in the said unit, and (c) requiring the University of Saskatchewan to bargain collectively with the applicant Association; And In the Matter of clauses (a), (b) and (c) of section 5 of the Trade Union Act, 1944. May 28, 1945.”
- 15 Ibid., 1.
  - 16 For an account of these transformations from public sector associations to trade unions, see Doug Taylor, *For Dignity, Equality and Justice: A History of the Saskatchewan Government Employees' Union* (Regina: SGEU, 1985); Glen Makahonuk, “Masters and Servants: Labour Relations in the Saskatchewan Civil Service 1905-1945,” *Prairie Forum*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (Fall 1987), 257-276; and Doug Smith, Jack Bates and Esylit Jones, *Lives in the Public Service: A History of the Manitoba Government Employees' Union* (Winnipeg: MGEU & Manitoba Labour Education Centre, 1993).
  - 17 “The Trade Union Act of Saskatchewan,” *Statutes of the Province of Saskatchewan 1944* (Regina: King's Printer, 1944 [second edition]), 207-215. The *Trade Union Act* which had been drafted by two prominent Ontario labour lawyers and CCF members, gave workers the right to organize into unions of their own choosing, the right to bargain collectively, and the right to strike. An employer was required to recognize his employees' union and bargain in “good faith” with a view to the conclusion of a written collective agreement. The Act also placed restrictions on certain employer anti-union activities, especially during the certification procedure. For instance, it was an unfair labour practice for an employer to discharge an employee for union activity. As well, it provided union security by means of maintenance of membership and compulsory dues check-off.
  - 18 Saskatchewan, Department of Labour, *Annual Report, 1975* (Regina: Queen's Printer, 1975), 70.
  - 19 Bryan D. Palmer, *Working Class Experience: Rethinking the History of Canadian Labour 1800-1991* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1992), 285.
  - 20 USA, MG 110, CUPE 1975 Fonds, University of Saskatchewan Employees' Union (USEU), Minutes, September 11, 1944.
  - 21 Ibid.
  - 22 Ibid., Minutes September 30, 1944.
  - 23 Ibid., Minutes October 8, 1944. For a brief account of the role of the CCF in Saskatchewan in promoting unionization under the Trade Union Act of 1944, see Ivan Avakumovic, *Socialism in Canada: A study of the CCF-NDP in Federal and Provincial Politics* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Ltd., 1978), 168-188; S.M. Lipset, *Agrarian Socialism: The Cooperative Commonwealth Federation in Saskatchewan* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1971), 278-286; W.J.C. Cherwinski, “Organized Labour in Saskatchewan: The TLC Years, 1905-1945,” PhD thesis (University of Alberta, 1972), 196-298.
  - 24 USA, MG 110, CUPE 1975 Fonds. USEU, Local 54, CLC Minutes October 21, 1944.
  - 25 USA, RG 152, Presidential Papers: Series II B-95, Labour Relations, 1943-1949. Form LRB - 1A Determination of Collective Bargaining Representative. Labour Relations Board. Application by a Trade Union for an Order to be made pursuant to Clauses (a), (b) and (c) of Section 5 of the *Trade Union Act*, 1944.
  - 26 USA, RG 152, Presidential Papers: Series II B-95, Labour Relations, 1943-1949, W.L. Lake to W.K. Bryden, March 7, 1945.
  - 27 Ibid.
  - 28 USA, Presidential Papers, Series II A-30, F.N. Clark, Rec. Secretary of SDLC, to Dr. J.S. Thompson, February 21, 1945.
  - 29 Ibid., Dr. J.S. Thomson to H.E. Bradwell, President SDLC, March 14, 1945.
  - 30 USA, RG 152, Presidential Papers, Series II B-95 Labour Relations, 1943-1949, J.S. Thompson to W.K. Bryden, March 15, 1945.
  - 31 Ibid., 2.
  - 32 Saskatchewan Labour Relations Board, “In the Matter of the University of Saskatchewan Employees' Association, applicant . . .” W.K. Bryden, May 28, 1945, 2.
  - 33 Ibid.
  - 34 Ibid.
  - 35 Saskatchewan, Department of Labour, M. Stuart, Secretary LRB to J.S. Thomson, President U of S., October 10, 1945.
  - 36 Saskatchewan, Department of Labour, Labour Relations Board Order W.K. Bryden, April 10, 1945.
  - 37 USA, MG 110, CUPE 1975 Fonds, USEU Minutes, May 15, 1945.
  - 38 Saskatchewan, Labour Relations Board, Between the University of Saskatchewan Employees' Union, Applicant, and University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Respondent; In the Matter of the determination of an appropriate unit of employees for the purpose of bargaining collectively, and the determination of the trade union representing a majority of the employees in an appropriate unit, and the requiring of an employer to bargain collectively; And in the matter of section 5, clauses (a), (b) and (c) and sections 6 and 7 of the Trade Union Act, 1944; the dates of the certification orders are September 17, 1945, November 22, 1945, December 18, 1945, January 3, 1946.
  - 39 USA, MG 110, CUPE 1975 Fonds, USEU Minutes of September 24, 1945; October 15, 1945 and December 19, 1945.
  - 40 USA, MG 110, CUPE 1975 Fonds, USEU, I Collective Agreements. This Agreement made in duplicate this 25th day of January 1946 Between the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Saskatchewan Employees' Union.
  - 41 Saskatchewan, Department of Labour, *Annual Report, 1947* (Regina: King's Printer, 1948), 7.
  - 42 Ed Finn, *Free Collective Bargaining and the Right to Strike* (Ottawa: Canadian Union of Public Employees, 1982), 2. See also Gerald E. Phillips, *The Practice of Labour Relations and Collective Bargaining in Canada* (Toronto: Butterworth and Co. Ltd., 1977).
  - 43 USA, RG 4, S, Controller and Treasurer Office, J.A. Pringle 1-31-3 U of S Employees' Union Negotiations 1973-74, Elaine Von Order to J.A. Pringle, November 1, 1973.
  - 44 M. Hayden, *Seeking A Balance, The University of Saskatchewan 1907-1982* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1983), 275.
  - 45 Ibid. The University of Regina had an impact on labour relations and the 1974 round of negotiations.
  - 46 USA, MG 110, CUPE 1975: University of Saskatchewan Employees' Union Fonds, 1974 Negotiations, September 10, 1974.
  - 47 Ibid.
  - 48 USA, MG 110, CUPE 1975: University of Saskatchewan Employees' Union Fonds, 1974 Negotiations, September 10, 1974.
  - 49 As of July 2, 1974 the minimum wage for most workers employed by an employer in Saskatchewan was set at \$2.25 per hour. The number of hours in a regular week was forty hours. And since there was an average of 4.3 weeks in a month, the minimum monthly wage was: \$2.25 per hour x 40 hours/week x 4.3 weeks/month = \$387. See Saskatchewan, Department of Labour, *Saskatchewan Labour Legislation, June 1974* (Regina: Queen's Printer, 1974), 36-37.
  - 50 The concept of a dual labour market is discussed in Paul Phillips, “The Dual Labour Market in Manitoba: A Theoretical Investigation,” *Manpower Issues in Manitoba: Report of the Manitoba Economic Development Advisory Board* (Winnipeg, 1975), 55-88.
  - 51 USA, MG 110, CUPE 1975: USEU Fonds, 1974 Negotiations, Tom Young, Vice-President, September 10, 1974.
  - 52 USA, MG 110, CUPE 1975: USEU Fonds, “U of S Administration: A Tough Nut to Crack for Local 54,” 1.
  - 53 For a detailed analysis of the strike, see Richard Hyman, *Strikes* (Glasgow: William Collins Sons Co. Ltd, 1977), 107.
  - 54 USA, MG 110, CUPE 1975: USEU Fonds, M. Desjardins, Chairperson Strike Information Committee, July 25, 1974.
  - 55 USA, MG 110, CUPE 1975: USEU Fonds, Strike File, Tom Young to Secretary-Treasurer, CLC, August 6, 1974.
  - 56 Ibid., David Montgomery, Secretary-Treasurer CLC to Tom Young, August 12, 1974.
  - 57 Ibid. Strike Information Sheet “Everything you have always wanted to know about striking but were afraid to ask.”
  - 58 Regina *Leader Post*, August 12, 1974.
  - 59 Ibid.
  - 60 USA, RG 4S, Controller and Treasurer Office, J.A. Pringle 1-31-3 USEU Negotiations, 1973-74, Report on Union Negotiations,



