

**SURVEILLANCE OF CANADIAN COMMUNISTS:
A CASE STUDY OF TORONTO RCMP INTELLIGENCE
NETWORKS, 1920-1939**

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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Surveillance of Canadian Communists:
A Case Study of Toronto RCMP Intelligence Networks, 1920-1939

by

© Michael Butt

A thesis submitted to the
School of Graduate Studies
in partial fulfillment of the
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Abstract

The following study examines Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) inter-war surveillance, harassment and repression of the Communist Party of Canada (CPC), primarily in Toronto from RCMP “O” Division, but also extends the discussion to include features of counter-subversion operations elsewhere, particularly in southwestern Ontario. These counter-subversion operations traversed three periods of activity: the early years 1920-28; an interlude/ intelligence crisis which led to a debacle in 1931; and a period of reestablishing the intelligence network and an intensification of its counter-subversion work from 1932 -1939. Each period in question was characterized by specific types of intelligence network ‘organization’ and ‘operation’.

My study of the rise, fall, and recovery of “O” Division’s core inter-war Toronto CPC intelligence network, examines the context in which the transformation took place linking it to the region’s industrial and political order. I explain why intelligence networks, like the organizations they seek to infiltrate and the individuals whose activities they try to monitor, are anything but static and instead function as a part of the communities in which they live and face similar constraints. Intelligence networks expand and contract and shift both their investigative and operational focus. Their field investigations are malleable; their size, scope, and activities change for economic reasons and to meet both ‘real’ and ‘perceived’ threats. As local constructs intelligence networks are often best studied as a series of interactions established at the Divisional level.

The expansion, contraction, and transformation of “O” Division’s key Toronto intelligence network influenced the types and quality of the information they secured. How intelligence networks functioned and how effective they were reflected the extent to which intelligence personnel adapted. Through much of the inter-war period “O” Division relied heavily upon the work of secret/ special agents. Sometimes, however, less obtrusive and more distant forms of surveillance activity best suited the needs of intelligence personnel. A great deal depended upon their abilities. Success was also dictated by many other factors such as the abilities of CPC stalwarts and their subsidiary

organizations. Only by paying close attention to these issues can we gain a more complete and accurate historical record of Canada's intelligence past.

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Acronyms

ACCL	All-Canadian Congress of Labour
AFL	American Federation of Labor
ARGO	Assistant Receiver General's Office
BI	Bureau of Investigation
CASD	Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy
CCAC	Chief Constables Association of Canada
CCC	City Central Committee (Communist Party of Canada)
CCF	Co-operative Commonwealth Federation
CEC	Central Executive Committee (Communist Party of Canada)
CEF	Canadian Expeditionary Force
CLAWF	Canadian League Against War and Fascism
CLDL	Canadian Labour Defense League
CLP	Canadian Labor Party
CLPD	Canadian League For Peace and Democracy
CPC	Communist Party of Canada
CI	Communist International
CIB	Criminal Investigation Branch
CID	Committee of Imperial Defence
CM	Confidential Memorandum
CR	Central Registry
CRS	Cross Reference Sheet
CSIS	Canadian Security Intelligence Service
DCI	Director of Criminal Investigations
DEC	District Executive Committee (Communist Party of Canada)
DMI	Director, Military Intelligence
DMP	Dublin Metropolitan Police
DND	Department of National Defence
DNR	Department of National Revenue
DOC	District Officer Commanding (After 1932 simply OC [Officer Commanding])
DP	Dominion Police
ECCI	Executive Committee of the Communist International
EDA	Employers Detective Agency
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FEA	Foreign Enlistment Actiii
FMPB	Friends of the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion
FSU	Friends of the Soviet Union
FUL	Farmers Unity League
GC & CS	Government Code and Cipher School
HUMINT	Human Intelligence
IACP	International Association of Chiefs of Police
ILP	Independent Labour Party

IMB	Imperial Munitions Board
IO	Intelligence Officer
IWW	Industrial Workers of the World
LEAO	Labour Educational Association of Ontario
LIO	Liaison and Intelligence Officer (After 1933 IO [Intelligence Officer])
LP	Labour Party [Great Britain]
LRPA	Labor Representation Political Association
MI	Military Intelligence
NACP	National Association of Chiefs of Police
NCUC	National Council of Unemployed Councils
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer
NDTF	Niagara District Trades Federation
NES	National Employment Services
NHQ	National Headquarters
NIS	National Insecurity State
NSPP	Nova Scotia Provincial Police
NUWA	National Unemployed Workers Association
NWMP	North-West Mounted Police
OBU	One Big Union
OC	Order-in-Council/ Officer Commanding
OLC	Ontario Labour College
OPP	Ontario Provincial Police
OSINT	Open Source Intelligence
PHF	Personal History File
PL	Plebs League
PPCLI	Princess Patricia Canadian Light Infantry
PS	Preventive Service
PSB	Public Safety Branch
RAF	Royal Air Force
RCIR	Royal Commission on Industrial Relations
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
RHQ	Regional Headquarters
RIC	Royal Irish Constabulary
RILU	Red International of Labour Unions
RMC	Royal Military College
RNWMP	Royal North-West Mounted Police
RSA	Recruiting for Spanish Army
SB	NWMP/ RCMP Security Bulletin
SDP	Social Democratic Party
SIGINT	Signals Intelligence
SPC	Socialist Party of Canada
SPNA	Socialist Party of North America

SS	Secret Service (RNWMP/ RCMP)
SSB	Secret Service Bureau [Great Britain]
SUMA	Single Unemployed Mens' Association
TCPD	Toronto City Police Department
TECHINT	Technical Intelligence
TDLC	Toronto District Trades and Labour Council
TLC	Trades and Labour Congress
ULFTA	Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple Association
WDC	Workers Defense Committee
WEA	Workers Educational Association
WEC	Workers Economic Conference
WEL	Workers Educational League
WESL	Workers Ex-Servicemen's League
WFC	Western Frontier Constabulary
WIL	Workers International League
WIR	Workers International Relief
WMA	War Measures Act
WPC	Workers Party of Canada
WUL	Workers Unity League
YCAWF	Youth Congress Against War and Fascism
YCL	Young Communist League

Chapter I

Introduction to the Study

The following study examines Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) inter-war surveillance and repression of the Communist Party of Canada (CPC), primarily in Toronto, but also extends the discussion to include features of counter-subversion operations elsewhere in southwestern Ontario. My central thesis is that these operations traversed three periods of activity: 1) the early years 1920-1928; 2) an intelligence interlude from 1928-1931 and; 3) a period of reestablishing the intelligence network and an intensification of operations from 1932-1939. Each period was characterized by a specific emphasis placed on certain types of intelligence work. These operations changed in terms of their size, scope, and shifted the focus of their activities, for economic reasons and to meet both 'real' and 'perceived' threats. Like a Greek tragedy – a play in three acts – with a rise, fall and recovery, by the end of the inter-war period Toronto intelligence personnel had returned to their earlier modus operandi, namely a primary reliance on penetration agents run inside key party branches in the months prior to World War II.

This study is organized in a chronological, rather than thematic, fashion. Following a brief introduction and literature survey it begins with an examination of the political, economic and social events which lead to the establishment of Toronto-based Western Ontario "O" Division in 1920. It ends in the fall of 1939 because the War demarcated an emerging new era in the Division's domestic intelligence history. At that critical juncture many of the organizations the intelligence section previously had targeted for two decades were outlawed and many members of these illegal bodies were forced to establish themselves underground or to leave the country. The fall of 1939 was a period of tremendous change for the Division with a rapid increase in personnel as hundreds of RCMP Reserves were hired and they joined the anti-subversive squads that roamed the province and protected strategic sites. A new security branch was also established within the Criminal Investigation Branch (CIB) which separated personnel who conducted political policing

from those who conducted other investigations. This change at the Division was an extension of changes that had taken place several years earlier at Ottawa National Headquarters (NHQ).

If a scholar was primarily concerned with international intelligence questions, rather than end the study in 1939, he might instead have chosen to adopt 1945 and the defection of Soviet cipher clerk Igor Gouzenko as the ideal ending point. However, such a decision would surely miss the larger claim that this study makes which is simply that domestic events at the regional and local level mattered enormously. Most intelligence decisions are made at the Division level, where operations often rise and fall. Intelligence organizations and the networks they establish do not operate in a historical vacuum but as part of the local communities in which they live and exist. Thus their history deserves to be studied at this level from the “bottom up” and not simply viewed as the outcome of decisions taken by elites.

The study of intelligence has not kept pace with the tremendous intrusion by the state and private agencies into the lives of citizens.¹ In fact, intelligence studies as a clearly recognizable field of academic enterprise only had its modern origins in the 1970s and the Canadian field is arguably even a more recent phenomenon. Although Canadians have engaged in secret intelligence operations for well over a century, they still know relatively little about their intelligence organizations.² We have nothing comparable to the remarkable Special Branch / MI5 literature nicely surveyed in the 1980s by Bernard Porter with its

¹See Wesley K. Wark, “The Intelligence Revolution and the Future,” *Queen’s Quarterly* 100,2 (Summer 1993), 273-287; Wesley K. Wark, “Introduction: The Fin-de-Siecle Phenomenon,” in A. Stuart Farson, David Stafford and Wesley Wark, *Security and Intelligence In a Changing World* (London, 1991), 2-9; and Reg Whitaker, *The End of Privacy* (Toronto, 1999).

²A point made in several writings, notably, Wesley Wark, “Security Intelligence in Canada, 1864-1945: The History of a ‘National Insecurity State,’” in Keith Neilson and B.J.C. McKecher [eds.] *Go Spy the Land: Military Intelligence in History* (Westport, Conn., and London, 1992), 153; Carl Betke and S.W. Horrall, *Canada’s Security Service: An Historical Outline, 1864-1966* (Unpublished, R.C.M.P. Historical Section, Ottawa, 1978), released by the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) in response to Access-to-Information request, 117-90-107; ix; John Sawatsky, *Men In The Shadows: The RCMP Security Service* (Toronto, 1980), xi-xii.

healthy mix of internal writings to its popularization by writers like Nigel West, and the work of its critics.³ John Sawatsky's study Men In The Shadows, the published work which most closely resembles such a treatment, is by its own admission an incomplete story.⁴ It paid very little attention to the early history of the security service and unconvincingly argued that structural reform and greater accountability was a solution for past intelligence shortcomings.⁵ Lorne and Caroline Brown's An Unauthorized History of the RCMP, was a project begun when fewer sources were available. It had as its primary objective to counter the Force's planned 1973 centennial celebrations. Although written for a broader audience it was a provocative and thoughtful study that deserved the wide readership it gained. It was extremely critical of the Force's operations, but in the final instance was concerned with the Force's actions against the groups it targeted and said very little about the institutional history of intelligence work.⁶ A third study that qualifies as a published history of the security service, Graeme S. Mount's Canada's Enemies: Spying in the Peaceable Kingdom, is largely anecdotal.⁷ Its primary contribution is in its treatment of other foreign services' agents operating on Canadian soil and has very little new to say about RCMP intelligence operations.

In addition to the published monographs that have contributed to our understanding

³Porter, "The Historiography of the Early Special Branch," 381-394; Nigel West, MI5: British Security Operations 1909 - 1945 (New York, 1982); Nigel West, The Circus MI5 Operations 1945-1972 (New York, 1983).

⁴Sawatsky, Men In The Shadows; He also published For Services Rendered: Leslie James Bennett and the RCMP Security Service (Toronto, 1982) and Gouzenko: the untold story (Toronto, 1984).

⁵Unlike other writers Sawatsky failed to address the larger question about the co-existence of a political police and true and meaningful democracy Richard Fiddler, RCMP: The Real Subversives (Toronto, 1978).

⁶Lorne and Caroline Brown, An Unauthorized History of the RCMP (Toronto, 1973); Lorne Brown has also written When Freedom Was Lost: The Unemployed, the Agitator, and the State (Montreal, 1987).

⁷Graeme S. Mount, Canada's Enemies: Spies and Spying in the Peaceable Kingdom (Toronto, 1993).

of Canada's intelligence past are several internal unpublished studies. The most important of these is RCMP historians Carl Betke's and Stan Horrall's *Canada's Security Service: An Historical Outline, 1864-1966*, produced in the 1970s as part of the Force's course materials for secret service training.⁸ This study suffers from a number of problems. Most significant is its inherent bias that suggests Canadians were well served by their security service, a thesis overturned by the McDonald Commission and several journalistic accounts produced as the Force historians were completing their internal study.⁹

The emerging Canadian security and intelligence field remains fragmented, uneven, and riddled with major gaps. Stuart Farson and Wesley Wark have each offered historiographical overviews of the field's evolution and between them they have identified about a half-dozen approaches.¹⁰ I favour a simpler typology that keeps politics at the centre of the field's evolution. I believe that the Canadian field has gone through a similar

⁸Betke and Horrall, *Canada's Security Service*, ix; Larry Hannant, "Access to the Inside: An Assessment of 'Canada's Security Service: A History,'" *Intelligence and National Security* 8,3 (1993), 149-159; A good number of agencies elsewhere have embarked on similar programs at various stages in their evolution; see Gerald Haines, "The CIA's Own Effort to Understand and Document Its Past: A Brief History of the CIA History Program, 1950 - 1995," Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones and Christopher Andrew [Eds.] *Eternal Vigilance? 50 years of the CIA* (London, 1997), 201-223.

⁹Canada, *Commission of Inquiry Concerning Certain Activities of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police* (Ottawa, 1981); (Hereinafter cited as McDonald Commission); Robert Dion, *Crimes Of The Secret Police* (Montreal, 1982); Fiddler, *RCMP: The Real Subversives*; Jeff Sallot, *Nobody Said No: The Real Story about How the Mounties Always Get Their Man* (Toronto, 1979); William Edward Mann and John Alan Lee, *RCMP vs. The People: Inside Canada's Security Intelligence Service* (Don Mills, 1979); On its successor organization, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) see Richard Cleroux, *Official Secrets: The Story Behind The Canadian Security Intelligence Service* (Toronto, 1990); James Littleton, *Target Nation: Canada and the Western Intelligence Network* (Toronto, 1986); Jack Granatstein and David Stafford, *Spy Wars: Espionage and Canada from Gouzenko to Glasnot* (Toronto, 1990).

¹⁰Stuart Farson, "Schools of Thought: National Perceptions of Intelligence," *Conflict Quarterly* 9,2(1989), 52-104; Wesley Wark, "Introduction: The Study of Espionage: Past, Present, Future?" *Intelligence and National Security* 8,3 (1993), 1-14; Farson identified seven areas of study: 1) fiction (or fictive elements), 2) official documents, 3) semi-official documents, 4) unsanctioned accounts, 5) reports and documentaries in the media, 6) special interest studies and, 7) those studies attempting the 'big picture' such as cross-disciplinary and comparative perspectives; Wark identified five directions: 1) 'research' projects, 2) 'historical' projects, 3) 'definitional' projects 4) 'investigative journalism' projects and; 5) 'popular culture' projects.

evolution to its richer US and British counterparts. The major difference is simply the field's depth which is both a reflection of the size of the academic community and is also driven by the size and kinds of services operating in the countries themselves. The Canadian field has gone through a pioneering phase with internal studies and piecemeal accounts by the Force's supporters, followed by a series of revisionist accounts much more critical of the agencies concerned. More recent still, is a post-revisionist phase that has benefited from access to new sources or has adopted new methodologies to challenge past assumptions. Having already considered the major monographs which span the entire history of Canada's intelligence past I will now provide a sketch of the other writings that have contributed significantly to the field with a primary focus on the domestic side of activities up until World War II.

Most early writings that focussed on Canada's nineteenth-century intelligence operations did so as part of a larger project.¹¹ Therefore, they failed to provide more than a cursory overview of intelligence matters. Conservative historian Donald Creighton's biographies of Canada's first Prime Minister, biographies by other conservative and liberal thinkers on subsequent Prime Ministers, political elites, and some studies that touch upon the transnational aspects of the 19th Century Irish National movement are representative. Often this work has suggested that Gilbert McMicken, who headed the Western Frontier Constabulary (WFC) 1864-1867 and the Dominion Police (DP) 1868-1920, and John A. Macdonald, his political boss, effectively 'managed' the early crisis' they encountered.¹²

¹¹Again this is where the Canadian field is excruciatingly thin when compared to the US and British counterpart.

¹²See C.P. Stacey, "Fenianism and the rise of National Feeling in Canada at the Time of Confederation," Canadian Historical Review, 12 (1931), 238-261; William D'Arcy, The Fenian Movement in the United States: 1858-1886 (The Catholic University of America Press, 1949, Rpt. New York, 1971); W. S. Neidhart, Fenianism in North America (Philadelphia, 1975); Donald Creighton, John A. Macdonald, The Young Politician (Toronto, 1952); K.R.M. Short, The Dynamite War (Dublin, 1979); S.W. Horrall, "Canada's Security Service: A Brief History," RCMP Quarterly, 50,3 (1985) 38-49; for an alternative view see Jeff Keshen, "Cloak and Dagger: Canada West's Secret Police, 1864-1867," Ontario History, 79,4 (1987), 353-382.