- J.A. Pringle to Deans and Department Heads, August 20, 1974, 1.
- 61 USA, MG 110, CUPE 1975: USEU Fonds, *The Skopein*, September 5, 1974.
- 62 USA, MG 110, CUPE 1975: USEU Fonds, *The Skopein*, September 5, 1974.
- 63 USA, MG 110 CUPE 1975: USEU Fonds. Strike Info Committee. University of Saskatchewan Employee's Union To Whom It May Concern, September 12, 1974.
- 64 The ballot read: "Are you in favour of strike action? Yes . . . No . . ." See USA, MG 110, CUPE 1975: USEU Fonds. Correspondence. E.W. Norheim, Regional Director CLC to M. Stefanyshin, President CUPE 1975, August 13, 1975; and Saskatoon *Star Phoenix*, September 17, 1974.
- 65 USA, MG 110, CUPE 1975: USEU Fonds, Elaine Von Oder to J.A. Pringle, September 18, 1974.
- 66 USA, RG 4S, Controller and Treasurer Office. J.A. Pringle 1-31-3, USEU Negotiations, 1973-74, R.W. Begg to Deans, Department Heads and Directors, September 18, 1974.
- 67 Saskatoon *Star Phoenix*, September 27, 1974.
- 68 USA, MG 110, CUPE 1975: USEU Fonds, Strike Info. University of Saskatchewan Employees' Union, Local 54, CLC, "To the Students," September 10, 1974.
- 69 USA, RG 4S, Controller and Treasurer Office J.A. Pringle 1-31-3 USEU Negotiations 1973-74, J.A. Pringle to Deans, Department Heads and Administration Officers, September 19, 1974, 1. Also see University of Saskatchewan, Board of Governors Minutes and Agendas, October 3, 1974, 11. Pringle reported to the Board the need to hire temporary help.
- 70 Ibid.
- 71 The term "scab" or "strikebreaker" is used to refer to an individual who accepts employment during a strike, continues to work for an employer while a strike is in progress, or crosses a picket line during a strike . . ." See Jeffrey Sack and Ethan Poskanzer, *Labour Law Terms: A Dictionary of Canadian Labour Law* (Toronto: Lancaster House, 1984), 144.
- 72 USA, MG 110, CUPE 1975: USEU Fonds, Correspondence, E.W. Norheim, Regional Director CLC to M. Stefanyshin, August 13, 1975.
- 73 USA, MG 110, CUPE 1975: USEU Fonds, Strike Information, Picket line rules.
- 74 Ibid., Strike Information Sheet, September 26, 1974.
- 75 Ibid., Strike Information, Jack London, "A Scab." Jack London (1876-1916) was an American writer who wrote many adventure novels and stories, one of the most famous being *The Call of the Wild* (New York, 1903). He was also a rebel and a socialist who played a key role as a social critic and spokesman for the oppressed and the proletariat. One of the essays he wrote and published is entitled "The Scab." See *The Social Writings of Jack London* (edited, with an introduction, by Philip S. Foner) (Secaucus, N.J.: Citadel Press, 1964), 460-473.
- 76 Saskatoon *Star Phoenix*, Sept. 27, 1974, 3.
- 77 Ibid.
- 78 "Strike Transforms Union," *Next Year Country*, Vol 2, No. 3, (December 1974-January 1975), 12.
- 79 USA, MG 110, CUPE 1975: USEU Fonds, Strike Info., Betty Pickering, President CUPE 1594, to Ronald Yeo, September 26, 1974; and Sheila M. Kuziak, ACTRA to Elaine Von Oder, September 30, 1974.
- 80 USA, MG 110, CUPE 1975: USEU Fonds, Strike Info. Receipts Re: Strike, March 19, 1975.
- 81 Saskatoon *Star Phoenix* Sept. 27, 1974, 3.
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# Book Reviews

## Marynia Don't Cry: Memoirs of Two Polish-Canadian Families

By Apolonja Maria Kojder and Barbara Glogowska. Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1995. Pp. 208. \$24.95 (Paper)

MARYNIA DON'T CRY contains the stories of two unrelated and very different Polish families whose fate brought them to Canada: "A Mother's Legacy," by Apolonja Kojder and "Three Generations" by Barbara Glogowska. Of particular interest to readers of *Saskatchewan History* is the personal and often melodramatic narrative woven by Kojder who was born in Hafford and grew up in North Battleford. Sensitive and highly intimate, "A Mother's Legacy" provides details of the lives of Kojder's mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. Indeed, the account is a celebration of the women's strength and endurance as the central characters of the family unit. The women persevered, worked, raised the children, managed the finances and supported each other. The men went off to war, left in search of work and died young.

Kojder launches her story in Austrian-occupied Poland before the turn of the century. With imagination she penetrates her cultural roots as she describes the humble everyday lives of her maternal grandparents. As landless peasants they struggled to survive by working on large estates and travelling to Germany in search of better wages. Polish independence came about in 1919 but did little to improve the lot of the family. At sixteen, the author's mother, Helena, wed Franek Kojder. He worked at various jobs while she managed to enroll in a nursing school. Always a restless spirit, Jan Beznowski, the author's grandfather, left his wife and three children and departed for Canada in 1925. Eventually he settled on a farm near Speers, Saskatchewan. Beznowski joined the thousands of single emigrants who left their wives and children in the home village with the intention of bringing them to Canada once they established themselves. But time was against them as the era of a good homestead had ended; soon the Great Depression shrouded the country. Helena and Franek dreamed of a better life in Canada. Their dreams were shattered in 1939. In that year, the author's parents, aunt, uncle and grandmother were uprooted from their homes by the invading Soviets. They embarked on a journey that took them to Siberia,

Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Iraq, Iran, India, Italy and England. Finally they joined Beznowski in Canada in 1948. However, not all Poles who were deported to Siberian labour camps managed to survive the extirpation. Kojder's infant sister and several members of her extended family perished. Hundreds of thousands of Poles were executed by the Soviets or died of starvation, disease and extreme cold. This is but one story, yet it is very much representative of the large scale repression that took place behind the front lines.

The section on the family's Saskatchewan years reflect many of the problems experienced by immigrants adjusting to a new and strange land while struggling to maintain their "identity." The author was born a few months after her parents, grandmother and aunt arrived in Canada. They chose not to remain on Beznowski's farm and moved to North Battleford. Here they made new friends and secured reasonable employment. All seemed to be going well. Their new-found peace, however, was shattered when Franek died in a work-related accident. Once again, the surviving women were on their own.

Although the author succeeded in producing an engaging saga, the work is not without problems. It is at times disjointed and lacks any discernible style and organization – 133 pages in length without chapters. Constructed from her mother's and grandmother's testimony, the Kojder family history also lacks substantive analysis and historical context. The author does not describe her interviewing and editing techniques and does not reveal how she worked to achieve such an emotional account. At times it reads like a novel, is liberally interspersed with verbatim transcripts, and concludes with fleeting thoughts from what appears to be a childhood diary. Owing to its personal nature, Kojder was obviously faced with a difficult task. How do you document objectively the lives of women who are your flesh and blood? At the same time, Kojder's background and close ties to her foremothers afforded her a "vantage point" inaccessible to an outsider. Kojder's effort certainly succeeds as ethnic and folk literature, but its contribution to scholarly ethnic studies will be minimal.

"Three Generations," is a much shorter account about Polish immigrant Mike Deputat and his descendants. Deputat came to Canada in 1928, worked in Western Canada and Northern Ontario and eventually made Toronto his home. The story is related by Barbara Glogowska, a friend of the family. It too suffers from methodological problems and its value, for the most part, is limited to the family itself. It may, how-



ever, inspire future generations to appreciate their Polish heritage.