Early concern with Irish Nationalists, incursions on both sides of the border during the US Civil War, and the Riel uprisings, led in the 1870s the federal government of Canada's to establish a Secret Service fund, that was also used for political purposes.¹³ There is a substantial literature concerning Canada and Britain's most famous 19th century spy, Thomas Beach, who operated under the alias Henri Le Caron, including an autobiography, a biography, and another study by one of his early handlers who was British, not Canadian.¹⁴

Early Canadian intelligence services served many purposes. In addition to helping fulfil national objectives set by central Canadian elites they also originally functioned as part of Great Britain's imperial surveillance networks to maintain its Empire.¹⁵ Canadian intelligence organizations have not only cooperated with the services of other western capitalist countries but also watched their activities and had theirs and Canadians' activities monitored by them. Working to assist the Empire is a theme nicely captured in the work of Richard Popplewell.¹⁶ Surveillance activities targeting Sikhs during an attempt to emigrate to Canada in a slightly later period is effectively treated by the work of Hugh Johnston.¹⁷

Cooperation, competition, and integration between services and the role of technology and signals intelligence versus human intelligence are the central themes in the

¹³Wayne Crockatt, "The Uses and Abuses of the Secret Service Fund: The Political Dimensions of Police Work in Canada, 1864-1877," M.A. thesis, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, 1982.

¹⁴Major Henri Le Caron, Twenty-Five Years in The Secret Service: The Recollections of a Spy (London, 1892); Sir Robert Anderson, Sidelights On The Home Rule Movement (London, 1906); J.A. Cole, Prince of Spies (London, 1984); Kealey, "The Empire Strikes Back," 1-12.

¹⁵Stacey, "Fenianism"; Keshen, "Cloak and Dagger"

¹⁶Richard J. Popplewell, Intelligence and Imperial Defence: British Intelligence and The Defence of the Indian Empire (London, 1995); See also his "The Surveillance of Indian 'Seditionists' in North America, 1905-1915," in Christopher Andrew and Jeremy Noakes [eds.] Intelligence and International Relations 1900-1945 (Exeter, 1987), 49-76; and his "The Surveillance of Indian Revolutionaries in Great Britain and on the Continent, 1903-1914," Intelligence and National Security 3,1 (1998); and his, "British Intelligence in Mesopotamia, 1914-1916," in Handel, Michael [ed.] Intelligence and Military Operations (London, 1990).

¹⁷Hugh Johnston, The Voyage of the Komagata Maru: The Sikh Challenge to Canada's Colour Bar (Delhi, 1979); also his, "The Surveillance of Indian Nationalists in North America, 1908-1918," BC Studies, 78 (1988), 3-27.

Canadian angle on the international intelligence literature. Much of the literature demonstrates that foreign political movements have operated networks of agents on Canadian soil, that foreign agents have also established a base in Canada as a weigh station to gain entry into the US, and that they have also succeeded in coopting Canadians to penetrate sensitive areas of American research in science, industry and the military.¹⁸ Canada's participation in the international intelligence community was examined by Jeffery Richelson and Desmond Ball, while Peter St. John has suggested how during World War II the balance of power in the Atlantic-Triangle shifted to the US.¹⁹ Much of Canada's role in the international intelligence community begins with World War II with Sir William Stephenson's BSC office in New York, the Manhattan project, Camp X, mass-production of deadly germs like anthrax at Grosse Ile and the establishment of the first germ warfare station among the western capitalist countries. The literature on these subjects is growing and subject to significant revision.²⁰

Since Canada did not have a foreign intelligence agency and since much of the RCMP's targeting concerned domestic organizations naturally the strength of the Canadian field resides in the study of intelligence operations that have targeted Canadians. The most prolific period of study in this respect has been World War I and the years immediately following. This scholarship has centered on the role of the Canadian state, and its

¹⁸Littleton, Target Nation; Jeffreys-Jones, American Espionage, 11, 18; John Price Jones and Paul Merrick Hollister, The German Secret Service In America, 1914- 1918 (Toronto, 1918), esp. 60-81; Phillip Knightly, The Second Oldest Profession: The Spy as Patriot, Bureaucrat, Fantasist and Whore (London, 1986), 101; Ladislav Farago, The Game Of The Foxes: The Untold Story of German Espionage in the United States and Great Britain During World War II (New York, 1971).

¹⁹Jeffrey T. Richelson and Desmond Ball, The Ties That Bind (North Sydney, 1985); Peter St. John, "Canada's Ascension to the Allied Intelligence Community, 1940-1945," Conflict Quarterly, 4, (Fall 1984).

²⁰David Stafford, Camp X: The Incredible and True Story of Canada's School for Secret Agents 1941-1945 (Toronto, 1986); John Bryden, Deadly Allies: Canada's Secret War, 1937 - 1947 (Toronto, 1989); William Stevenson, A Man Called Intrepid (New York, 1976); William Stevenson, Intrepid's Last Case (New York, 1983); Richard Cleroux, Official Secrets: The Inside Story of The Canadian Security Intelligence Service (Toronto, 1990); Michael Frost and Michael Gratton, Spyworld: Inside Canada's Security Establishment (Toronto, 1994).

involvement in postwar class conflict.²¹ Several genres dominate the field in this period and they include: memoirs and autobiographical studies by former Force personnel, a journalistic account and academic investigation. Of the three groups, the least-satisfying assessments of the RCMP's intelligence work have been the anecdotal accounts written by former Mounties themselves. They are biased and allot little space to counter-subversion operations.²² For instance, Clifford Harvison's study grossly exaggerates his successes in intelligence matters, a fact not overlooked by scholars.²³ Journalists James Dubro and Robin Rowland favorably examined the career of Frank Zaneth, an RNWMP (then RCMP) agent. However, their study covers familiar territory as it moves forward in time and in its treatment of the 1920s and 1930s adds very little to our understanding of political police work.²⁴

Gregory S. Kealey has assessed the intelligence apparatus' structure, and the

²¹Gregory S. Kealey, "Introduction," in Gregory S. Kealey and Reg Whitaker [eds.] R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins, 1919-1929 (St. John's, 1995), 9-19; Gregory S. Kealey, "The Early Years of State Surveillance of Labour and the Left in Canada: The Institutional Framework of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Security and Intelligence Apparatus, 1918-26," Intelligence and National Security 8,3 (1993), 129-48; Gregory S. Kealey, "State Repression of Labour and the Left in Canada, 1914-1920: The Impact of the First World War," Canadian Historical Review 73,3 (1992), 179-210; Gregory S. Kealey, "The Surveillance State: The Origins of Domestic Intelligence and Counter-Subversion in Canada, 1914-21," Intelligence and National Security 7,3 (1992), 179-210; S.W. Horrall, "The Royal North-West Mounted Police and Labour Unrest in Western Canada, 1919," Canadian Historical Review 61,2 (1980), 169-190.

²²Charles Rivett-Carnac, Pursuit in the Wilderness (Boston and Toronto, 1965); Vernon A.M. Kemp, Scarlett And Stetson: The Royal North-West Mounted Police on the Prairies (Toronto, 1964); Vernon A.M. Kemp, Without Fear, Favour or Affection: Thirty-Five Years with the RCMP (Toronto, 1958); R.S.S. Wilson, Undercover For The RCMP (Victoria, 1986) discusses his CIB work in the 1930s in greater detail than most; William Kelly with Nora Hickson Kelly, Policing In Wartime: One Mountie's Story (Regina, 1999); William Kelly with Nora Hickson Kelly, Policing the Fringe: A Young Mountie's Story (Regina, 1999); Alan Phillips, The Living Legend: The Story Of The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (Boston, 1954).

²³Granatstein and Stafford, Spv Wars, 27.

²⁴James Dubro and Robin Rowland, Undercover: Cases of the RCMP's Most Secret Operative (Toronto, 1991).

operational work of its constituent branches.²⁵ In addition, he has begun to explore the Force's intelligence linkages to other government departments as well as its ties to intelligence organizations in Great Britain and the US.²⁶ Together with Reg Whitaker he has edited and published a multi-volume series of RNWMP/ RCMP Security Bulletins (SBs) from 1919 through 1945. Introductions in the series provide additional information on the Force's intelligence past. They include an examination of the massive file sets the RCMP compiled. They explore issues surrounding their construction and their geographic representation, as well as the Personal History Files (PHFs) opened on agitators. Furthermore, they flesh out more information on key agents and other RCMP personnel during the inter-war period, and their complex relationship with their political bosses.²⁷

Historian Mark Leier published a study of early agent Robert Gosden and other scholars have concerned themselves with the operations of special agent Sergeant John Leopold (aka J.W. Esselwein). In particular, Leier concentrated on Gosden's ties to the labour movement and to mysticism. His study also serves as a introductory primer to encourage future research on related topics. Where it is thin is in its exploration of Gosden's relationship to others serving in the Division in an intelligence capacity and in its examination of the Division and particularly its CIB. An article by Gregory S. Kealey and

²⁵Gregory S. Kealey, "Filing and Defiling: The Organization of the State Security Archives in the Interwar Years," in Franca Iacovetta and Wendy Mitchinson [eds.] On the Case: Explorations In Social History (Toronto, 1998), 88-108.

²⁶Gregory S. Kealey, "The RCMP, the Special Branch, and the Early Days of the Communist Party of Canada: A Documentary Article," Labour/ Le Travail 30 (1992), 169- 204.

²⁷Kealey and Whitaker, [eds.] The Early Years; Gregory S. Kealey and Reg Whitaker [eds.] R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins: The Depression Years, Part I, 1933-1934 (St. John's, 1993); Gregory S. Kealey and Reg Whitaker [eds.] R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins: The Depression Years, Part II, 1935 (St. John's, 1995); Gregory S. Kealey and Reg Whitaker [eds.] R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins: The Depression Years, Part III, 1936 (St. John's, 1996); Gregory S. Kealey and Reg Whitaker [eds.] R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins: The Depression Years, Part IV, 1937 (St. John's, 1997); Gregory S. Kealey and Reg Whitaker [eds.] R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins: The Depression Years, Part V, 1938-1939 (St. John's, 1997); Gregory S. Kealey and Reg Whitaker [eds.] R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins: The War Series, Part I, 1939-1941 (St. John's, 1989); Gregory S. Kealey and Reg Whitaker [eds.] R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins: The War Series, Part II, 1942-1945 (St. John's, 1993).

of suspected agitators to be supervised by the Divisions' senior officers and to include such particulars as: the name, age, occupation, home address, and a brief description of the subject in question, as well as their associations and peculiar habits. The second set concerned revolutionary organizations (designated 175) and the third was a file system for revolutionary literature (designated 177).¹¹⁹ By the fall of 1919 these file sets were joined by weekly intelligence bulletins generated for Borden's Cabinet and senior officials in other departments as well as for the Force's own personnel. The idea for these files had likely originated overseas and had likely been patterned on those sets first devised by the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC), the Dublin Metropolitan Police (DMP), and the London Metropolitan as well as Britain's Home Office to keep tabs on Irish Nationalists. The weekly intelligence bulletins produced for Cabinet in Canada beginning in the fall of 1919 had been instituted in Britain the previous year by Basil Thomson, the head of Scotland Yard.¹²⁰

With a filing system entrenched in the CIB by early 1919 there was a rapid increase in the months ahead in the political work being conducted. Newton Rowell insisted that all labour organizations be investigated, including those conservative ones such as the AFL with the goal of separating out individuals who advocated revolutionary change through armed insurrection from those individuals who favoured reform. By the time the Western Labour Conference met in Calgary in March the Force had infiltrated many important centres of revolutionary activity in Western Canada. Undercover agents, either the Force's own, or those hired by private firms, and informants in several instances soon rose to positions of authority. They provided the CIB with detailed intelligence on events taking place in the revolutionary movement. The IWW, the One Big Union (OBU) were both targeted in this manner, as were many other organizations.¹²¹

¹¹⁹Kealey, "introduction," in Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] The Early Years, 13-15.

¹²⁰Porter, Plots and Paranoia, 146.

¹²¹On the OBU see, David Jay Bercuson, Fools and Wise Men: The Rise and Fall of the One Big Union (Toronto, 1978).

Recognizing the intense level of industrial conflict then afflicting the country a labour sub-committee recommended to cabinet, that a Royal Commission on Industrial Relations (RCIR) be established to tour the country to hear testimony from workers, manufacturers and other organizations and private citizens. Cabinet accepted the recommendation and the RCIR under Manitoba Justice T.G. Mathers identified many grievances labour organizations had when it traveled to city after city in mid-1919 holding hearings in centres such as Cobalt, Sudbury, Sarnia, London, Hamilton, Kitchener and Toronto. In total, 137 representatives of various organizations and individuals at these centres spoke on issues such as the high cost of living and the terrible conditions which plagued industrial relations and society in general.¹²²

A massive wave of industrial unrest commenced in the late spring and carried into the summer of 1919 as the RCIR was winding down its hearings. The Commissioners' report eventually recommended some "sweeping reforms" but was basically too little, too late.¹²³ As of 15 May 1919, thousands of workers had downed their tools and walked off their jobs in Winnipeg in the building and metal trades and for the next six weeks the city was paralyzed by a general strike. Similar strikes erupted across the country. They were all part of an even larger international revolt even if the character of class conflict in each city had its own peculiar flavour. By this point intelligence networks were operating in all major western Canadian centres. The Manitoba networks were being run from "D" Division's Winnipeg headquarters by Sergeant Albert E. Reames. Many others (like Reames) who would play an important role in Toronto in the years that followed at "O" Division were also earning their stripes out west during these now familiar events.¹²⁴

¹²²Royal Commission on Industrial Relations (RCIR),

¹²³"Royal Commission Hands In Report," The Labor News, 4 July 1919, 1.

¹²⁴For various arguments and interpretations on this event see especially Craig Heron [ed.] The Workers' Revolt in Canada, 1917-1925 (Toronto, 1998); Gregory S. Kealey, Workers and Canadian History (Montreal, 1995); also the second edition of David J. Bercuson, Confrontation at Winnipeg: Labour Industrial Relations, and the General Strike (Rpt. Montreal, 1990).

After the bloody Winnipeg General Strike was ended, on 5 August 1919 Perry met with Borden to discuss the subject of federal police services. At the meeting Borden informed the Commissioner that the Government “was concerned as to conditions in Canada resulting from general unrest in the World and the pernicious propaganda which is being carried on, distinctly revolutionary in its tendency.” He informed Perry that the idea of extending the RNWMP throughout Canada with the amalgamation of the DP had been floated around Ottawa. He believed it would increase the efficiency of the service generally.¹²⁵ Perry left the meeting under orders to provide a blueprint sketching the possibilities for the establishment of a new national policing agency.

In his final report Perry recommended that one individual be made responsible for all police services. He should be the “sole executive head” and report to a single Minister. This policy, Perry felt, should happen without delay. He presented two options to carry this out:

First. Bringing under one Minister the R.N.W.M. Police and Dominion police and appointing one officer to the command of both, leaving each Force with its present jurisdiction, duties, and executive head. Second. Amalgamating both Forces into one, which might take the form of the absorption of one by the other.¹²⁶

After weighing the positive and negative sides to both services Perry concluded that the country’s interests would be best served by “extending the jurisdiction of the Royal North West Mounted Police Force throughout Canada” and that the DP should be absorbed into the RNWMP and made responsible for guarding public buildings.¹²⁷

Perry also recommended that Eastern Canada be divided into four Districts: Western Ontario with headquarters at Toronto, Eastern Ontario with headquarters at Ottawa, Quebec

¹²⁵NAC RG 18 vol. 83-4/321 Box1 file G-2-6(1951), Commissioner Perry to Prime Minister Borden, 7 August 1919.

¹²⁶ibid.

¹²⁷ibid.

with a headquarters at Montreal and the Maritime provinces with a headquarters at Moncton. Each district would be placed under the command of an officer. He also suggested that "To each district should be assigned such strength as may be found necessary, with as many Secret Agents as may be required." The total personnel strength required to maintain order in Eastern Canada needed to be set at a minimum of 1200. He also recommended that the headquarters of the Force be moved to Ottawa from where the Officer in Command would have full control and management of the Force under the minister.¹²⁸ Borden and Rowell accepted Perry's recommendations which served as the basis for the nationalization of the Force. The final report took effect as of 1 February 1920.¹²⁹

With the passage of the RCMP Act 188 new detachments were established East of the Manitoba boundary. Article ten (from a PC amendment) called for the division into districts all of Canada under the command of a senior officer "with suitable rank, according to the responsibilities and the number of men detailed for the district" in a manner similar to operations currently existing in Western Canada. The DOCs would report directly to Ottawa Headquarters. In time, each Division assigned to a district more often would be commanded by an officer of the rank of at least Superintendent. Superintendents would be provided with a staff officer who would also perform the duties of "District Adjutant, Paymaster and Quartermaster."¹³⁰ With nationalization, the Depot (training centre) remained

¹²⁸ibid.

¹²⁹NAC RG 18 vol. 3154/ 458(1920) Organization of Charges, Commissioner Perry's Report, 2 January 1920.

¹³⁰ibid.; S.W. Horrall, "The Maritime Provinces District," RCMP Quarterly 42,1 (Winter 1977), 5-9; There were three Divisions established in Eastern Canada and from 1920 until 1 December 1931 the Maritime command was of a slightly reduced status and known as a "District" not Division. As of the later date it became part of an expanded "C" Division which included the Eastern Arctic and Quebec which became known as the "Quebec and Maritime Provinces District". It only lasted as such for a few weeks and then eventually emerged as "H" District in April 1932, with three Divisions for each of the Maritime provinces within it and the following year was broken up again with separate Divisions in each province.

in Regina, while the Supply Store was removed to NHQ in Ottawa.¹³¹

The RCMP Act's importance in repositioning personnel was phenomenal. The series of promotions and transfers that took place became the most significant opportunity for Perry to reward those individuals whom he felt had given undivided service to the institution during his long tenure as Commissioner. The process led to the establishment of a permanent, national police force, with a political police division within its CIB. Almost overnight the plans made to absorb the DP in the new organization meant that Canada had largely adopted the Irish model for its national police force. Whereas the DP was a civilian force the RNWMP had its roots in military style training. Whereas the British system of policing was rooted in the tradition of the local constabulary, the RCMP model, like that of the Royal Irish Constabulary, favoured the uprooting and movement of personnel to Divisions where they had little personal attachment where they would serve for a few years at a time and then be uprooted and transferred again.

Once public, news of the Force's intended expansion met with a cool reception by Canadian labour. In the pages of the One Big Union Bulletin, an author spoke frankly of "a once proud Force with some romance when the bold riders of the plains protected the sparsely settled districts against armed outlaws or cattle thieves..." which was substantially transformed. "Now the riders of the plains act as detectives, ransack newspaper offices, break into houses at night and frighten women and children. Once the R.N.W.M.P. were popular heroes: Now they are the gendarmes of a discredited government." Democracy in Canada functioned effectively for about two percent of society was the main thrust of the article and largely on account of the Force's activities. This author took brief solace only in the fact that "recruiting has been temporarily stopped" in the fall of 1919 since workers were worn down, tired from the war and mostly resting. Furthermore, he added, "[L]ittle wonder that the men back from the front are not keen to join a force that may be called upon to shoot

¹³¹NAC RG 18 vol. 3154/ 458(1920) Organization of Charges, Commissioner Perry's Report, 2 January 1920.

down their comrades.”¹³²

Cartoons also appeared with Mounties buttressing federal authorities and the arrested leaders of the Winnipeg General Strike in jail, both sides faced off against one another with the Minister of Justice saying “If I let you out will you be quiet?”¹³³ Another article in the Industrial Banner months later declared “Canada’s Spy System In Full Operation.” Its author accused the federal government of adopting “Kaiser Methods” to “Spot Citizens” and noted that the “Canadian Cossacks” went well beyond the limited scope of the “stool pigeon” and rather acted as *agent provocateurs*. He quoted Winnipeg Alderman, and soon elected MP, A.A. Heaps as stating that “This once proud force is being used for no other purpose than as a government tool in the interests of the employers of Canada.”¹³⁴

In the Winnipeg General Strike trials that followed, the court room was transformed into a theatre of class warfare. As many progressives subsequently noted, it turned out to be little more than a “show trial” whose outcome was largely predetermined. During the trial further evidence of the NWMP’s domestic spy system was revealed when Frank Zaneth, an undercover operative and member of the Force and several others like Sergeant Reames appeared as lead witnesses in the Crown’s prosecution. Times had permanently changed in industrial relations in Canada and certainly had taken a turn for the worse. By 1920 with its new RCMP the Canadian establishment had a new weapon in its arsenal against Canadian labour.

2.2

The Rise of "O" Division under the 1920 RCMP Act.

By January 1920 plans to nationalize the Force were already well under way. Three new

¹³²“Democracy! (2%) XXX,” The One Big Union Bulletin, 6 September 1919, 3.

¹³³Cartoon, The One Big Union Bulletin, 13 September 1919, 1.

¹³⁴“Canada’s Spy System In Full Operation,” Industrial Banner, 6 August 1920, 1-6.

Divisions and a Maritime District were to be up and running the following month bringing the total to eleven.¹³⁵ From offices above a postal outlet in downtown Toronto at the corner of Yonge Street and Charles Street "O" Division's RHQ would function through most of the 1920s.¹³⁶ One major task confronting the Division's senior personnel was the establishment of a series of detachments throughout the southwestern portion of the province.¹³⁷ This cluster of RCMP offices would also double as nodes in the district's intelligence networks. It was from these detachments and subdistrict headquarters that constables would be sent out to monitor the activities of communists and other leftists.

Officially transfers to "O" Division did not take place until the first week of May, when under RCMP General Order (G.O.) #296 eighteen personnel from Depot under the command of Staff Sergeant Walter Munday (who figures prominently later in this study), and five others from HQ, K, G, D, and N Divisions, arrived to establish the new Division.¹³⁸

¹³⁵NAC RG 18 vol. 3154/ 458(1920) Organization of Charges, Commissioner Perry to Comptroller, 16 January 1920; Horrall, "The Maritime Provinces District".

¹³⁶RCMP, Annual Report, 1925, 33. Notes that in addition to RHQ, the single men were "suitably housed" in an upper floor of the Postal Station on Yonge Street as well.

¹³⁷ibid., 1920, 8.

¹³⁸RCMP, General Orders Part II, Fiche 296-602, 08.05.20 - 17.07.20, (Hereafter throughout study cited as RCMP G.O.) G.O. 296, May 8, 1920. A complete list of the transfers to date from 1-5-20. From "Depot" to "O" Division is provided below.

"O" Division Personnel
By Name, Rank, and Location: May 1920

Inspector W.J. Beyts			Inspector J.W. Phillips		
<u>Reg.No.</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Name.</u>	<u>Reg.No.</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Name.</u>
<i>A) Depot Div.</i>					
2566	S/Sgt.	Wilson, J.J.	4092	S/Sgt.	Munday, W.
5740	S/Sgt.	Darling, H.	4172	Sergt.	Macmillan, C.R.
4493	Sergt.	Birtwistle, A.	6338	Const.	Atkins. L.R.
5491	Corpl.	Whebell, C.J.	8128	Const.	Authier, L.P.
6454	Const.	Lynch, T.F.	8330	Const.	Elmore, W.W.

For many from Depot the change in landscape alone, the return to the urban environment pumping with the pulse of the national economy, was a nice improvement over the harsh bleak and barren space with few trees.¹³⁹

While these transfers took place in the spring several others had arrived well in advance to lay the groundwork for the Division. From the outset Division personnel were ordered to keep a watchful eye over the area and to report any suspicious comings and goings of organizers and speakers into their district.¹⁴⁰ The following section sets the context in which these activities took place by considering the towns selected for detachment sites. It briefly examines the political and industrial landscape of the places chosen and assesses how the arrival of the new agency was received at several locations.

Ontario had undergone enormous change in the two decades after 1900. In fact, its northernmost boundary had only been recently extended to the Hudson Bay.¹⁴¹ In these years the province was being transformed and its changes reflected those taking place throughout most of Eastern Canada as citizens were moving from rural to urban areas as part of a more integrated national economy. W.R. Young estimated that 200,000 people left rural Southern

8272	Const. Wiebe, A.	8769	Const. Samson, F.A.
8673	Const. Simpson, F.	8936	Const. Lea, H.F.
8840	Const. Barnett, J.H.		
8976	Const. Phillips, F.L.		

B) Elsewhere

4693	S/Sgt.	Millar, R.M.	from Hdqrs to "O" Div'n
3322	Sergt.	McLaughlan, L.	" " K to "O"
4919	Sergt.	Joy, A.H.	" " G to "O"
5123	Sergt.	Fish, G.W.	" " D to "O"
9195	Sergt.	Fahy, T.	" " N to "O"

¹³⁹Rivett-Carnac, Pursuit in the Wilderness, 174-175.

¹⁴⁰NAC RG 18, vol. 3770 G 509-67, Circular Memorandum #807, 6 January 1919.

¹⁴¹Robert Bothwell, A Short History of Ontario (Edmonton, 1986), 97.

Ontario in the decade after 1901 and the following decade another 154,000.¹⁴² This ongoing process of urbanization was largely the result of changes in agriculture and advances in new manufacturing, mass production, and mechanization of industry.¹⁴³ New corporations had emerged. A wave of mergers had followed. Even in the years just before World War I change was apparent. For instance, as Tom Traves noted, between 1909-1913, 221 firms with over \$200 million in assets had been consolidated in 97 mergers, while the number of major corporations with over \$1 million in annual sales had grown as well. In 1901 there were 39, in 1911, 150 and by 1921, 410. Collectively they had accounted for 15 per cent of the country's manufacturing in 1901 and this number had increased to 51 per cent by 1921.¹⁴⁴

The RCMP was a part of this transformation. It was an important part of the transition to a more integrated corporatized capitalist economy. The Force arrived in the southwestern Ontario corridor at this particular juncture in the region's history and was a stabilizing factor and at the same time marked a point of change, a departure in class relations as it established operations in various cities and towns.¹⁴⁵ Coercion in this new era of corporations, taylorism and the removal of skills also created spies, blacklists, company

¹⁴²W.R. Young, "Conscription, Rural Depopulation, and the Farmers of Ontario, 1917-1919," Canadian Historical Review 53 (September 1972), 318-319, cited in Naylor, The New Democracy, 122.

¹⁴³Changes are captured nicely in John Herd Thompson with Allen Seager, Canada 1922-1939: Decades of Discord (Toronto, 1986), 347; Jacob Spelt, Urban Development in South-Central Ontario (Rpt., Toronto, 1972), 180.

¹⁴⁴Tom Traves, The State and Enterprise: Canadian Manufacturers and the Federal Government 1917-1931 (Toronto, 1979), 1-12.

¹⁴⁵Craig Heron, "The Crisis of the Craftsman: Hamilton's Metal Workers in the Early Twentieth Century," Labour/ Le Travailleur, 6 (1980), 10; Robert Storey, "Unionization Versus Corporate Welfare: The 'Dofasco Way'" Labour/ Le Travailleur 12 (1983), 10-12; Craig Heron, "Hamilton Steelworkers and the Rise of Mass Production," in Bryan D. Palmer, [ed.] The Character of Class Struggle: Essays in Canadian Working-Class History, 1850-1985 (Toronto, 1986), 77-79.

police and labour segmentation.¹⁴⁶ "O" Division's personnel assisted the transformation of the industrial order which strove to push points of conflict in labour-capital relations on a new, often more sophisticated playing field.¹⁴⁷

Commissioner Perry had been responsible for overseeing the establishment of hundreds of detachments during his career. He was an ambitious, yet cautious, expansionist when it came to the Force's operations and its role in society. He was sorely disappointed when the scope of the Force's responsibilities was not nationalized in 1914, but two years later pursued a cautious line. He then recognized that the Force was stretched beyond its abilities and knew full well that it needed to be relieved of provincial duties in the Western provinces to fulfil its obligations. In just eight years between 1913-1920 Perry had overseen the closure and opening of 378 detachments. 188 detachments were established in 1920 alone.¹⁴⁸

Commissioner Perry's philosophy towards stationing personnel at detachments had been developed early on when he recognized that, although detachments varied in strength from one to nine according to their workload, most served areas larger than they could properly police. He felt that a detachment of one constable was not effective, either from a "disciplinary" or policing "point of view." "None," he had asserted, "should be less in strength than one non-commissioned officer and two constables."¹⁴⁹ Yet in practice fiscal

¹⁴⁶Craig Heron and Robert Story, "On the Job in Canada," in their [eds.] On the Job: Confronting the Labour Process in Canada (Kingston, 1986), 18; Robert Storey, "Unionization Versus Corporate Welfare," 7-42.

¹⁴⁷Heron and Story, "On the Job in Canada," 3-47; Christopher Tomlins, The State and the Unions: Labor Relations, Law, and the Organized Labor Movement in America, 1880-1960 (New York, 1985), 61, 76-77; Naylor, The New Democracy, 38, 45.

¹⁴⁸RCMP, Annual Report, 1921, 6; *ibid.*, 1920, 9; In 1913 there were 211 detachments. By 1916 the number had increased to 257. Yet with a departure of Force personnel to Siberia and France that number sank to 26 in 1918. It had increased dramatically in the two years since then. By 1920 it stood at 127 detachments.

¹⁴⁹RCMP, Annual Report, 1908, 1.

constraints continuously undermined Perry's attempts to achieve the kind of detachment personnel numbers he desired. In Ontario more often his philosophy met with mixed success as we shall soon see.

In January 1920 Commissioner Perry sent Inspectors W.J. Beyts and J.W. Phillips to a series of towns selected for future RCMP "O" Division detachment sites.¹⁵⁰ Both officers had vast experience in the north and in western Canada, leading long-distance patrols and opening detachments, which no doubt influenced Perry's decision in choosing them to establish the Division. They prepared the groundwork for the arrival of constables and other Division personnel. At each town Beyts' and Phillips' first job was to survey the prospects for adequate housing, to find suitable office facilities, and to make the necessary arrangements to have the Force up and running within the region over the next couple of months.

On 28 January Beyts arrived at Bridgeburg, the first site selected for a detachment. Nestled along the northeastern most point of Lake Erie in the Welland District, the town of Bridgeburg had grown significantly during the two decades after 1900 even if it had failed

¹⁵⁰NAC RG 18 vol. File 0-160, Service Record of Walter James Beyts; RNWMP, Annual Report, 1911, 11; ibid., 1913, 44; ibid., 1915, 13-14; NAC RG 18 vol. 3451, File 0-173, Service Record of John Willett Phillips; RCMP Nominal Rolls, 1920-1921; RCMP Quarterly, 25,4 (April 1960), 343, "Old-Timers' Column, The Late Asst. Commr. J.W. Phillips"

Walter James Beyts was born in London, England, in 1870. He emigrated to Canada in his early twenties and joined the NWMP in 1893 after a failed attempt at farming. He resigned in 1900 to fight in the Boer War. He rejoined the Force in 1901, led a draft to the Yukon during the height of the Gold Rush where he likely gained some of his earliest intelligence experience. For the better part of the next two decades Beyts worked extensively across the north where his assignments varied and on several instances earned Commissioner Perry's commendation in annual reports. Beyts died in 1923 from complications surrounding a fire at Haileybury.

John Willett Phillips was born in Belville, Ontario, in 1879. He joined the Force in 1898 and served extensively across western Canada and in the Arctic during the next two decades. He worked at "O" Division during 1920-1921, briefly as its second in command. He was stationed at Haileybury as officer in charge of the Colbalt Sub-District, the Belcher Islands patrol and Fort William. He was transferred to "A" Division in March 1921. His subsequent postings included command of "C" Division, "A" Division and "E" Division. He retired to pension at the rank of Assistant Commissioner on 1 January 1936 and died in 1959.

to keep pace with growth in the district as a whole.¹⁵¹ Its ethnic, gender, and religious composition had also radically changed in these years. At the turn of the century there were more women than men; two decades later men vastly outnumbered women.¹⁵² Always an English, German, Irish and Scottish stronghold, by 1921 the numbers of Italians, Germans and Dutch in the District had increased considerably. Its Protestant order was also being threatened by the large influx of Catholics.¹⁵³

Not only had there been a notable shift in the region's gender, ethnic and religious composition, but people living there had become much more mobile as well. The Welland region had become an increasingly important strategic point in the traffic of people and goods between Canada and the US. Increased traffic had stimulated local industry. In particular, shipbuilding had emerged as one of Bridgeburg's most important commercial enterprises.

Yet Bridgeburg's shipbuilding industry faced accelerated change during the war and in the immediate post-war period. Like other industries, its workers had suffered through several years of high levels of inflation. Workers in Bridgeburg, like others throughout the region, had come together during the war recognizing the need for greater solidarity. In 1917 ILP branches were formed at nearby centres such as Chippawa, Niagara Falls, Welland, Port Colborne and Thorold as labourers, farmers and veterans joined together in opposition to the

¹⁵¹Canada, Fourth Census of Canada 1901, vol. 1, Table 8, 86 [hereafter cited as census number, year, volume table, page]; Sixth Census of Canada 1921, vol. 1, Table 8, 86; The village of Bridgeburg had a population of 1,356 (some 280 families) and was the 9th largest centre in the District in 1901. In 1911 Bridgeburg's population had climbed to 1 800 and by 1921 increased to 2,401; Fifth Census of Canada 1911, vol. 1, Table II, 355; Sixth Census of Canada 1921, vol. 1, Table 8, 86; In 1911 the population of the Welland region had increased by 50 percent, risen to slightly more than 42,000 and a decade later it had climbed to 66,668.

¹⁵²Sixth Census of Canada 1921, vol. 1, Table 15, 247.