Despite the reservations outlined above, *Marynia Don't Cry* is a good read and a welcome addition to the growing body of memoirs of Polish Canadians. To a large extent the book documents family experiences which were common to immigrants who arrived at the same times as did Deputat, Beznowski and the Kojders. Inspired writing of this type enhances existing literature about the origin of Canada's people, ethnic settlement and adjustment.

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## O Little Town: Remembering Life in a Prairie Village

By Harlo L. Jones . Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1995. Pp. xxviii, 236. \$17.50 (Paper).

IN THIS MEMOIR Harlo L. Jones recalls with great fondness his childhood in Dinsmore, Saskatchewan, located some sixty miles south of Saskatoon. The village where he grew up was founded in 1913 when the railway came through. Jones's parents arrived in the district that same year from Nebraska. They eventually had four children; Harlo, the youngest, was born in 1923.

Jones's father farmed for a time, then moved to Dinsmore in 1917 and opened a hardware store. He subsequently added a farm machinery dealership and also began selling Ford cars. In 1926 he installed a power plant which thereafter supplied the village with electricity.

*O Little Town* differs in two respects from most of the memoirs and reminiscences that have been published about the settlement era in western Canada. First, it is a chronicle of life in a prairie village rather than of the experience of those who lived on the land. Dinsmore was big enough to have a four-room school, a hospital and a movie theatre, yet it was small enough that ". . . everyone knew everyone else and everyone took part in almost everything" (p. 213). Co-operative endeavour sustained the village's curling and hockey rink, its hospital and the Community Club, founded in the depths of the Depression, which organized dances, plays, concerts and variety shows. But Harlo also recalls the discrimination directed against the Chinese proprietor of the local cafe.

Impermanence was another characteristic of the village. The vagaries of the economy were partly responsible for this. Thus when Dinsmore's newspaper went

bankrupt while Jones was still a young boy, the building it had occupied became a butcher shop and grocery store. Still later it became a general store.

Fires also took their toll. There were three major blazes in Dinsmore while Jones lived there. Some owners rebuilt; in other cases the land the building or buildings had stood on remained vacant for years.

*O Little Town* is different too because it consciously offers a child's perspective of Dinsmore and its inhabitants, and the larger world in which they lived. Dust storms and falling wheat prices left their mark on Dinsmore, and on Jones's memory of the Depression decade, but he also frankly admits that for him and for his contemporaries it was also a "very happy time ..." (p. xii). And so it appears to have been. Jones recounts in great detail how delightful life was for a child growing up in Dinsmore during the hardest decade Saskatchewan has yet experienced.

The coming of World War II had a far greater impact on Jones and his friends. When they finished high school in 1940, many promptly enlisted. "Two years after graduation," he recalls, "I returned to the village on leave from the air force and found only two of my male contemporaries there, one also on leave from the air force and the other who had been found unfit for military service. And when we two in the air force returned to duty, our friend was left alone" (p. 91).

Here Jones's narrative ends, for after the war he returned to Dinsmore infrequently, and only to visit.

These recollections of a childhood spent in a small prairie town are a welcome addition to the literature on the settlement of Saskatchewan and western Canada.

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## A Saskatchewan Sport Bibliography

Kathy Burianyak, researcher and writer; Greg Unger, editor. Regina: Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame and Museum, 1994. Pp. 175 (appendices). \$5.00 soft cover.

THE PROLIFERATION OF written and electronic coverage of the Montreal Forum's recent closure, reinforced for me the importance of sport in the evolution of Canadian culture. Gerald Friesen, prairie historian, refers to the many cultured world of Canada as a "stew" rather than the oft used "mosaic" analogy. Sport is one ingredient in the stock of this Canadian stew. Viewed within the context of social history, sport and physical activity



impact on the lives of the people in Montreal and other regions of Canada. This sporting phenomenon has been an important element in the growth of most Saskatchewan communities. Kathy Burianyk and Greg Unger provide those interested in this aspect of provincial history with a valuable resource.

Burianyk concludes her introduction to this publication with the hope, "that this bibliography will be valuable in researching the rich history of Saskatchewan sport!" This well organized information is presented alphabetically by sporting activity. The list proceeds from archery through wrestling, and concludes the bibliographic coverage with a section entitled "Miscellaneous-Sports." The "Miscellaneous-Sports" section, though weakly named, includes significant archival and secondary sources. The author and editor are to be commended for their efforts in initiating this bibliographic study.

The focus of many sport history students is on the particular rather than the general. Women's hockey prior to 1914, a famous rodeo rider or a hometown curling rink are exemplary of these focuses. The structure of *A Saskatchewan Sport Bibliography* provides broad, useful parameters for the general researcher, but its utility is more limited for those interested in the specific. As examples of this difficulty, take the terms "baseball," "equestrian," "football," "physical education," "swimming," and "wrestling." Each term is immediately recognized and understood by each individual researcher and reader relative to their total phenomenological experience with the term and its meaning to him or her. All of the aforementioned activities follow this model. As an illustration consider the Equestrian/Horse section. Cowboy riders at Duck Lake or Swift Current perceive they are as much a part of this section as the people who raised and raced standard breeds in the years prior to World War I, or the wealthy horse people of the seventies and eighties. Similar definition, gender, racial and educational sources, if known, could be noted in a brief introduction to each section. This would be helpful to readers utilizing this publication. Definitions and groupings may be controversial but are necessary and should be understood in historical context by the writer. When additional sources are located from major sporting groups (e.g. women, first nations, rural communities) in addition to listing them in alphabetical form, they could be cross-referenced according to special interest groups.