¹⁵³Sixth Census of Canada 1921, vol. 1, Table 27, 486-87, *ibid.*, vol. 1, Table 38, 704-705.

two established parties.¹⁵⁴

In March 1918 the federal government brought the shipbuilding industry's labour and capitalists together in a bid to secure "more harmonious working agreements" between the various parties concerned and to try to "control the entire production of these yards..."¹⁵⁵ It was a subtle example of "industrial voluntarism" half functioning which was so often the case during the war. Failure to meet with the government and to comply with any measures it saw fit to introduce held the promise of further OCs being passed or other calibrated coercive measures to ensure compliance.¹⁵⁶

Representatives from Bridgeburg's shipbuilding unions joined representatives from elsewhere in the provincial industry at a convention in Toronto in May 1918. The meeting was the first of its kind for the industry. It was held under auspices of the Ontario Provincial Council of Carpenters, affiliated with the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners and resulted in plans to establish a federation. While recognizably a tactical move adopted by craft unions to stave off the industrial challenge, support for a federation also signaled recognition on the part of the industry's workers of the need to broaden their base by strengthening their lines of solidarity.¹⁵⁷

In June 1919 225 Bridgeburg shipbuilders (roughly one in eight of the town's residents) struck for increased wages and shorter hours. The strike lasted almost three weeks, it polarized the community and the settlement ended in compromise. Yet the costs had been enormous. More than 3,150 work days were lost and even in settlement issues were still left unresolved. Days afterward, the original strike was followed by a second one over union

¹⁵⁴"Chippewa Branch of Labor Party Holds Big Rally," Industrial Banner, 7 September 1917, 1; "Labor Party In Welland County Is Going Good," Industrial Banner, 15 March 1918, 1.

¹⁵⁵"Ontario Shipworkers Hold A Live Conference In Toronto," Industrial Banner, 10 May 1918, 1-2.

¹⁵⁶Fudge and Tucker, Labour Before The Law, 89-103.

¹⁵⁷"Ontario Shipworkers Hold A Live Conference In Toronto," Industrial Banner, 10 May 1918, 1-2.

recognition. It lasted two weeks and cost a further 1,800 working days. This strike was settled in favour of the employees and events like these made Bridgeburg a particularly volatile point in the region's changing industrial landscape. The presence of the RCMP would provide assurances to capitalists in the region. Several months later the RCMP established a detachment at this point.¹⁵⁸

When Beyts arrived in Bridgeburg he met with the local Department of Immigration Inspector stationed there. This department, like the post office and other government departments at all levels, typically should have proved a natural ally of the RCMP. Co-operation was part-and-parcel of small town Ontario life, especially when officials often had much in common as white, protestant, Anglo-Saxon males, paid by various levels of government. They had a great deal at stake in preserving their lucrative appointments, their status and authority within the communities they served.

During the War, the DP and Department of Immigration officials shared the joint responsibility for keeping tabs on so-called "foreigners," enemy nationals, and guarding the international border in the region.¹⁵⁹ Although the DP had never established an office at this location it was likely that at Bridgeburg as in many of the other towns selected as future detachment and sub-district sites, the DP, private detective agencies and Department officials would have worked in a liaison capacity. Together they would have overseen the registration of enemy aliens, they would have carried out internment orders and conducted numerous investigations, as well as guarding important strategic and industrial concerns.

Competition among small towns to have Force detachments established in them was fierce. The presence of a detachment offered both a 'real' and 'imagined' sense of security to the local elite. A detachment could be used to entice manufacturers and merchants to establish operations in these communities. The Force's public presence reinforced so-called 'norms' about gender roles, about ethnic hierarchies, of the dominant and dominated, hence

¹⁵⁸Canada, Labour Gazette, March 1920, [hereafter simply, Labour Gazette, year], 284.

¹⁵⁹Mount, Canada's Enemies, 28-43.

the maintenance of a social 'order' as well as a political and industrial one. It was a role that held up well in the public sphere but crumbled only in the private realm. For many early years in a Mountie's career the paramilitary barrack-style existence any clashed with the so-called ideal family model predicated on that of a husband and wife. However, the Force also brought significant economic benefit to local manufacturers, retailers and shopkeepers. As consumers, RCMP members, their families, and their offices turned to the local proprietors for resupply.

When Beyts arrived in the town he tried to arrange shared accommodations for his constables with Department of Immigration officials, but was ultimately unsuccessful. The local immigration inspector offered temporary office space for detachment work and tacitly promised to stay on the "look out for quarters" and to help the constables. But until more permanent accommodation could be secured, Beyts was forced to arrange to have them billeted at the local hotel.¹⁶⁰

In early February, Constables H.F. Lea and F.L. Phillips arrived at Bridgeburg. Later that month they secured suitable detachment quarters which consisted of three rooms which Lea subsequently described in a report for RHQ:

Two making small bedrooms and the largest an Office. These rooms are unfurnished. Have good lighting and heating arrangements and the use of a bathroom would be available. They would be especially suitable for our work as they are totally separate from the remainder of the building. Rent \$25.00 (Twenty-five Dollars) per calender month including light, heat and sanitary arrangements. These rooms are ready for immediate occupation.¹⁶¹

There were advantages and disadvantages to having living accommodations directly attached to the office. Some were obvious, some less so. Joint facilities significantly reduced the overhead which was always an uppermost consideration to the adjutant's office. In the

¹⁶⁰RG 18 vol. 3160 file G 1318-6-21 Bridgeburg Ontario, report, Inspector Beyts to Commissioner, 1 February 1920.

¹⁶¹RG 18 vol. 3160 file G 1318-6-21 Bridgeburg Ontario, report, Constable Leas and Staff Sergeant Walter Munday to CO "O" Division, 20 and 23 February 1920.

very small operations, such arrangements also gave constables a greater degree of flexibility, they could come and go quickly. The region's weather was a problem. Transportation was especially difficult in the snow belt during the winter months. In the spring months it had often little improved with muddy roads. So tying in office and private life ensured a level of efficiency.¹⁶² Most important from an intelligence perspective tying in both living and work spaces was critical to the Division because it provided security for offices, for equipment and supplies.¹⁶³ When it came to the very secret intelligence activities that the Force soon undertook, this was no less true. Intelligence reports had to be filled out, and the other raw intelligence data acquired and stored. The downside was that anonymity was certainly lost in smaller centres and the Force invaded all spheres of their existence.¹⁶⁴ Nevertheless, this was the lifestyle that many personnel such as Lea and Phillips had accepted with their signing of contracts. With little assistance from other government officials, the constables spent a month at a local hotel and boarding house until the Bridgeburg detachment was fully established.¹⁶⁵

Once the groundwork for the Bridgeburg detachment was laid, Beyts pushed onward to Niagara Falls to make similar arrangements at that point. The Niagara Falls detachment would eventually consist of a staff sergeant and two constables since the town was the largest center in the Welland District and an important strategic point with considerable

¹⁶²G.P. de T. Glazebrook, A History of Transportation in Canada II (Toronto and Montreal, 1970); On the importance of technology to police forces in this period see, Greg Marquis, Policing Canada's Century: A History of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (Toronto, 1993), 168-174; also see, Bill Rawling, "Technology and Innovation in the Toronto Police Force, 1875-1925," Ontario History, 80,1 (1988), 53-71.

¹⁶³Consideration of detachment quarters and modeling arrangements was largely a later phenomenon, see, N.A. "Standard Detachment Quarters," RCMP Quarterly, 22,3 (January 1957), 200-201.

¹⁶⁴Harvison, The Horsemen, 60-63; Kemp, Without Fear, 85-89. Commissioner Starnes raised the marriage restriction to 12 years in 1927.

¹⁶⁵RG 18 vol. 3160 file G 1318-6-21 Bridgeburg Ontario, report, Constable Leas and Staff Sergeant Munday to CO "O" Division, 20 and 23 February 1920.

traffic across the international boundary.¹⁶⁶

There was a large Immigration Branch stationed at Niagara Falls well equipped to handle the increased international traffic that came with the building of bridges earlier that century. First established in 1908, since then the Branch had flourished. In the years before World War I it had already increased its staff to 12. By the end of the 1920s it had 35 officers stationed there, many of them with decades of experience.¹⁶⁷

The Immigration Branch had developed close ties to the region's industrial elite. They had established offices and conducted 'examinations' in the Grand Trunk Railway Station. They also undertook investigations at the Upper Steel Arch bridge, the Lower Arch bridge, the Queenston-Suspension bridge as well as at nearby Niagara-on-the-Lake and Queenston (for steamship passengers). Immigration inspectors met the train traffic through Niagara which increased substantially during these years with more than sixteen entering the country each day. Since the Falls immigration department was so-well staffed, they also invested a considerable amount of time and energy following up largely unsubstantiated rumors of social purists and other racists who feared that "Chinese" and "other illegal immigrants" were being smuggled into Canada from this point.¹⁶⁸

Niagara Falls also had long history of industrial unrest. This concerned the RCMP. By World War I the industrial landscape in the Niagara Falls region was rather unique in Southern Ontario since it had two major projects in the area, the New Welland Canal and the Hydro Electric Power Commission's Chippawa Canal. Each employed about 2,000

¹⁶⁶See, Fourth Census of Canada, 1901, vol. 1, Table 7, 86-87; Fifth Census of Canada, 1911, vol. 1, Table 1, 93; Sixth Census of Canada, 1921, vol. 1, Table 8, 86. By 1901 Niagara Falls already had more than 4,000 people living there; a decade later it had passed the 9,000 mark (which now also included Niagara Village a town of slightly less than 1,500), and by 1921 it had almost reached 15,000.

¹⁶⁷Niagara Falls, Canada: A History of the City and The World Famous Beauty Spot. An Anthology (Toronto, 1967), 105; Charles E. Wilcox had opened the Branch in 1908 and he remained with the Department at Niagara Falls until he retired 31 years later in 1939. He was replaced by H.A. Hunt who had joined the Department in 1913 and remained there until he retired in 1949.

¹⁶⁸ibid., 104.

workers, mostly skilled. Socialists and other progressive joined forces there during the war and their power rose steadily. In 1916 the SDP also held several organizing meetings in Niagara Falls with the national executive in attendance to try to reinvigorate the party and they were rewarded as soon its membership numbers started to rebound.¹⁶⁹ In 1916 progressives on Niagara Falls city council unanimously passed a resolution for government control of the country's food supply and unions there pressed for the conscription of wealth.¹⁷⁰ In 1916 an ILP branch was established in Niagara Falls. The Niagara Falls SDP pressured the ILP to adopt a progressive preamble and constitution in the weeks leading up to its founding convention and eventually to adopt a more progressive program of nationalization and collective ownership in transport, communications, and of all large natural resources.¹⁷¹

The Niagara Falls ILP sent delegates to Toronto in November 1916 to meetings that launched the Greater Toronto Labour Party. They also assisted in the formation of local ILP branches at nearby centres such as Welland, Thorold, and Port Colbourne which were organized by May the following year.¹⁷² They joined branch delegates from fifteen other centres throughout the region in July 1917 at the ILP of Ontario's founding convention in Hamilton which was important for several reasons.¹⁷³ At that convention the party's clear cut platform was adopted: its main objective was to "promote the political, economic, and

¹⁶⁹"Secretary Notes," The Canadian Forward, 11 November 1916, 8.

¹⁷⁰"Take Over Elevators, Mills, Abattoirs, Etc.," The Canadian Forward, 27 December 1916, 6; "Niagara Falls Local No. 60 Calls For A Referendum For Both Men And Wealth," The Canadian Forward, 24 February 1917, 5.

¹⁷¹"A Pertinent Question," The Canadian Forward, 11 November 1916, 8; Chas. H. Newman, "Letter to the Editor," The Canadian Forward, 2 December 1916, 5.

¹⁷²"Welland Joins The Procession And Has Formed," Industrial Banner, 4 May 1917, 1-4; "New Labor Party Formed In Thorold," Industrial Banner, 18 May 1917, 4. "Welland Labor Party," Industrial Banner, 18 May 1917, 4.

¹⁷³"Independent Labor Party of Ontario," Industrial Banner, 6 July 1917, 1,2.

social interests of people who live by their labor, mental, or manual, as distinguished from those who live by profit upon the labor of others.”¹⁷⁴ As well, the Industrial Banner was adopted as the official organ of the ILP and since the party was to contest elections, the thorny issue of affiliation was also debated. The report the Constitution Committee submitted to delegates noted that no member of the party could be a member of another political organization. However, while party branches were not allowed to work with the two old capitalist parties, they were allowed to endorse candidates and work in conjunction with farmers and other “bona fide” parties “which are clearly not capitalistic organizations.”¹⁷⁵

By October after several months of solid and successful organizing in the region, the region’s ILP met in Welland and formed the Welland County Association and unanimously favoured running a labour candidate in the fall election. By election time it was also hoped that the Welland branch by itself might have as many as 500 dues-paying members and growth was evident elsewhere including the Falls.¹⁷⁶ Although labour across Ontario (not just this riding) was unsuccessful in 1917, two years later after further organizing and a much stronger base was established, it was anything but surprising, that at the polls in the October 1919 provincial election, ILP candidates, Charles Swayze in Niagara Falls and Frank Greenlaw in nearby St. Catharines were both elected as part of labour’s total of 11.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁴“Independent Labor Party of Ontario,” Industrial Banner, 6 July 1917, 1-2; “Platform Of The Independent Labor Party of Ontario,” Industrial Banner, 6 July 1917, 2. Their progressive platform included: free and compulsory education, pensions, equal pay for equal work, electoral reforms such as abolition of property qualifications for all municipal offices, nationalization of banking and credit institutions, the establishment of national reserves of coal, amendments to the BNA Act and abolition of the Senate.

¹⁷⁵ibid., When questioned if the SDP was to be recognized as a “bona fide” labour party, the chairman of the committee said it was, and this view was endorsed by the convention. At the convention J.J. McAninch, Niagara Falls secretary, was elected second vice president of the Ontario party which also increased the prestige of the Falls local.. All these developments boded well for further working-class political solidarity in places like Niagara Falls.

¹⁷⁶“Chippewa Branch of Labor Party Holds Big Rally,” Industrial Banner, 7 September 1917, 1; “Labor Candidate Will Be Run In Welland Riding,” Industrial Banner, 26 October 1917, 1-2.

¹⁷⁷Naylor, The New Democracy, 217; “Big Majority For I.L.P. Candidates,” Industrial Banner, 31 October 1917, 2.

It was only later, as Tim Buck noted, that the euphoria died, and that many progressives realized that a much more militant organization would be required to bring in substantial reform.¹⁷⁸

Much of the political success in the region was a consequence of gains in the industrial arena. In 1916, 600 workers struck at the Welland Canal and the federal government which oversaw the project (the province oversaw the Chippawa Canal) sent in the military. Reports in the New York Times and the Industrial Banner noted that the soldiers lined up the strikers with bayonets drawn, and searched them and their houses too. It was events like these that helped push support for a political labour party, as James Naylor noted, and made it easier for socialist and non-socialist organizations to join forces which was demonstrated by the convention held in Niagara Falls in September 1917.¹⁷⁹

In 1918 and 1919 industrial unrest in the region accelerated. In July 1918 hydro electric employees went out on strike to protest the discharge of an employee, for extra rates for overtime and shorter hours. A compromise was reached and they returned to work at the end of the month.¹⁸⁰ Yet by August, a Niagara District Trades Federation (NDTF) had been organized. It represented 14 unions employed on the two canal projects. It was part of a larger move in the region to amalgamate the craft unions bringing them towards industrial unionism.¹⁸¹ In 1919 workers at the canal struck for an eight-hour day, and relief from having to work compulsory overtime. They won the settlement from the Hydro Electric Commission. Again in 1920, 2000 members of the NDTF Hydro Chippewa project struck in an attempt to get a “straight” eight hour day, an unprecedented concession for work of this

¹⁷⁸Beeching and Clarke [eds.] Yours in the Struggle, 63-72.

¹⁷⁹Naylor, The New Democracy, 91.

¹⁸⁰Labour Gazette, March 1919, 300.

¹⁸¹Naylor, The New Democracy, 61-63.

type.¹⁸² As Martin Robin's work suggests, it was this issue along with the tariff which became a thorn in the Farmer-Labour government's coalition and within labour ended any hope that the CLP/ ILP-Farmer fractures would be overcome.¹⁸³

Strikes throughout this region in this period were legion. Hundreds of papermakers struck in nearby Thorold.¹⁸⁴ So did motormen, painters, shipbuilders in several instances, pulp-and-paper labourers and machine tenders, carpenters, many of them for shorter hours, better wages, and union recognition. In the majority of instances, the workers won.¹⁸⁵ In a Thorold incident, in June 1919 employees at the Beaver Board Company (a US firm) organized into a local affiliated with the Pulp, Paper, and Sulphite Workers' International union. The union presented an agreement to management demanding an increase in wages and the eight-hour day (a similar condition that existed in the US mills). The manager informed them that he had no power to make a contract and that the president of the company was away so the workers would have to continue on under the existing framework until he returned. After some time the workers grew tired of waiting and went out on strike. Management responded by stereotyping the workers in a statement delivered to the Thorold chamber of commerce and the press, accusing "officers and members of the union of being Bolsheviks, irresponsibles, etc."¹⁸⁶ Before long management "surrounded the plant with an armed guard – gunmen walking up and down, with guns on their shoulders, guarding a plant where the strikers were not even thinking of violence."¹⁸⁷ Events like these encouraged the arrival of a national police force in the region.

¹⁸²Naylor, The New Democracy, 208, 230-231.

¹⁸³Robin, Radical Politics, esp., 199-251.

¹⁸⁴Labour Gazette, March 1919, 292, 296.

¹⁸⁵ibid., March 1920, 285, 277, 203.

¹⁸⁶"Gunmen Guard Thorold Plant," The Labor News, 4 July 1919, 1.

¹⁸⁷ibid.

Not surprisingly, a pattern began to emerge in the establishment of "O" Division's regional infrastructure. Once Beyts arrived in Niagara Falls he approached the local Department of Immigration Inspector for support. Again he was given a cool reception. He was informed that there was a similar "shortage" of housing in the Niagara region. Frustrated by his initial attempt Beyts upped the ante. He now realized the power that he carried among some elites in the local community. Since he feared a similar protracted search for suitable facilities and accommodations, he turned to the Mayor and to the local council for support. The Mayor, Beyts apprised the Commissioner, "informed me that he was very pleased to hear that we were opening a detachment at that point, and would do what he could to help us get a building."¹⁸⁸

In Niagara Falls, someone applied pressure on the Department of Immigration Inspector stationed there. Arrangements were quickly made whereby Staff Sergeant Munday and his wife could immediately take residency at a local hotel. The two constables would be boarded at a nearby rooming house. The treatment of personnel varied according to rank. A couple of weeks later the Mundays were able to move to a house rented from a member of the Department of Immigration considered suitable for a detachment headquarters, while arrangements for quarters for the two Constables was temporarily postponed.¹⁸⁹

From Niagara Falls, Munday was responsible for overseeing the work of the Bridgeburg detachment. In both towns he would see to it that the Force's regular and "special" policing functions were carried out. In no time relations with the Department of Immigration improved. RHQ confidential memos and orders arrived by mail, while those sent from NHQ arrived "in care of the Immigration Department."¹⁹⁰ Soon the Adjutant's office felt that expanded policing duties in this centre might require the services of as many

¹⁸⁸RG 18 vol. 3160 file G-1318-5-21 Niagara Falls, report, Inspector Beyts to Commissioner, 1 February 1920.

¹⁸⁹ibid., report, Inspector Beyts to Commissioner, 2 February 1920.

¹⁹⁰ibid.

as six personnel. Toward that end, Munday was instructed to arrange the long-term lease of a larger facility.¹⁹¹ By April, the constables and the Munday's had moved into the new quarters. Completely equipped with patrol motorcycles, the Niagara detachment had now been established.

Once the groundwork for establishing a detachment in the Welland District was laid Beyts next traveled to the District of North Essex to set up RCMP offices in Windsor. If both the case of Bridgeburg and Niagara Falls reveal that other Departments were not as accommodating as might have been expected during the Force's eastward march, then the Niagara Falls experience in particular, also suggested that the Force was not unwilling to apply political pressure to gain a toehold in the region. The experience in Windsor revealed yet a different problem. Eastern elites in Ontario and Ottawa had originally been among the Force's staunchest supporters in its great march West when it served their expansionist interests as part of the National Policy. Fifty years later when the Force returned "home" in 1920 its reception was something less than many within its ranks might have envisioned.

Windsor had a long history of secret service work ever since Gilbert McMicken had established the Western Frontier Constabulary back in December 1864 and had run his first spies from that centre until 1871.¹⁹² Because of its close proximity to the border, early liaison took place between intelligence personnel at this centre and individuals involved in similar work at nearby Buffalo and Detroit. Since the earliest days Canadian spies had travelled freely across the border keeping tabs on Irish nationalists and trying to prevent the trans-border movement of recruits from Canada who planned to enlist in northern forces

¹⁹¹RG 18 vol. 3160 file G-1318-5-21 Niagara Falls, report, Staff Sergeant Munday to OC "O" Division, 6 February 1920, *ibid.*, memorandum, Inspector Beyts to Commissioner 7 February 1920; *ibid.*, memorandum, Perry to Rowell, 9 February 1920; *ibid.*, memorandum, Assistant Commissioner to Inspector Beyts, 11 February 1920; *ibid.*, memorandum, Inspector Beyts to Commissioner, 13 February 1920; *ibid.*, memorandum, Staff Sergeant Munday and Inspector Beyts to Commissioner 14 and 17 February 1920.

¹⁹²Keshen, "Cloak and Dagger," 356; Betke and Horrall, *Canada's Security Service*, 29-122; Horrall, "Canada's Security Service," 39-43; Sawatsky, *Men in the Shadows*, 54-60; Marquis, *Policing Canada's Century*, 41.

during the American Civil War.¹⁹³ The detachment would be used for similar political designs in the inter-war period especially as a base to try to contain radicalism, to prevent the movement of revolutionaries from the US into Canada as well as those leaving the country. The Force would also establish checkpoints here, working in close cooperation with other government departments to prevent subversive literature from being smuggled into the country. This was all done in this period as in brief spurts earlier to maintain the existing political order.

Like other locations selected for detachments, Windsor was chosen because of continued geographic, political, and industrial considerations. The population of North Essex had significantly increased in the two decades after 1901: it had risen from 12,000 to more than 38,500 in 1921.¹⁹⁴ A rather unique feature in the city was that Windsor's trade council was more closely tied to the Detroit Federation of Labor, than to the Ontario Labour movement. In fact, workers there only began seriously considering establishing an ILP branch during the winter of 1919 and finally applied for a charter in April.¹⁹⁵ But like many other centres Windsor workers were increasingly dissatisfied with existing wartime and postwar conditions described earlier in this study. At least seven significant strikes took place at Windsor in 1919 alone. The city's cigar makers, garbage collectors, woollen workers and molders all struck during that year.¹⁹⁶ Technology was transforming several

¹⁹³Kealey, "The Empire Strikes Back"; Betke and Horrall, *Canada's Security Service*, 29-102.

¹⁹⁴Fourth Census of Canada, 1901, vol.1, Table VII, 60; Fifth Census of Canada 1911, vol.1. 75; Sixth Census of Canada 1921, vol.1, Table X, 221. Mid-way in 1911 North Essex stood at 19 000.

¹⁹⁵"Advance Move By The Labor Party," Industrial Banner, 4 April 1919, 1.

¹⁹⁶On changes in the cigar-making industry see, Patricia A. Cooper, Once A Cigar Maker: Men, Women, and Work Culture in American Cigar Factories, 1900-1919, (Urbana and Chicago, 1992); Labour Gazette, March 1920, 271-294. Street railway workers struck first in May when 78 employees walked out with demands for increased wages. The strike lasted 10 working days, was settled by mediation, and won by the employees. Then in July, 86 walked out again for 15 working days and it too, was won by the employees. The cigar makers involved 110 employees at a single establishment. It lasted for 33 working days and resulted in 3,630 days lost. In sum, as a result of the strikes held in Windsor and won by employees during the first nine months of 1919 a total of more than 9,000 work days were lost.

industries making old forms of organization and craft skills sometimes obsolete. In some respects it was an example of the ongoing battles over deskilling taking place in many industries during the period and aptly described by others in the works of Braverman, Heron and Storey.¹⁹⁷ Street railway workers also struck twice during the spring and summer. Authorities were threatened by this event since the local police during one of these disputes refused to promise to protect strike breakers. It was rather easy to make the argument that constituted authority was being challenged, law and order undermined (although it was a gross exaggeration). Nevertheless, the city council thought so and responded by calling in the army.¹⁹⁸ Once again, it was clear that the presence of a national police force of some kind would serve a useful political purpose.

What made Beyts' experience in establishing a Windsor detachment significantly different from either Bridgeburg or Niagara Falls was that Windsor was the first town selected in "O" Division's District that had formerly had the services of a federal policing agency, the DP, whose national structure was in the process of being absorbed.¹⁹⁹ The DP had carried out their regional duties from Windsor and had established contacts within the community. But some persons in the community supported the old organization and wanted to see its presence maintained. Furthermore, somewhere in the RCMP structure inadequate consideration of the process to phase out the DP at the local level had occurred. As a result the transfer was anything but smooth.

Beyts and an undisclosed number of RCMP personnel arrived at Windsor on 30 January and lost no time in the transfer of power. They immediately assumed the duties formerly undertaken by the DP who had operated from quarters at the Windsor Armouries.

¹⁹⁷Harry Braverman, Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century (New York, 1974); Craig Heron and Robert Story [eds.] On the Job: Confronting the Labour Process in Canada (Kingston, 1986).

¹⁹⁸Naylor, The New Democracy, 208.

¹⁹⁹RCMP, Annual Report, 1920, 7-8; Fetherstonhaugh, The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, 185-186; Betke and Horrall, Canada's Security Service, 377-379.

After a quick search for suitable office and residential accommodations for the sub-district headquarters, and finding none, Beyts pressed for an arrangement similar to the one the DP had struck with the senior officer in charge of the Armouries. Local military officials gave Beyts a cool reception. He was informed that such an arrangement would be granted for just a brief period, until an alternative could be found. The Armouries already had plans for the former DP headquarters: "[t]hey would shortly be needed by the Militia Department."²⁰⁰

Not only was the RCMP refused the offices formerly used by the DP, a first sign of conflict between the services in the region, but problems were compounded when the RCMP moved to dismiss former DP staff. Beyts was under orders to relieve two DP officers stationed there, and similarly its support staff, which consisted of a secretary, once RCMP personnel became "acquainted with that district." Beyts dismissed the secretary the day he arrived and subsequently wrote the Commissioner that he had taken such action. She produced a letter from the senior DP officer stationed at the detachment who at that time was away in Quebec on business, and who had told her to continue on in her job until further instructed by him. A. J. Cawdron, Acting Chief Commissioner of the DP, was planning to review the transfer of power and had also directed her to continue to work until he arrived on 5 February.²⁰¹ Beyts, who had acted too hastily in dismissing her, subsequently reversed his position (likely at Cawdron's insistence) and she was kept on for an additional week. Yet

²⁰⁰RG 18. Vol. 3160 file, G-318-2-21, Windsor Ontario, report, Inspector Beyts to Commissioner, 1 February 1920.

²⁰¹Who's Who and Why, 1919-1920, 28; Betke and Horrall, *Canada's Security Service*, 130B; Albert J. Cawdron was born in Ottawa in August 1873 of English background. He died in 1938. He began his career as a stenographer with the DP Commissioner, in Ottawa, 1891-1897 and was appointed constable, 1897. He served in South Africa in 1899-1900 and he was appointed Commissioner of Police for Canada, September 1915. He became Acting Chief Commissioner, December, 1918 and when the DP was absorbed into the RCMP on 1 February 1920, Cawdron was commissioned an RCMP Superintendent and made Director of Criminal Investigations. From July 1926 until July 1927 he was attached on special duty to Customs and Excise. He returned as RCMP supply officer (was promoted Assistant Commissioner in 1932) until retirement to pension 1 January 1936.

as soon as replacements for the DP personnel arrived they were immediately dismissed.²⁰²

Friction in the transfer not only came from other organizations, either because of loyalty or the dismissal of former DP employees, but as it intensified, it soon turned to more petty issues like the basic furniture and office contents. The DP office had been well furnished; the RCMP was interested in securing its basic contents. Yet some of the furniture and equipment had been loaned to the DP from the Department of Public Works because of the close association the DP had forged with other departments in the city. The DP refused to release the contents, the Department of Public Works refused to allow a transfer to the RCMP and it was largely as a result of the Assistant Commissioner's intervention (in Ottawa being drawn into the conflict) that these items eventually were transferred to the Force. Chief Inspector Duncan who headed the Special Service Branch for Military District #1 overzealously guarded the materials and forced the RCMP's Sergeant Birtwistle to arrive in the city to fill out forms. When the lists were compiled and subsequently forwarded the Commissioner, A.J. Cawdron made Inspector Duncan fill out a separate report covering the transfer. It is clear from the positions taken by the various departments that there was considerable conflict in this transfer.²⁰³

The transfer from DP to RCMP control in Windsor was poorly orchestrated. Clearly some DP personnel were hostile towards the new organization. During the month of February the detachment at Windsor was shuffled out of the old DP offices and stuck in the room formerly used as the Quarter Masters Store.²⁰⁴ Accommodations for the new Force were secured with no less difficulty and members were forced to rent a house in Walkerville which was two miles outside of Windsor. It was not until 1 May that the RCMP finally

²⁰²RG 18. Vol. 3160 file, G-318-2-21, Windsor Ontario, report, Inspector Beyts to Commissioner, 1 February 1920; and Commissioner's scribble at the bottom.

²⁰³RG 18, vol. 3160 file, G-318-2-21, Windsor Ontario, report, Sergeant Birtwistle to Commissioner, 7 February 1920; report, Inspector Duncan to Albert J. Cawdron, DCI, 9 February 1920.

²⁰⁴RG 18, vol. 3160 file, G-318-2-21, Windsor Ontario, report, Inspector Beyts to Commissioner, 25 February 1920.

secured a permanent office in Windsor located sufficiently close to accommodations for its men stationed there. Yet once again one of the overriding reasons for establishing the detachment in that centre was in further evidence when the Force delayed moving into the new quarters for several days. Sergeant Birtwistle stated "In view of the possibility of Labour trouble or demonstration I thought it advisable not to move in that day, but to hold ourselves in readiness for any emergency."²⁰⁵ By May, despite the many hassles, the RCMP had its Windsor detachment up and running.

The creation of new detachments in Southern Ontario continued during the spring and summer months. Sarnia, another site selected, was situated in the Lambton West district where similar issues conspired to make it a place the RCMP chose to establish a detachment. Its population had nearly doubled to 15,000 in the two decades after 1901.²⁰⁶ Originally a Methodist, Anglican and Roman Catholic stronghold, by 1921 it had also increasingly become a centre of German, French, Austrian, Dutch, Greek, Jewish, Italian, Polish, Russian, Scandinavian and Ukrainian activity, with far greater numbers than surrounding towns and villages.²⁰⁷

Sarnia was the location of considerable organizing during the war. By the fall of 1917 progressives had begun organizing an ILP branch in that centre largely through the support of an IAM lodge at the Imperial Oil Refinery. Once organized, even without a strike the ILP branch and the IAM had managed to extract concessions from the Refinery's management such as the reduction from twelve to eight hour shifts once the company planned to keep its operations open round the clock.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁵RG 18, vol. 3160 file, G-318-2-21, Windsor Ontario, report, Sergeant Birtwistle and Inspector Beyts to Commissioner, 4 and 6 May 1920.

²⁰⁶Sixth Census of Canada 1921, vol.1, Table X, 221.

²⁰⁷Sixth Census of Canada 1911, vol.1, Table VII, 222; Seventh Census of Canada 1921, vol.1, Table 27, 464-465.

²⁰⁸"Many Unions Are Being Organized In Border City," Industrial Banner, 28 June 1918, 1.

Still, many workers at the Imperial Oil Refinery were dissatisfied with pay rates and working conditions. By March 1919 unskilled workers at the company who did not qualify as boilermakers had organized into Federal Labour Unions. The company responded to this and other actions by trying to implement an industrial council scheme which was effectively rejected by the workforce, while many of its welfare provisions were accepted. The situation deteriorated, tensions escalated. Winnipeg General Strike leader William Ivens toured Southern Ontario during the fall on a speaking tour. At Sarnia, Imperial Oil's agents tried to prevent his meetings from being held.²⁰⁹ Tensions escalated in that centre the following year.²¹⁰

Similarly, at Sault Ste. Marie, the fifth site selected for a detachment, once again location, industry, and population combined to make it an obvious candidate. It was a town where there had been considerable political organization and industrial unrest. In mid-1917 it was in the process of forming an ILP branch even if it was not represented at the ILP's Ontario founding convention in July that year. The SPC had a foothold there and so did the SDP.²¹¹ Like other centres, during the war Sault steelworkers protested the soaring cost of living, the anti-strike legislation and other OCs. After the war, as David J. Bercuson reminds us, Sault steelworkers remained strongly sympathetic to the OBU.²¹² In the October 1919 provincial elections Sault area workers ran J.B. Cunningham as their candidate and he easily

²⁰⁹Naylor, The New Democracy, 70-71.

²¹⁰Naylor, "Southern Ontario," 149; Naylor, The New Democracy, 179-185; On shop councils as one form of strategy employed throughout the region in this period see, Bruce Scott, "A Place In The Sun: The Industrial Council at Massey-Harris, 1919-1929," Labour/ Le Travailleur, 1(1976), 158-92.

²¹¹"Sault Ste. Marie Will Be In Line," Industrial Banner, 18 May 1917, 4; "Independent Labor Party of Ontario: Provincial Organization Formed and Clear Cut Platform Adopted," Industrial Banner, 6 July 1917, 1-2.