The appendices provide two significant sources of additional information. Saskatchewan museums are listed by location and their holdings relative to sport. The author warns us that the listing is "by no means comprehensive." Museums in centres such as Prince Albert, Weyburn, Battleford, Regina, and Swift Current are omitted. Special collections such as those of the Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Museum in Regina and the origi-

nal fire hall in Prince Albert call out for greater annotation. Appendix B provides an adequate listing of local history books. A future edition of this work could be complemented by appending sources of additional periodical materials and special collections (eg. Women and First Nations). These are two central populations in Saskatchewan that have received minimal coverage.

Kathy Burianyk and Greg Unger are to be commended for the researching, writing and editing of *A Saskatchewan Sport Bibliography*. They have provided a comprehensive research tool for exploring Saskatchewan's diverse history of sport and physical activity. Their work provides the foundation for the building of an extensive bibliography of Saskatchewan sport.

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## Help Us to a Better Land: Crofter Colonies in the Prairie West

By Wayne Norton. Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 1994. Pp. 107. Illustrations. \$15.00 (cloth).

IN THE FOREWORD to this monograph Wayne Norton suggests that the "generally accepted stereotype of the Scots in Canada is one of a favored people who stepped from the decks of the 'Hector' into the boardrooms of the nation's industries after only brief apprenticeships." However, the story that he proceeds to tell, of Scots crofters or farmer-fishermen from the Hebrides who settled in Canada's North-West Territories in the 1880s, is clearly not consistent with that image. By unearthing this "forgotten episode in the history of the Scots in Canada," Norton seeks to provide a more balanced view of the adjustment experience of this very influential group. In the process he has produced a fine microstudy of emigration which greatly enhances our understanding of some of the difficulties which attended the early settlement of Western Canada.

The two crofter colonies or settlements established near Killarney and Saltcoats in 1888, according to Norton, resulted from the intersection of three separate dreams. Prompted by the desire of the Scottish and Imperial governments to solve the growing problems of the Western Isles through voluntary depopulation, the scheme was also consistent with the Canadian govern-



ment's need to ensure national prosperity through the settlement of the West with agriculturalists. Most importantly, it involved a huge risk on the part of the individuals who left a familiar if troubled environment for a strange and distant land to create a better life for themselves and their families. The great tragedy of the story is that for many the danger led only to bitter disappointment which was caused, at least in part, by decisions made by British and Canadian government agents.

The scheme was less than successful, Norton suggests, because it was "flawed in conception and rushed in implementation." Originally recommended by Malcolm McNeil, Poor Law Inspector for the Western Isles, massive emigration was taken up by Scottish Secretary Lord Lothian as the only "permanent and effectual solution to the chronic poverty and land scarcity that was causing a Crofters' War in the early 1880s." Once the scheme was approved, and financial assistance provided by the Treasury Board, McNeil immediately began to recruit potential emigrants from the islands of Lewis, Harris and North Uist. In the case of emigrants from Lewis, families had between four and seven days to settle their affairs and prepare for the journey. Existing debts were a problem as many emigrants had no choice but to use part of the 120 pounds advance which the government provided to pay their accumulated debt before leaving. This would prove disastrous later, as many crofters were chronically short of cash upon arrival. This first contingent was settled in the Killarney area and a year later a second group settled in the Saltcoats districts. The decision to leave was, Norton speculates, "spontaneous, necessitous and anxious." The majority of these left their homes without any clear idea of what or where their destination was.

Compounding the indecent haste and short-sighted under-funding, there was no clear agreement among the interested parties as to who was responsible for the emigrants once they arrived. Envisaged as an "Imperial Tentative Effort," an Imperial Colonization Board consisting of Scottish, British and Canadian government officials and land speculators initially oversaw the settlements. But, as it became obvious that the scheme would not be immediately successful, all parties sought to absolve themselves of responsibility, and the crofters quickly developed a perception of themselves as victims of government duplicity and broken promises.

Norton insists, however, that the crofters also contributed to their own fate. Completely unfamiliar with the new climate and agricultural techniques, they also demonstrated an exaggerated sense of entitlement. Some settlers, for example, believed that houses had been promised to them by the Imperial Colonization Board, and refused to work on the construction of their own homes unless paid for the service. After a number of other conflicts a local Canadian government agent opined that in his not inconsiderable experience, he had never found a more difficult lot of men to satisfy, and

compared them to helpless Indians. Local conditions also influenced the fortunes of the settlers. The Killarney settlers were able to secure good quality land suitable for cereal cultivation, while the Saltcoats settlers were immediately handicapped by the poor land they found waiting for them. Surrounded by established settlers at Killarney, the crofters there had access to local employment to tide them over the lean times. At Saltcoats, the crofters found themselves competing with the small local population for scarce labour. Moreover, the merchants in the Killarney area were willing to extend credit to the crofters on the assumption that either the British or Canadian government would ultimately assume responsibility. This critical assistance was not available at Saltcoats, where Imperial Colonization Board officials warned local merchants that the state was in no way liable for debts incurred by the crofters. The result was that Killarney settlers did considerably better than those at Saltcoats, and, in fact, a majority of Saltcoats settlers had left the area within a decade of the establishment of the colony.

This analysis of the two crofter settlements leads Norton to question the traditional view of the Scottish experience in Canada. Scottish birth did not guarantee easy adjustment or quick success, he concludes. In fact, he suggests that the attitudes and practices brought from the Western Isles may have inhibited the settlers' adaptation and isolated them from the surrounding community. Moreover, he suggests that the experience of the crofters in the North-West Territories discouraged further emigration from the Western Isles and contributed to the growing feeling in Canada that the British generally did not make good agricultural settlers.

In telling this story of three inter-related dreams, Norton does a very good job of documenting the administrative activities of British and Canadian officials, their efforts to avoid incurring additional costs, and the legal situation surrounding land resulting from the schemes' failure. However, this is also a weakness of the study; by telling the story primarily from the perspective of government officials, the human side of the story, the experiences of individual crofters and their families as they tried to adjust to an alien environment, is virtually ignored. There is little analysis here of the long term impact of the crofters on their new homes, how long they continued to speak Gaelic, or what they contributed to the local religious, educational, cultural or political institutions. This book is a valuable source for students of Scottish emigration and the early settlement of the west. But, it is curiously devoid of insight into or detailed information on the personal experiences of crofter emigrants in the North-West Territories.

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# Park Prisoners: The Untold Story of Western Canada's National Parks, 1915-1946

By Bill Waiser. Saskatoon: Fifth House, 1995. Pp. 294. Illustrated. \$27.95 (cloth).

IT IS NOT LIKELY that many people who visit Riding Mountain, Banff, and other national parks in western Canada realize the real history of some of the most popular buildings and facilities. Many were built by men sent there against their will, some because they were desperate and hungry, some because they were unemployed, some because Canadian society was afraid of them, some because they refused to fight for King and country, and some because they were prisoners of war.

When World War I broke out in 1914, the Canadian government interned hundreds of "enemy aliens" in various facilities across the country. These men were seen as potential saboteurs, and, because the country was just coming out of a serious economic depression, they were also viewed as sources of labor unrest. Economic as well as patriotic motives dictated that they be put out of harm's way, and the national parks, far from centres of population, seemed ideal places. Apart from the unfairness of such a policy, Ottawa already knew that these German and Austrian-born immigrants posed no threat; the Mounted Police, whose business it was to spy upon them, had told the government so. Even more illogical was the categorization of Ukrainians, born in what was then the Austro-Hungarian Empire, as enemy aliens: though technically citizens of an enemy country, they had no love for it or its government; nevertheless, off to the camps they went.

From the government point of view, the use of the parks was such a success that it was repeated in the 1930s, when unemployed men were put to work. This type of labour was used again during World War II, when conscientious objectors (mostly Jehovah's Witnesses and other pacifist groups), Japanese expelled from British Columbia, and German prisoners of war were sent to labour on roads and park facilities.

Waiser's fascinating book tells the stories of these various groups. Some of the tales, such as that of the ethnic Japanese, separated from their families and sent into the wilderness, are pathetic and disturbing, while others are infuriating, and some are simply absurd. An example of the latter is the story of the camp set up for German prisoners of war in Riding Mountain National Park during World War II. The camp was not fenced, and had virtually no security. No prisoner escaped, since the Germans were under orders from their officers not to do so (they would have been sent to a maximum security facility if they had), but many of them regularly left the camp to socialize with local residents, attend

dances and parties, and generally enjoy themselves—all strictly against camp policy. The authorities, however, seemed powerless to prevent their wanderings.

The accounts of the camps set up during the 1930s to provide work for unemployed men (not to be confused with similar camps run by the army) are a reminder of how bleak life could be for those who fell on hard times in an era when Canada had only a rudimentary social safety net. Although the food was almost universally good, the work was hard and the pay derisory. The men in the camps were quasi-prisoners, for they were cut off from any welfare benefits if they left.

This is an interesting account of a series of painful and little-known episodes in Canadian social history. It is lively and well-written, though the style in places would have benefited from the attentions of a stricter copy editor (an example: on p. 54, "many of the jobless . . . found it personally degrading to apply for assistance"—the word "personally" adds nothing to the meaning). Nevertheless, the book is a good corrective to nostalgia for the "good old days" in this country.

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## The Kelsey Papers

New introduction by John Warkentin. Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 1994. Pp. xlviii, 88. Map. \$25.00.

ONE OF THE MOST famous fur trade figures is Henry Kelsey: a mere lad, barely out of his teens, who ran away from a monotonous life as a York Factory servant and spent two years (1690-91) wandering the western interior. So much for legend. The truth of the matter is that Kelsey was not only sent inland by his Hudson's Bay Company masters to encourage the inland Indians to come down to the bay to trade, but that his celebrated travels would not have been possible without the active cooperation and support of the Indians.

That Kelsey should be the subject of such misunderstanding is largely a consequence of a bitter mid-eighteenth century debate over the Hudson's Bay Company's fulfillment of its charter obligations. When the HBC was founded in 1670, it was required, among other things, to explore and develop the trade inland. By the 1740s, however, critics of the monopoly, in particular Irish MP Arthur Dobbs, charged that the company had effectively "fallen asleep at the edge of a frozen sea"



and thereby failed to execute its charter. When the company subsequently attempted to defend itself before a government inquiry by citing the Kelsey journeys as evidence of its inland activity, critics countered that the trip was never sanctioned and that Kelsey had slipped away in search of adventure.