²¹²David J. Bercuson, Fools and Wise Men: The Rise and Fall of the One Big Union (Toronto, 1978), 164.

unseated Premier Hearst.²¹³ Sewer workers had struck for increased wages and shorter hours that year and the town seemed poised for conflict at local steel mills.²¹⁴ In November 1920, 200 Sault steel workers struck in protest in defense of employees who had been discharged. The strike was only settled in its third week after a loss of 2,500 working days.²¹⁵

In Sault Ste. Marie battle lines were drawn between labour and capital over the establishment of an RCMP detachment. Shortly after its arrival in June 1920 that centre's Trades and Labour Council held a meeting and passed a resolution asking the RCMP be removed from the city because the Force's actions, "in regard to organized labour" the council felt, "are suspicious of an ulterior motive." The council knew the RCMP had created an "espionage system" with the goal of obtaining names of union officials "for the purpose of grading them in categories in accordance with the views held by them." The TLC officials asserted, that under "sound democratic government" responsibility for "order" and the "enforcement of laws" resided with the municipality and not the RCMP. Furthermore, before the town council, local TLC representatives argued that since organized labour at all times "advocated the bringing about of reforms by constitutional methods, and there being no evidence of any movement in this district towards unconstitutional methods in rectifying grievances" that city council "exercise their rights in obtaining from the proper authorities just what jurisdiction this force posses, and their possible removal, as unnecessary, from the City of Sault Ste. Marie..." They also demanded the support of the Board of Trade and GWVA in this matter.²¹⁶

At first it was believed that this controversy had erupted because Sault Constable M.J. Walsh, who lacked experience, had been sent out by his CO Staff Sergeant R.M. Millar

²¹³"Big Majority For I.L.P. Candidates," Industrial Banner, 31 October 1919, 2.

²¹⁴Labour Gazette, March 1920, 203.

²¹⁵Labour Gazette, February 1921, 181.

²¹⁶NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, file "Dominion Trades and Labor Congress," Sault Ste. Marie, "TLC" resolution of 25 June 1920.

to conduct an investigation into local labour organizations. Walsh had met with a TLC official and had “in reply to a question as to why we [the Force] wanted to know who the different officials were” stated that the Force was “grading them for their views.”²¹⁷ Walsh was sternly reprimanded for his disclosure by both his CO and the Commissioner.

It was at that point that Millar met with several leading capitalists in the city, as well as the Board of Trade and the GWVA, to discuss a strategy to counter the public outcry. One step taken was that the owner of the Spanish River Pulp and Paper Mills, one of two large employers of labour in the city (it employed 800), wrote Commissioner Perry in support of the Force’s continued presence in the city. He felt they were doing a fine job in the maintenance of “public safety” and in an anti-labour capacity highlighting the labour “troubles” his company had experienced recently, especially in its woods operations chiefly due to the “foreign element.”²¹⁸ Similar letters were sent by officials at the Algoma Central and Hudson Bay Railway Company and the Sioux Dredging and Construction Company. Since Perry was overseas, the Force’s Assistant Commissioner replied putting to rest any fears these capitalists had that the government had plans to withdraw the Force from the region.²¹⁹

Labour had the backing of the town’s Mayor and with his support the TLC refused to let the issue die. They kept the pressure up for answers to their questions concerning the Force’s presence and demanding its withdrawal from the region for several months further

²¹⁷ibid., report, Staff Sergeant Millar i/c Sault Ste. Marie, Detective Staff Sergeant McLauchlan for Inspector Commanding Cobalt Sub District, and Inspector Beyts to Commissioner, 21 and 22 July 1920.

²¹⁸ibid., letter, source deleted, The Spanish River Pulp and Paper Mills to Commissioner Perry, 22 July 1920.

²¹⁹ibid., letter, The Algoma Central and Hudson Bay Railway Company to Commissioner Perry 13 July 1920; and ibid., reply, 22 July 1920; ibid., letter, Assistant Commissioner of the RCMP to Soo Dredging and Construction Company, 21 July 1920

in the local press.²²⁰ The city's Board of Trade and the GWVA responded with their own campaign. In addition to the private actions taken on the part of some of their members, publicly the Board came out in full support of the Force's continued presence in the city.²²¹ The Board also kept Perry apprised of developments. They forwarded him copies of counter-resolutions they sent the local TLC which he sent to J.A. Calder, the President of the Privy Council, preparing him in the likelihood that the issue was raised in the House of Commons.²²²

Probably no one hoped the issue would soon die more than Staff Sergeant Millar. To reduce the likelihood of further damage he "strongly impressed both Constables stationed [t]here with the necessity of giving these individuals [Labour] no cause for adverse comment by word or deed." Millar had planned to travel up the Algoma Central Railroad (ACR) but wisely he delayed this trip on account of the incident.²²³ He also felt the Force's position would be strengthened by Commissioner Perry coming out publicly with an "official" press statement to prevent the radicals who were "misrepresenting the reason for our presence in the City, making it appear that the Government is spying on labor organisations in the interest of the employer." This action, he felt would "go along way towards nullifying the mischievous efforts of these agitators."²²⁴

By October the issue had still not died. The Sault Ste. Marie TLC sent Perry a letter

²²⁰ibid., "T.&L. Council Do Not Agree With B. of T.'s Action," The Sault Daily Star, forwarded along with a report, Staff Sergeant Millar i/c Sault Ste. Marie detachment, Inspector Beyts OC "O" Division to Commissioner, 26 and 28 July 1920.

²²¹ibid., "Labor Would Oust 'Mounties From Soo," ; ibid., "Board Of Trade Against Recall of Mounted Police," 20 July 1920.

²²²ibid., letter, accompanied with a resolution, Secretary of the Sault Ste. Marie Board of Trade to the Commissioner, RCMP, 27 July 1920; ibid., letter, Commissioner Perry or Force Comptroller to J.A. Calder, President of the Privy Council, 29 July 1920.

²²³ibid., report, Staff Sergeant Millar i/c Sault Ste. Marie, Detective Staff Sergeant McLauchlan for Inspector Commanding Cobalt Sub District, and Inspector Beyts to Commissioner, 21 and 22 July 1920.

²²⁴ibid., report, Staff Sergeant Millar and Inspector Beyts to Commissioner, 26 July 1920.

condemning the Force's anti-labour "motives" and protesting the Board of Trade's position. The debate continued to fester publicly that month in The Sault Daily Star with the TLC and the Board of Trade at loggerheads.²²⁵ Before long, the issue exploded in the Force when it was learned that Sergeant Millar, not just Walsh, was largely responsible for the events that had taken place. Not only had Walsh unwittingly approached TLC delegates but his CO Sergeant Millar had even gone further putting a similar request in writing to the Sault Ste. Marie and Steelton TLC, a fact only brought to light when the letter's contents were published in The Sault Daily Star and forwarded by Sault's Chief Constable to NHQ. It read as follows:

Dear Curry:

I want to get hold of a list of the different craft unions, and the names of the officials, and would like to know if possible if they are opposed to Bolshevism, I.W.W. etc. There is no ulterior motive in asking for this. I simply want it so that I shall know whom I can turn to for assistance and information in combating the spread of the other thing. It would make it much more easy for me if you could furnish me with such a list. I shall get it anyway in the long run, but your help would save me much time.

Will you phone me at 1371 if you want to know anything more, and let me know if you can assist me.

Yours Sincerely,
R.M. Millar.²²⁶

Assistant Commissioner Crawdon, the DCI, was furious when he received a copy of this clipping. He wrote "O" Division's OC demanding a full account from Sergeant Millar adding that he felt such action "was very indiscreet on Millar's part; particularly telling them what we are doing as regards Labour Organizations, which we endeavour to keep as secret

²²⁵ibid., letter, Secretary of the Sault Ste. Marie Trades and Labour Council to Commissioner Perry, 10 October 1920.

²²⁶ibid., "T & L. Council Give Report On Mounted Police Resolution," The Sault Daily Star, 9 October 1920.

as possible.”²²⁷ Unable to rely on his own personnel stationed at the Sault, Superintendent Crawdon, the DCI, asked Sault’s Chief Constable to keep him apprized of developments in that centre and to forward clippings to NHQ.²²⁸

Millar tried to blame Walsh, but obviously both were at fault and neither escaped unscathed. “O” Division’s Superintendent, in particular, felt that it was indeed certainly “most indiscreet” for Millar to write the letter. He added, “With his experience he should have known that a man of [word deleted] class could not be trusted. I am notifying Staff-Sergt. Millar to this effect.”²²⁹ Basically that brought to a close this investigation. But it was neither the first nor the last time, that the Force would come under attack and demands made that it be removed from a part of Canada.

By October 1920, in addition to Toronto RHQ, with considerable difficulty, the Force had established six detachments and sub-district headquarters in the Division. By then “O” Division had 31 NCOs and regulars, twelve were stationed at Toronto RHQ.²³⁰ Outside the city the number of detachment personnel ranged from one constable stationed at Sarnia to four at both Haileybury and Windsor.²³¹ The Division’s resources were stretched thin by their numerous responsibilities. Although Commissioner Perry never saw the day when his philosophy with respect to adequate numbers of personnel being stationed at detachments was met, nevertheless the Force’s darkest hours were gone.

“O” Division’s detachment and personnel numbers ebbed and flowed during the

²²⁷Ibid., “Confidential memorandum,” Assistant Commissioner to “O” Division OC, 13 October 1920.

²²⁸Ibid., memorandum, Superintendent Crawdon to the Chief Constable, Sault Ste. Marie, 13 October 1920.

²²⁹Ibid., report, Staff Sergeant Millar and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 15 and 19 October 1920.

²³⁰“O” Division’s senior officer was stationed at Toronto RHQ. Also at RHQ under his command were 2 Staff Sergeants, 3 Sergeants and 6 Constables.

²³¹RCMP, Annual Report, 1920, 34.

inter-war period. Neither kept up with the rapid population explosion, nor the growth and development of the region as a whole. Tables 1.1 to 1.3 at the back of this chapter sketch the contour of the Division's strength vis a vis national distribution for the inter-war period. They also identify eventual detachments and personnel numbers stationed at them. In the 1920s "O" Division's total enlisted strength peaked in 1924 with 46, and fell again to 39 in 1928. Similarly the number of detachments "O" Division opened increased modestly during the 1920s and rose from six to nine.²³² The major personnel shifts at "O" Division that took place in the 1920s led to increased centralization of Division resources. In 1920, 12 of 37 of the Division's total personnel were stationed in Toronto, the rest were positioned strategically throughout the Division. By the mid-1920s, nearly half the Division was in Toronto. Through the 1930s, as one might have expected, as the perceived need to "maintain order" and other responsibilities shifted and increased throughout the region a slow reversal took place. By the end of that decade "O" Division had more than tripled its original number of detachments and subdistrict headquarters bringing its total to 19 and a greater centralization of the Division's resources occurred as Canada prepared for War.²³³

Even at Haileybury, the sixth detachment site selected the potential for industrial disorder entered into the equation. Haileybury was a strategic location, a transportation centre with rail access, and a good place to keep tabs on industrial unrest in nearby communities such as Colbalt and Porcupine where for years conflict had been present in the mines. Haileybury also had its own peculiar labour "troubles". It was a centre of considerable OBU organizing during 1919-1920. A company contracted to build a nearby dam facility hired labour spies to keep tabs on workers in their camps and in 1920 OBU

²³²ibid., 1924, 29.

²³³Table 1.1 below provides the total national strength of the Force from 1920-1939. Table 1.2 provides the location, respective strength and the year specific "O" Division detachments were created (conversely went out of operation) up until 1939.

organizer Barilko was arrested on charges of sedition.²³⁴

Spying had a long history in Southern Ontario that dated back to the 1860s and 1870s with the creation of the WFC and DP. Yet it was only during World War I that it achieved any permanency. Prior to this point, most of the intelligence carried out by services seemed to have been on a rather *ad hoc* basis. In 1914 at the start of World War I, unlike Great Britain, Canada lacked a national security and intelligence apparatus. Instead, its domestic security and intelligence service consisted of a disparate conglomerate of agencies responsible for certain policing tasks primarily in a regional capacity. By the end of the War, although better poised, Canada's security and intelligence apparatus still was not fully national. Its birth followed in response to meet the new industrial challenges in a changing industrial order especially after the Winnipeg General Strike. The CIB was created in early 1919 and was made fully national the following year when the new RCMP Act took affect.

The establishment of the first RCMP detachments in Southern Ontario is noteworthy for several reasons. First of all, it offers considerable insight into the basic problems the Force had to overcome to secure its footing in the region. It also offers some insight into how the RCMP reflected the class-based or societal tensions as a whole. Detachment locations first and foremost were influenced by the Force's obligations as the agency responsible for enforcing federal statutes. Uppermost in the minds of those who made the decisions as to their location seems to have been geographic considerations (and in particular proximity to international borders). Yet selection of detachment site locations also appears to have been influenced by a number of other considerations such as the location of industrial and manufacturing concerns and the apparent potential for disorder and industrial unrest. Although some pressure was exerted by local politicians to have RCMP detachments established at certain points, the limited evidence available to us suggests that these attempts

²³⁴E.J. McMurray "Barilko in Haileybury," One Big Union Bulletin, 4 December 1920, 1; RCMP, Annual Report, 1920, 34; About the only place where labour unrest did not enter into the equation was the Special Duty to the Belcher Islands or the Belcher Island patrol as it was more commonly referred to

failed.

The arrival of the first RCMP detachments met with different responses in the communities they entered. The societal tensions that existed were reproduced within the Force and in its relationship to the community and was evident in numerous respects. What was surprising was only perhaps where it found its least resistance and its greatest opposition. At Bridgeburg and Niagara Falls prominent persons lent assistance to the Force and came to their aid to help them get established. If the idea of establishing a detachment at these centres was not warmly endorsed, at the very least it encountered little overt opposition. Somewhat surprisingly, in the city where there had been an active DP detachment and perhaps where there was the greatest potential for 'labour disturbance' the arrival of the RCMP was less favourably received. But it was not labour that protested, but others. And while company officials probably supported the maintenance of a policing force, the transition from DP to RCMP at the local level seemed to have drawn Department of Militia officials at both the local and district level into the politics of absorption and reorganization. At Windsor and at M.D. #1 HQ in London, the Militia favoured the relationship already established between the DP and the Militia and any change was viewed with hostility.

Even worse for the Force was the situation at Sault Ste. Marie. The experience there demonstrated how many in society viewed the Force's presence as a clear strike against labour in the ongoing battles between labour and capital as industrialization, mechanization, and consolidation of industry transformed Canadian society and the framework and conditions in which labour and capital faced off against one another. The picture there revealed just how inexperienced and unsophisticated some Force personnel were in early political policing operations. While the junior personnel lied to their seniors to conceal shoddy investigative methods, others more senior in rank lied publically to conceal their "anti-labour" agenda when confronted.

It was in this context then, that the Force participated in the early "Cold War" which

began in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution. Henceforth, systematic surveillance, harassment and repression began to unfold in a national context, even if it remained rather fragmented and lacked both the professionalism and sophistication of a later period. With the creation of the CIB and both the national and regional structure established, chapter three turns to assess the successes and failures of “O” Division’s 1920s main counter-subversion operations conducted against the communist party’s Toronto organization.

Table 1.1
Total National Strength of Force 1920-1939

Year	Officers	NCOs Constables	Total Personnel
1920	73	1459 plus (139 SCs)	1671
1921	70	1485 (125)	1680
1922	64	1081 (82)	1227
1923	58	1010 (80)	1148
1924	58	883 (79)	1020
1925	53	842 (82)	977
1926	53	823 (87)	963
1927	52	952 (97)	1004
1928	55	936 (96)	1087
1929	54	1024 (121)	1199
1930	56	1067 (122)	1245
1931	59	1154 (138)	1351
1932	91	1911 (346)	2348
1933 ²³⁵	-	-	-
1934	88	2279 (137)	2504
1935	91	2367 (137)	2573
1936	90	2491 (136)	2717
1937	92	2350 (131)	2573

²³⁵It should be noted that there is no Annual Report for 1933. The Force moved forward the date of its annual release from September to March in that year and reported in March 1934.

1938	91	2384 (123)	2598
1939	95	2382 (126)	2603

Source: RCMP Annual Reports, 1920-1939.

Table 1.2
“O” Division’s Distribution of Strength,
CO’s, NCO’s and Constables, 1920-1928

Location	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927	1928
Toronto		14	16	17	23	21	19	18	19
Haileybury		5	4	4	5	5	2	2	1
Sault Ste. Marie		4	3	2	2	1	1	1	1
Niagara Falls		3	3	2	2	1	1		1
Windsor		4	4	3	3	3	3	2	3
Bridgeburg		2	1	1	1				
Sarnia		1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1
Muncey						1	2	1	1
Hamilton		1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1
Brantford				3	1				
Ohsweken					5	6	3	7	5
Camp Borden						1	1	1	1
Moose Factory							1	1	1
On Command		3	1	1	1	1	1	8	4
On Leave				1	1	1	1	2	1
On Loan (Customs)							3		
Total Personnel		37	34	37	46	44	41	45	40

Source: RCMP, Annual Reports, 1920-1928.