The truth about Kelsey's purpose and activities was finally settled in 1926 when a Dobbs descendant turned over a collection of original Kelsey materials to the Public Records Office of Northern Ireland; a bound volume of 128 pages had been found in the family library. Three years later, the documents were meticulously transcribed and published as *The Kelsey Papers*, with an introduction by Canadian Dominion Archivist A.G. Doughty and Professor Chester Martin of the University of Manitoba. The new Canadian Plains Research Centre edition is a faithful reprint of the 1929 publication, but with an added bonus—a new introduction, which brings together the recent writing on the topic, by historical geographer John Warkentin.

Henry Kelsey devoted the better part of his life to the Canadian fur trade, starting with his apprenticeship in 1684 at the age of seventeen to his retirement as governor of all HBC posts in 1722. *The Kelsey Papers* reflect this fascination with the land and its people. They include an account of a 1689 trip into the barren lands, a description of his travels to the parklands in 1690-91, a report on the customs and beliefs of the Plains Indians, logs of ocean voyages to the bay, daily journals about life at York Factory in the mid-1690s, and a memo outlining his term of service from 1684 to 1722. The documents, although somewhat brief, make for interesting reading—not only for what they reveal about the nature and rhythm of early fur trade life, but for how Kelsey saw this world and fit into it. His observations provide some of the first “outside” impressions of the new environment.

The collection is also greatly enhanced by the insightful comments in Warkentin's new introduction. He reminds the reader, for example, that Kelsey's 1690-91 expedition was undertaken at a time before horses had been introduced to the area and that it is not exactly known where he went, let alone wintered. He also notes that Kelsey had a life-long interest in Indian languages and culture and that he was able to explore inland only by becoming part of an Indian trading party; he may have been the first known European to see the open plains, but his presence there was entirely dependent upon the goodwill of his Indian hosts. Above all, according to Warkentin, Kelsey should be remembered for more than his inland journey; his appetite for exploration was never exhausted, and he was involved in some of the more exciting moments of the early fur trade, such as when the French and English fought fierce naval battles over the bay posts in the 1690s. Kelsey's forty-year career suggests that he was more than a wanderer and that he had an insatiable interest in the land, its people, and the trade. Why else

would he continually renew his term of service with the Company and spend more time in the Canadian subarctic than in his native England?

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## The Institutionalized Cabinet: Governing the Western Provinces

By Christopher Dunn. Montreal: McGill-Queen's, 1995. Pp. xiv, 333. \$44.95 (cloth).

THIS BOOK IS WHAT the author terms “a structural history” of Saskatchewan's, Manitoba's, and British Columbia's cabinet systems in the post-war era (p. 20). The principal focus is on the transition from the traditional cabinet that was relatively unstructured, uncoordinated, and less prone to emphasize planning and coordination, to its modern equivalent that is more structured, more collegial, and more prone to emphasize planning and coordination. Dunn's central objective is to examine the forces that underlie both the initiation and persistence of cabinet institutionalization in the postwar period in three of the four western provinces. Alberta's cabinet system was not examined because, according to the author, key officials in that province would not grant the requisite information and interviews. In noting the original contribution of his study, Dunn maintains, and rightly so, that prior to the completion of his monograph the origins and evolution of the institutionalized cabinet in the western provinces had not received much attention in the literature.

In foreshadowing his findings in the introductory chapter regarding the patterns, processes, and forces that contributed to the initiation and persistence of such institutionalization, Dunn issues three important caveats: there has not been a standard pattern of cabinet institutionalization in these western provinces; there has not been a standard process of initiation of such cabinets; and the forces that contributed to the origins of institutionalized cabinets are not necessarily the same as those that contributed to their persistence.

The author's basic objective is to find more complete and sophisticated explanations of both the origins and persistence of cabinet institutionalization. Dunn suggests that extant explanations of this phenomenon tended to be partial and somewhat misleading. As examples, he points to studies that attribute the institu-



tionalization of cabinet to singular factors: the increased size and greater institutional complexity of cabinets; the rise of the welfare and regulatory state resulting from the demand for public goods and services; a greater willingness to respond to these demands; the premiers' drive for leadership and control; the need for coordination of increasingly complex relationships among policy areas; and the cabinets' desire to reassert a collective power that had drifted out to departments.

In explaining the origins of the institutionalized cabinet in each province, he notes that it is important to examine the unique mixtures of ideology, pragmatism, and historical precedents of each province during that era. Regarding the role of ideology in the initiation of institutionalization, Dunn points out that the evidence suggests that institutionalization was not limited to jurisdictions where governments operated primarily from the left end of the political spectrum as was the case with the T.C. Douglas government in Saskatchewan. Such a trend was also evident in those areas where governments operated from the right end of the spectrum, as was the case with the W.A.C. Bennett government in British Columbia.

Dunn postulates that in order to explain the persistence of the institutionalized cabinet it is necessary to focus on endogenous and exogenous factors. Endogenous factors included: the premier's quest for influence; unsatisfactory aspects of the unaided cabinet; the emulation of predecessors; the cabinet's quest for political and financial control; the urge to simplify decision-making; the momentum of past reforms; and ideology. Exogenous factors included: the impact of other governments, the sending of symbolic messages to concerned publics; social science rationalism; and facilitation of interest group input. Dunn notes that the aforementioned endogenous and exogenous factors were common to more than one province, but that their relative weight differed between premiers.