Table 1.3
"O" Division's Distribution of Strength,
CO's, NCO's and Constables, 1929-1939

Location	1928	1929	1930	1931	1932	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939
Toronto	19	24	25	21	27	32	29	35	36	35	44
Amherstburg					1	1	1	1	1	2	2
Camp Borden	1	1	5	1	1						
Cobourg					1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Cochrane					3						
Fort Erie					3	2	2	1	2	3	1
Haileybury	1	1		2							
Hamilton	1	2	2	2	4	4	4	5	5	4	6
Kirkland Lake						3	1	1	1	1	1
Leamington					1						
Lindsay					1	1	1	1	1	2	1
London			1						2	2	2
Moose Factory	1	2		2	2	3	4	3	2	3	2
Muncey	1	2		1	1	2	2	1	2	2	2
Niagara Falls	1	1	1	1	5	4	4	4	2	5	4
Ohsweken	5	5	2	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4
Orillia						1	2	2	2	2	2
Owen Sound					1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Port Lambton					1	1	1	1	2	2	2
St. Thomas					1	2	2	2			
Sarnia	1	1	2	1	2	2	3	3	2	2	2
Sault Ste. Marie	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	1

Simcoe					1						
Sudbury					2	3	3	3	3	4	3
Timmins							2	2	2	2	2
Walkerville					8						
Windsor	3	2	2	2		8	8	5	5	5	5
Welland					1	2	1	1	1		
On Command/ Leave	5	1	5	9	6	1	3	3	6	1	1
Total	40	43	46	47	78	80	80	82	85	86	89

Source: RCMP, Annual Reports, 1928-1939.

“As a general rule the C.P. members are very satisfied with the progress made at this meeting in the formation of the English Branch of the W.P.”

Special Agent Constable Harry Catt,
5 January 1922

Chapter III
“O” Division and its 1920s Penetration Agents

This chapter investigates RCMP counter-subversion work in Toronto in the 1920s. It begins by setting something of the context in which these operations took place, describing the establishment of the RHQ CIB, identifying the Division’s key intelligence personnel, as well as discussing their assignments and duties, and evaluating their contributions to this important work. Political investigations became too important by the 1920s to be left in the hands of private firms’ operatives.¹ The Force’s resources were extremely limited, so in bringing these operations under RCMP control and removing them from the hands of private firms in Toronto, Force personnel tailored their intelligence work accordingly. The principal form of intelligence gathering “O” Division RHQ’s CIB adopted during much of the 1920s in its core Toronto CP counter-subversion operations was reliance on a primary penetration agent developed inside the party. Penetration provided CIB personnel with better intelligence than did later forms of acquisition.

The 1920s was a rather uneven decade for both the RCMP and Canadian labour. For the Force the decade opened on a high note. Nationalization in February 1920 saw the RCMP’s strength increase. By September the Force stood at 1671 all ranks— a remarkable reversal from its fortunes two years earlier when in December 1918 its

¹On similar problems in the US see Robert P. Weiss, “Private Detective Agencies and Labour Discipline in The United States, 1855-1946,” *The Historical Journal*, 29, 1 (1986), 87-107; also Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones, *American Espionage*, 16-28.

strength was 303, exactly the same number at its time of inception.² But before long, any gains it made in strength following its “phoenix-like” rise out of the ashes of the Winnipeg General Strike were offset by rising workloads and attrition.³ In 1921 alone the number of Acts it enforced on behalf of other federal departments more than doubled to 44.⁴ The duties its personnel undertook also multiplied: the Force provided guards for public buildings in Ottawa, on board harvester trains, and for dockyards in Halifax and Esquimalt. It joined the Department of Health’s war on the illicit traffic in narcotics and provided assistance to the Inland Revenue Department’s efforts to close thousands of illicit stills. For the Department of Mines the Force enforced the Explosives Act; for the Department of Agriculture the Force supervised the pari-mutual machines at race tracks; for the Department of the Interior and its provincial counterparts the Force rendered assistance in fighting forest fires. These were only a few examples of new duties it assumed and by 1929, workloads had more than quadrupled over the decade, while the Force’s strength which stood at 1199 remained well below its 1920 level.⁵

The collapse of the labour revolt in 1920 and the economic downturn that followed sent many progressive organizations into a tailspin in the early 1920s. Union membership declined and labour militancy as evidenced by strike activity also decreased. In Toronto, the number of strikes fell almost by half. They had peaked in 1920 with 32, and in 1921 sat at 15 before falling to 12 per annum during the next two years. In general, the number of workers involved in these strikes decreased while the

²RCMP, Annual Report, 1920, 9.

³Longstreth, The Silent Force, 290-311; RCMP, Annual Report, 1922, 5; RCMP, Annual Report, 1923, 6; For instance, in 1922 Force workloads increased 11.4 per cent and again by more than a sixth a year later, while its strength decreased by 27 per cent and by 6.4 per cent respectively.

⁴NAC RG 18, vol. 2383, CIB Memorandum #44, “Re-Training,” 4 January 1921.

⁵Fetherstonhaugh, The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, 203-204; Nora and William Kelly, The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, 167; RCMP, Annual Report, 1929, 6.

number of days lost remained high suggesting that the strikes were of longer duration. Outside the city in Southwestern Ontario the same basic pattern manifested itself although the decrease in the number of strikes in this part of the province was even more pronounced. It fell from 81 in 1920 to 44 in 1921 and then further to 18, 11, and 9 over the three consecutive years.⁶ When the economy improved in the mid-1920s, growth was evident in a number of trades and sectors, labour rebounded, as new alliances were forged in both the political and industrial arenas.

“O” Division was established in February 1920. From its beginning the Division operated under less-than-ideal circumstances. By comparison to many western districts the Division’s resources were meager even if both the relative area the Division supervised was smaller than elsewhere and it was little concerned with provincial statutes since the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) was charged with that responsibility. In May 1920 “O” Division’s entire staff consisted of fewer than two-dozen personnel making it the third smallest of the eleven Districts the Force had established as only the Force’s Quebec and Maritime Districts had fewer personnel.⁷

Records for half the Division’s original members have survived posterity. They were all Anglo-Saxon males and all but one were first generation immigrants: two from London, and one each from Manchester, Norwich, Bedfordshire and Islington; while three more were from Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The sole Canadian among them was born in Belleville, Ontario. All but two had gained military experience serving overseas. Most served during World War I with the CEF in France or Siberia, a few in other organizations such as the Princess Patricia’s Canadian Light Infantry (PPCLI) and the Royal Air Force (RAF). One member had served earlier in South Africa during the Boer

⁶Naylor, The New Democracy, 256.

⁷RCMP, Annual Report, 1920, 5.

War.⁸

Police training for the Division's originals and most inter-war Force personnel therefore was limited to that provided at Regina Depot, which as Greg Marquis has argued, remained much like an "army boot camp" throughout this period.⁹ Only a handful of Force personnel had previous policing experience overseas and among "O" Division's originals there was only Sergeant Archibald Birtwistle, who prior to joining the Force in 1906 had served for a year in the Cheshire Constabulary and four years with the Scottish Guard.¹⁰ The Regina program was divided into two parts and lasted a maximum of six months. The first half of the program consisted primarily of foot drill, physical training and military exercises, while the second half of the program consisted of equitation, studying federal statutes, instruction in revolver and rifle drill, *jiu-jitsu*, and other basic detachment duties.¹¹ A few minor modifications were made in the program during the 1920s and 1930s, which added emphasis on syllabus and curriculum development and refresher courses offered at District headquarters for personnel. Notably there was no intelligence training.¹² Not until the mid-1930s did the Force provide any specific intelligence training. Thereafter, it was often only available for a

⁸This assessment was made by comparing Nominal Rolls with a combination of NAC RG 18 personnel records and obituaries in the RCMP Quarterly for Division Originals in mid 1920. Some records exist for the following individuals: Inspectors W.J. Beyts and J.W. Phillips; Staff Sergeants J.J. Wilson, H. Darling, W. Munday; R.M. Millar; Sergeants A. Birtwistle, C.R. Macmillan, L. McLaughlan, A.H. Joy, G.W. Fish; Corporal C.J. Whebell; Constables J.H. Barnett, L.R. Atkins, F.A. Samson.

⁹Marquis, Policing Canada's Century, 181.

¹⁰RCMP Quarterly, 30, 4 (April 1965), 78, "obituary of Ex-Sgt. Archibald Birtwistle," was born in Norwich, Cheshire in 1876. He retired to pension in 1927 having accepted the job as Chief Constable at Charlottetown, PEI, a position he held for the next 22 years. He died on 1 November 1964.

¹¹Harvison, The Horsemen, 14-22; Kelly, Policing The Fringe, 10-33.

¹²NAC RG 18, vol. 2383, "Circular Memorandum, No. 44" 4 January 1921; "Circular Memorandum, No. 44b." 7 October 1921; *ibid.*, "Circular Memorandum No. 44d." 4 January 1924; *ibid.*, CIB Memorandum, #44E, "Re: Training," 27 September 1927

select few senior officers who were schooled for a maximum of several months duration at the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) training academy or at London Metropolitan's Scotland Yard. Even then these courses devoted only a small amount of time to intelligence matters.¹³ It was not until 1947 that NHQ first began to offer anything that amounted to an intelligence program. For the majority in our period intelligence training was entirely learned on-the-job.

For the first six months of "O" Division's existence Inspector Walter James Beyts oversaw Divisional responsibilities as its Acting DOC. While the groundwork was being laid for the Division's detachments and subdistrict headquarters during the winter of 1920, Beyts returned to Toronto to concentrate on establishing its RHQ offices and single personnel quarters. Toward that end Beyts secured the top floors of a building on Yonge Street above a Toronto postal office.¹⁴ Eventually eight personnel were stationed in Toronto directly under Beyts' supervision. By 1922 this number had increased to 17.¹⁵

With reorganization completed Perry's first task was to "find new and suitable personnel to carry out the Force's covert operations."¹⁶ In February 1920 NHQ Assistant Commissioner Routledge informed Inspector Beyts that he was transferring an NCO, George William Fish, a British-born immigrant with CIB experience gained in Winnipeg

¹³Harvison, The Horsemen, 14-26; Marquis, Policing Canada's Century, 179-184.

¹⁴RCMP, Annual Reports, 1920-23.

¹⁵96ATIP - 0271, Microfiche, Nominal Rolls, A-23's for Toronto Division 1920 -1922, (Hereafter simply cited as "O" Division Nominal Rolls, date) April 1920; Again, at least half this lot was British born, first generation emigrants with some previous military service "O" Division Nominal Rolls, April 1920. Under Beyt's the senior Toronto officer was Detective Staff Sergeant J.J. Wilson, then came Detective Staff Sergeant Herbert Darling, Detective Sergeant C.R. MacMillan, Detective Corporal G.W. Fish, Corporal C.J. Whebell, and three constables L.R. Atkins, F.A. Samson, and F. Simpson. Beyond their rank and regimental numbers there was virtually no further designation of RHQ responsibilities in nominal rolls, not at least, for the first few months of its operation.

¹⁶Betke and Horrall, *Canada's Security Service*, 446.

during the General Strike, to Toronto to establish the Division's CIB office.¹⁷ By the time of his Toronto transfer Fish had become "thoroughly familiar with all C.I.B. work., – accounts, agents pay lists, etc..." which Routledge informed Beyts, would certainly become an "asset" in establishing your "CIB offices."¹⁸

In March 1920 Beyts reported to NHQ that Fish had "taken charge" of the Division's CIB work and several weeks later in another memorandum added that since his transfer Fish had "organized the C.I.B. Branch in this District." Fish performed effectively so Beyts informed NHQ that he intended to let Fish carry on in this capacity.¹⁹ Fish likely reviewed the cases of any human intelligence sources such as informants and agents who might possibly be transferred over from the DP into the new organization.

Under Fish's guidance the Division's CIB began to take form. In April 1920 Staff Sergeants Herbert Darling and John J. Wilson were transferred to Toronto from Regina to assist Fish in CIB investigations. John Wilson brought with him decades of detective experience, but his impact on "O" Division CIB's political investigations was minimal

¹⁷NAC RG 18, RCMP, Service Record of George William Fish, O-277 [hereafter cited as RCMP Personnel File – George Fish], "Memorandum For FYLW NO;- O-277," *ibid.*, "Cross Reference Sheet," letter of appreciation, from A.J. Andrews, 3 April 1920; *ibid.*, memorandum, OC Manitoba District to Commissioner, 15 December 1919; *ibid.*, memorandum, OC Manitoba District to Commissioner, 15 December 1919; *ibid.*, memorandum, OC Manitoba District to Commissioner, 15 December 1919; *ibid.*, memorandum, Assistant Commissioner to Inspector Beyts, 24 February 1920; *RCMP Quarterly* 30,2 (October 1964), 83, "Obituary of George William Fish".

George William Fish was born in London, England, in 1889. Prior to joining the Force he worked briefly at Tisdale, Saskatchewan, probably as a farm hand. Following Regina training in 1910 Fish worked at Battleford, Wilkie, Prince Albert, Wadena and Saskatoon. He worked at "O" Division from 1920 until 1932, when following his promotion to Inspector he was transferred to Cranbrook, BC. Two years later he headed the Vancouver CIB and he assumed command of Edmonton Sub-Division in December 1938. He moved to Peace River in 1940 and in 1945 was sent to Regina and was promoted Superintendent in April. He retired to pension on 1 January 1946 after 35 years of service. He died in Victoria, BC, in April 1964.

¹⁸*ibid.*, memorandum, Assistant Commissioner to Inspector Beyts, 24 February 1920; and *ibid.*, telegram, Superintendent Duffus to the Commissioner, 23 February 1920.

¹⁹*ibid.*, memorandum, Superintendent Duffus OC "D" Division to OC Toronto 6 March 1920; *ibid.*, memorandum, Adjutant to OC "D" Division, 30 March 1920; *ibid.*, memorandum, Inspector Beyts to Commissioner, 15 March 1920; *ibid.*, memorandum, Inspector Beyts to Commissioner, 23 March 1920.

since he was near the close of his career and he retired in 1922.²⁰ Darling, on the other hand, played an extremely important role in "O" Division's RHQ CIB operations becoming its north star, the compass that guided its work during the 1920s and into the 1930s.²¹

Born in Cardiff, Wales in 1887, after a failed commercial career as a salesman, an accounts clerk and as a business instructor, Darling emigrated to Canada in 1912. He joined the Force in Regina the following year and served overseas during the war in the RCMP CEF Cavalry Draft contingent under future "O" Division DOC George Leslie Jennings. Until his 1920 Toronto transfer most of Darling's time in the Force was spent working in Perry's office as a stenographer.²²

With these personnel changes implemented "O" Division's CIB got off to a rocky start. Fish was a better detective than he was an administrator and was more interested in conducting outside investigations than running the office operation. He hated office politics and his authority was being challenged by sergeants such as Wilson and Darling who were higher in rank yet were often under his supervision, themselves conducting

²⁰He had joined the Force in 1891 and his most-celebrated case was his 1906 arrest of Bill Minor and his train robbing associates.

²¹RCMP Quarterly 1,1(July 1933), 38, "Obituary of Ex-Staff Sergeant J.J. Wilson," notes that Wilson's career was interrupted at some point so his total pensioned service was 23 years. He died in 1933 on the Sunshine Trail, east of High River, Alberta in a motor vehicle accident.

²²NAC, RG 18, vol.3459, 0-232, vol.1, Herbert Darling service record [hereafter cited as RCMP Personnel File – Herbert Darling], statement 16 June 1913; ibid., memorandum, Darling to Adjutant, n.d. December 1919; ibid., memorandum, G.L. Jennings to the Commissioner, 16 July 1919; ibid., Medical Examination of Darling by Morrison, and RNWMP Engagement contract, 20 November 1919; ibid., memorandum, Commissioner Perry to Assistant Commissioner Starnes, 9 April 1920; ibid., memorandum, Adjutant to Commanding Officer "O" Division, 13 April 1920; and ibid., reply, Inspector Beyts to Commissioner Perry, 20 April 1920; RCMP Quarterly 43, 2 (Spring 1978), 77-78, "Obituary of Herbert Darling"; Kemp, Without fear, favour or affection, 11.

Herbert Darling in 1931 was promoted Inspector and transferred to Ottawa to work as assistant to the DCI. In 1935 he was loaned to the Vancouver city police department for two years to establish its CIB. He was appointed Acting Superintendent in 1931, confirmed in rank in 1941, promoted Assistant Commissioner in 1946 and retired to pension in 1949. During the later stages of his career he served as CIB officer in Regina for "F" Division, served as OC "K" Division, and held various postings at NHQ including two years as head of its Identity Branch. He died in Edmonton in November 1978 at age 90.



Herbert Darling was "O" Division's leading intelligence light from 1921-1931.
This photo was taken in 1946 when Darling, nearing the end of his career,
was appointed Assistant Commissioner and OC Edmonton.