In addressing the question of whether the institutionalization of cabinet had any significant effects, Dunn argues that "Changing the structure of cabinet changes how power is wielded and who wields it." He notes that such institutionalization has given premiers greater capacity to manage cabinet and its work. Despite any differences in their precise structure, the institutionalized cabinets all share one characteristic: "the premier's role grows from that of mere personnel choice to that of organizational architect with regard to the structure and decision-making processes of cabinet." Unfortunately Dunn does not probe this point sufficiently to indicate whether the institutionalized cabinet guarantees the premier such a central role, or whether the centrality of the premier's role even in an institutionalized cabinet is a function of other factors. After all, it is possible to have an institutionalized cabinet with a weak premier who does not have a central role in the operation of either the cabinet or the government as a whole.

The section of the book devoted to cabinet decision-making in Saskatchewan reviews the cabinet structure, central agency structure, planning and budgeting, and decision-making processes, during the CCF regimes of Tommy Douglas and Woodrow Lloyd, the Liberal regime of Ross Thatcher, the NDP regime of Alan Blakeney, and the Progressive Conservative regime of Grant Devine. Dunn notes that while each successive government made some minor changes to the architecture and operation of the institutionalized cabinet, the general structural and operational framework persisted. Dunn attributes the creation of the institutionalized cabinet to ideological factors. Unfortunately, it is not clear what he means by ideological factors. Consequently, one is left to speculate whether he is referring to a socialist orientation for centralized planning, or to the search for a management framework for developing and implementing a socialist agenda.

In his analysis of the persistence of the institutionalized cabinet over time, Dunn suggests that there were several factors that contributed to its endurance in Saskatchewan: the ideological orientations and belief in social science rationalism of successive CCF and NDP governments; the management imperatives of governing a growing and complex administrative leviathan; and the management styles of Liberal and PC premiers who preferred to exert personal control within the cabinet system.

Dunn notes what is already well known in public management circles: the efforts to produce an institutionalized cabinet in Saskatchewan had significant implications for public management and governance in many jurisdictions in Canada. The Saskatchewan initiatives under the CCF government produced a legendary cadre of expert administrators, several of whom were trained at Harvard under a special government-financed program. Some of those experts would eventually be recruited by the federal government. While in Ottawa the so-called "Saskatchewan Mafia would popularize the new rationalism in government with an effect far out of proportion to their numbers"(p. 38). Their management initiatives both in Saskatchewan and Ottawa would serve as models that would be emulated by other jurisdictions in Canada.

In the concluding part of the book Dunn addresses the question of whether the institutionalized cabinet will persist in its current form. He suggests that it is not unrealistic to expect that a post-institutionalized cabinet may emerge in the provinces as various governments attempt to deal with various financial and management problems that call for a political response that includes smaller cabinets and also fewer cabinet committees, central agencies and departments. Dunn muses whether it could be that the institutionalized cabinet has been a "whistle stop on the way to a new destination" (p. 292).

*The Institutionalized Cabinet* makes a key contribu-



tion to our understanding of the history of management and administrative initiatives and reforms undertaken by various provincial governments in Saskatchewan, as well as in Manitoba and British Columbia in the post-war period. In addition to the contribution that he has made in terms of analysis, Dunn makes an equally important contribution by providing the foundations on which certain parts of the structural history of that era can be analyzed in more detail, the historical context

for the analysis of recent, current and future developments in the organization and operation of provincial cabinets in these provinces, and an analytical framework for the analysis of this phenomenon in other jurisdictions.

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# Saskatchewan History & Folklore Society



## *Oral History*

Since its establishment in 1957 the mandate of the Saskatchewan History & Folklore Society has been to gather and preserve the common history and folklore of Saskatchewan. One of the more effective and rewarding means of accomplishing this mandate is through the collection of oral histories.

Although many historians may reject the use of oral histories as being nothing more than nostalgic and anecdotal reminiscences, SHFS is of the opinion that if conducted in a professional and thorough manner a wealth of useful information can be obtained. Through the use of oral history interviews, one is able to develop a better understanding of what gave meaning to people's lives and how this may have impacted on physical events of the day.

Throughout the years SHFS has been involved with oral history projects in a number of ways. Through our member funding program (grants provided to Society members to undertake heritage projects) we have assisted a number of community groups with the development of formal oral history projects. One such project recently completed its initial phase. The Manitou Lake Historical Association has conducted a number of interviews with Indian elders exploring the cultural and spiritual significance of the Manitou Lake area for the First Nations people (Big Manitou lake near Nelburg and Marsden, not Little Manitou near Watrous). These

first tapes have produced some fascinating tales and the Manitou Lake Historical Association hopes to continue this project during 1996.

SHFS has also conducted an extensive oral history project of its own. More than 180 interviews were conducted with people from over thirty different ethnic groups. In addition to obtaining a wealth of information on Saskatchewan's ethnocultural heritage, SHFS was able to develop a classroom activity kit designed to complement the 4th grade unit on Culture and the 5th grade unit on Identity.

In conjunction with the Saskatchewan Archives Board, the Saskatchewan History & Folklore Society has conducted workshops on oral history project development. These workshops cover the four basic components of an Oral History project: set up; preparation and research; interviewing; follow up. Plans are presently under way for a series of these workshops in 1996; should you wish further information on one of these workshops please contact:

Finn Andersen  
Saskatchewan History & Folklore Society  
1860 Lorne Street  
Regina, Sask.  
S4P 2L7  
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Saskatchewan Archives Board, Star-Phoenix Collection, S-SP-B 3459-13.

*A farm near Aberdeen made into an island by the flood, 1955.*

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