Source: NAC RG 18 Service Record of Herbert Darling, p320
(Originally from the Calgary Herald, 23 April 1946)

CIB investigations. More troubling still was that for months hardly any intelligence was being gathered by the RHQ CIB. For years the Force's sole focus had concerned its activities in Western Canada.²³

Many of these problems were resolved once Division personnel adjusted to their tasks at hand and began ironing out wrinkles at their regional headquarters. Fish's complaint concerning his rank and status was resolved with a promotion.²⁴ Intelligence work also became more of a priority following a leadership change with the August 1920 transfer of Superintendent Arthur Duffus to Toronto to relieve Beyts of his control of the Division.²⁵ Duffus had considerably more experience than Beyts in both administrative and intelligence matters. He had commanded subdistricts since the 1900s, districts for nearly a decade and served overseas during the war, where along with Worsley, Douglas, Wilcox and Caulkin, he had led the Force's contingent in the Siberian campaign.²⁶ During the Winnipeg General Strike he was officer in charge of Brandon sub-district and he came from a monied Halifax family and he made no pretense about both his privileged role in society and more specifically in the Force. He was an individual whose class background and experiences made him a beneficiary of the kind of orderly society

²³RCMP, Nominal Rolls, G.O. 320; also see *ibid.*, memorandum, Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 7 May 1921.

²⁴*ibid.*, memorandum, Inspector Beyts to Commissioner, 23 March 1920; RCMP, Nominal Rolls, G.O. 320; also see *ibid.*, memorandum, Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 7 May 1921.

²⁵ RCMP Personnel File – Arthur Duffus, "Description Form 59," 25 August 1896; *ibid.*, "Application Form 70,"

Arthur W. Duffus was born in Halifax in 1878. He came from a monied Halifax family. He joined the Force in 1896 and his position and early promotions came largely as a result of his father's connections to the Liberal Party -- figures like Prime Minister Laurier, W.S. Fielding (Laurier's Minister of Finance) and J.F. Stairs another Eastern businessman and Liberal politician.

²⁶Longstreth, *The Silent Force*, 282-283.



Actually *Superintendent* Duffus in the 1920s. One of few Canadian born senior inter-war "O" Division personnel. He was responsible for supervising some of the Division's earliest intelligence networks and was the liaison between Division and NHQ.

Source: NAC RG 18 Service record of A.W. Duffus, p. 171.
(Originally from the Regina Leader, 17 November 192?)

the Force was organized to uphold.²⁷

Shortly after becoming "O" Division's DOC Duffus took several steps to improve the CIB's functioning. First, he began reassigning duties. Beyts was transferred to Bridgeburg to focus on detachment operations, while another officer who had occasionally assisted Fish in CIB work was sent to patrol the Belcher Islands and eventually transferred to Ottawa. Other personnel better suited for intelligence work were repositioned within the RHQ.²⁸ Herbert Darling (who had been pulled off of Toronto CIB duties and sent to Kingston to operate undercover in the prison system) was returned to Toronto RHQ in January 1921 to the CIB office and placed in charge of CIB accounts and records.²⁹ As a result Fish was freed up so he could "utilise his full time to outside investigations," which Duffus knew full well was where Fish's strength lay.³⁰

These changes meant that control of "O" Division RHQ's CIB shifted from Fish

²⁷RCMP Personnel File – Arthur Duffus, "Officer's Record of Service," Form 253, n.d.; *ibid.*, "Officer's Record of Service," Form 253, n.d.

²⁸ On Beyts' career see RCMP Annual Report, 1923, 28; RCMP G.O. 3890, 25-1-23; On Phillips' duties and transfer see, "O" Division Nominal Rolls, April - August 1920, and RCMP G.O. 1369, 1-3-21; Beyts contracted pneumonia, the result of complications suffered in a fire that swept the town of Haileybury in 1922 and he died at Sault Ste Marie in January 1923.

²⁹RCMP Personnel File – Herbert Darling memorandum, Commissioner Perry to Assistant Commissioner Starnes, 9 April 1920; *ibid.*, memorandum, Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 29 January 1921; Darling was transferred with Staff Sergeant J.J. Wilson who also assisted Fish. Wilson's service record was destroyed so we know almost nothing about his career other than his involvement in CIB work was short-lived.

³⁰RCMP Personnel File – Herbert Darling, memorandum, Commissioner Perry to Assistant Commissioner Starnes, 9 April 1920; *ibid.*, memorandum, Adjutant to Commanding Officer "O" Division, 13 April 1920; *ibid.*, report, Inspector Beyts DOC "O" To Commissioner, N.D. 1920; Detective Sergeant Fish would on occasion continue to work with the intelligence group. In May 1921 for instance, he signed several secret agents reports on behalf of Duffus and forwarded them to NHQ; See, NAC RG 146, 175/P1639, Florence Custance file, report, secret agent (name deleted) and Fish to Commissioner, 2 and 4 May 1921.

RCMP Personnel File – Herbert Darling, original request, Herbert Darling to Commanding Officer "O" Division, 13 October 1920; *ibid.*, memorandum, Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 14 October 1920; *ibid.*, memorandum, Adjutant to Commanding Officer "O" Division, 20 October 1920; *ibid.*, memorandum, Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 29 January 1921.

to Darling in early 1921. This transfer of power from Fish to Darling became the most significant development in the CIB's operations to this point. Darling remained in charge of the Division's CIB for more than a decade. He only left this job in 1931 on an Ottawa transfer to become Assistant to the Director of Criminal Investigation (DCI), an even more important intelligence post. Both Darling and Fish excelled in their new assignments. They worked well together at "O" Division in the 1920s. Fish assisted Darling by sometimes serving as temporary officer in charge of the CIB when Darling was on leave, visiting detachments, or off conducting his own investigations. Close cooperation between them extended well into the 1930s elsewhere in the Force.³¹

Darling and Duffus also forged a close working relationship in 1921 which subsequently guided the Division's CIB operations. Darling eventually began sending out detectives and other plainclothes members to cover and report on meetings revolutionaries held. He also supervised the work of informants and was involved in the CIB's other work such as mail thefts, narcotics and moonshine operations bringing many cases to successful conclusion.³² Duffus' role eventually increased. He also began supervising the Force's own undercover personnel, reviewing their intelligence reports, and making his own assessments of their work before forwarding materials to NHQ.

Together these officers brought greater standardization to the Division's

³¹RCMP Quarterly, 30,2 (October 1964), 83, obituary of Supt. George William Fish. Fish was born in London in 1889. He was in Vancouver from 1934-1938, then subsequently served as command Edmonton sub-division. In 1940 he headed Peace River and in 1945 was transferred to Regina and promoted Superintendent. He retired as of 1 January 1946 and died in April 1964.

With Darling's transfer to NHQ in 1931, Fish was promoted Detective Staff Sergeant and he bridged the gap in Divisional headquarters heading its CIB and supervising its intelligence work until a suitable replacement for Darling was found. In 1934 Fish was transferred to Vancouver to head "E" Division's CIB where he remained stationed til 1938. In 1935 Darling was loaned to the Vancouver Police Department for two years to help them reestablish their CIB

³²Ibid., Commissioner Starnes' "Memorandum for the minister in Control of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police," 26 September 1923.

intelligence work. They encouraged CIB personnel to dispense with hand-written reports in favour of typed copies. Soon most intelligence reports opened with a similar phraseology. The date and subject matter were clearly identified at the top and file numbers were appropriately affixed so they could be quickly retrieved by personnel at both the Division and at NHQ.³³ These officers also made sure that CIB personnel responded as best they could in a timely manner to any requests the DCI and other NHQ personnel had concerning intelligence matters. If answers were not easily obtained, then they made sure that applications to extend "diary dates" were promptly applied for.

Eventually a triumvirate of sorts became the dominant form of Toronto CIB investigations in the 1920s. Someone such as a detective, informant or operative conducted outside investigations. Their work was supervised by Darling in the Toronto office. And while Darling increasingly set the tempo of CIB work, Duffus ultimately set the tenor of the Division's operations as a whole and its ties with NHQ.

With the Division's CIB in place by early 1921 many other changes followed which improved its intelligence operations. A few of these are worth noting. Through 1921 a clearer definition in the Division's personnel duties began to appear in nominal rolls. By April Toronto RHQ had officially designated an Orderly Room Clerk and a Toronto Clerk in the Division Office.³⁴ By November the position of a Toronto RHQ CIB clerk was established which split Divisional clerking responsibilities between general clerking duties and CIB clerking. Since no formal distinction between criminal and political intelligence work occurred within the RHQ CIB until late 1939, CIB

³³The kind of standardization they brought to the Division can be found by comparing early intelligence reports with later ones in the early 1920s and also alongside of early Confidential Memorandums (CMs) in RG 18 volumes 2381 - 2383.

³⁴"O" Division Nominal Rolls, 1920s, The former position went to Corporal Lea while the latter was given to Corporal Allen. "O" Division Nominal Rolls, April 1921; Haileybury (the Cobalt sub-district HQ) also gained its first clerkship and this position went to Constable Authier.

clerking mushroomed in successive years along both fronts. To accommodate this rapid growth soon several constables were assisting in CIB clerking while others were placed on three-months probation as detectives (now standard practice) and tested for competency in plainclothes duty.³⁵

By early 1922 the RHQ CIB's total staff had increased to about seven. There it remained for most of the decade never climbing higher than ten, nor sinking lower than five regular personnel. Through most of the 1920s Darling and Fish were assisted by Constable John Rolph (another British emigrant with military service) who undertook the RHQ CIB's clerical work, maintaining the Division's records.³⁶ In a typical year in the 1920s a handful of low-ranking personnel, usually constables and corporals were tested out as detectives. Seven RHQ personnel were tested for competency in detective work during 1921-1922. They included: Corporal H. Catt, and Constables E. G. "Ted" Weeks, C. B. Alexander, G. A. Hartnett, P.B. Caveny and two others (R.L. Allan and L.P. Authier who were soon transferred to Montreal). Nearly all made it and were confirmed in rank.³⁷ At least three of this lot (Catt, Weeks and Alexander) were British emigrants. One of them (C.B. Alexander) had served for five years with the RIC. More

³⁵RCMP G.O. 1649; *ibid.*, 2053; "O" Division Nominal Rolls, November 1921; This position was given to Constable Ralph; In July of 1921 Constable Westaway was transferred to the Division and four months later he was granted extra pay while appointed general Clerk in Division Office; RCMP G.O. 1906, Noted that Constable Hartnett was transferred from "N" Division on 1-11-21;; September, That same month two other personnel (Constables G.A. Hartnett and Constable C.B. Alexander) began to share CIB clerking responsibilities with Ralph. They did so periodically during the better part of the following year.

³⁶RCMP Quarterly 40,4 (September 1975), 79, "Obituary of John Rolph,"
John Rolph, was born in 1898 in Essex, England. He joined the Force in 1918 at Lethbridge and 3 days later enlisted in the Cavalry Draft. He was invalided to pension in 1930 having been stationed at Regina, Moose Jaw, Lethbridge, Ottawa and Toronto. He died in April 1975.

³⁷RCMP Quarterly 40,4 (September 1975), 78, "Obituary of Edward George 'Ted' Weeks"
Edward George Weeks, was born in 1900 in Southampton, England. He joined the Force in August 1919. He finished his career at the rank of Staff Sergeant and was retired to pension in 1946 having been stationed at Regina, Rockcliffe, London, Muncy, Hamilton, Niagara Falls, Windsor, Walkerville and Toronto. He died in Winnipeg in April 1975.

constables were tested in successive years in the 1920s as demands required and resources allowed.³⁸

Elsewhere by 1921 the Division had six detachments and subdistrict headquarters. Niagara Falls, Windsor and Haileybury each had three personnel stationed at them, while Sault Ste. Marie and Bridgeburg each had one.³⁹ The senior officers at each of these points were all British born military men and these individuals became the key point men in the Division's enforcement of federal statutes.⁴⁰ They also began conducting intelligence work and funneling information through the system to NHQ. Their work was supervised by an officer at the RHQ who was sent unannounced on monthly inspections of subdistrict headquarters and detachments. Nevertheless, as workloads increased for all Division personnel, supervision in this respect slackened somewhat by the mid-1920s creating a situation in which sub-district personnel exercised greater autonomy than was considered prudent. This tension escalated between centre and periphery within Divisions and between Divisions and NHQ in the 1920s and 1930s. Both Starnes and his successor were aware of this problem and through reprimands in Confidential Memorandums (CMs) encouraged a tightening up of control

³⁸"O" Division Nominal Rolls, 1921-1922; RCMP Quarterly, 4,2 (October 1936), 142, "Obituary of C.B. Alexander"

Charles Bernard Alexander, b. 1893, joined the Force in 1910 and took his discharge in August 1914 to serve overseas where he served with the Dragoon Guards and Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders. He was promoted to the rank of Captain and was granted the Military Cross for distinguished conduct. He served with the RIC after the war and rejoined the RCMP in November 1921. He left the Force in 1925 and was appointed an Inspector with the Department of Customs in Toronto. He died on 25 January 1936.

³⁹Staff Sergeant Munday headed Niagara Falls, Windsor was headed by Sergeant Birtwistle, Haileybury was initially supervised by Detective Sergeant MacLaughlin, Sault Ste. Marie was run by Staff Sergeant Miller and Bridgeburg by Constable Lea.

⁴⁰"O" division Nominal Rolls, April 1920; At Niagara Falls were J.H. Barnett and A. Weibe. At Windsor were W.W. Elmore and T. Fahey. At Haileybury were G.H. Joy and L.P. Authier.

between centres in all kinds of operations.⁴¹

While a more defined structure existed in "O" Division's operation by this point, for the most part CIB intelligence work remained a part-time affair. Not only was training largely learned on the job, but sustained undercover operations were something of an anomaly during this period at least for Force regulars. In most instances RHQ personnel probably devoted only a couple of hours here and there to covering a meeting or event being held and therefore were not granted extra pay. This makes it impossible to establish exactly how much time was devoted to political work in a Division or an RHQ during these years. Those recorded instances in G.O.'s of regular personnel drawing extra pay for detective and plainclothes duty varied enormously depending on their assignment. In the 1920s they ranged from approximately one to three months on average. In general, it appears as though several regular personnel conducted sustained political and criminal investigations at the same time. It is most likely, however, that much work was in the criminal realm and not concerned with policing political ideas. Taking 1921 as a representative example of the early 1920s, we note that Constable P.B. Caveny drew extra pay from late February to early April 1921. Ted Weeks drew extra pay from mid-April to the beginning of June and then for an additional three weeks again starting on 22 June. Another constable spent 108 days from April to August 1921 on special plainclothes duty drawing extra pay.⁴²

In most instances it is impossible to separate out how much time was spent on 'political' and 'criminal' investigations by each of these individuals. Therefore we can get only the broadest sense of what tasks for what periods of time occupied the attention

⁴¹For instance, see, RG 18 vol. 2383, CIB Memorandum 52A, 17 December 1923; *ibid.*, 52B, 2 December 1924; *ibid.*, 52C, 9 August 1928; *ibid.*, 52E, 3 October 1932.

⁴²For Caveny see RCMP G.O. 1334, *ibid.*, 1425; for Weeks see RCMP G.O. 1740; for Allan who worked undercover for 108 days see RCMP G.O. 1826.

of these CIB personnel. Second, we have no way of knowing with any certainty the volume of work contracted out to private firms (although in Toronto through 1921 it remained substantial, perhaps as much as 70-80 per cent of intelligence being acquired in this manner) nor whether or not other agents were operating within the District and whether they were hidden on other payrolls at NHQ or funded elsewhere through contingency accounts.⁴³

As intelligence networks were established as part of the Force's larger responsibility, their foothold in communities was also strengthened over time. This was both a conscious and unconscious development, an evolution that reflected the Force's reality as an organic part of the society in which it existed. Detective work remained a part time and piecemeal operation. But clearly a growing number of individuals gained some detective experience during these years. Some of it was in an intelligence capacity. This meant that the Division had individuals it could rely increasingly upon to cover revolutionary meetings and public demonstrations.

Against the grain of "O" Division's basic continuity in senior Division personnel where few changes occurred in the 1920s was a massive continual flux as dozens upon dozens of lower-ranking personnel passed through the Division's rosters during the decade. Many individuals served for brief periods in the Division and built successful careers elsewhere in the organization. Others left the Force entirely, and became potential contacts for the Force elsewhere. Sergeant Birtwistle resigned in 1927 to accept the post of Chief Constable at Charlottetown, a position he held for the next 22 years until he retired. Detective Sergeant McLauchlan retired in 1927 and accepted an appointment as police chief in Timmins which lasted four years. He eventually served

⁴³NAC RG 18 vol. 2380, CM 37, 24 April 1919? This CM from Routledge to an OC reveals that up until that point CIB telegram costs were hidden by being charged to a War Appropriation account. One can only speculate what else might have been.

as chief at Toronto and Haileybury.⁴⁴ Corporal C.J. Whebell joined the Bahamas Police in 1921 (first as Assistant Commissioner from 1921 -1926, then as Commandant from 1926-1936) and returned to Canada during World War II to head an internment camp at Brantford.⁴⁵ As the Division established itself in the region, its ties in the community within which it functioned were increased. This would only help strengthen the Division's intelligence operations later on in the CIB's history.

3.1

Formative Period, Henry Catt And the First Campaign, 1920-1923

Although the RHQ CIB was established in 1920, in the early stages its intelligence work was far from effective. Initially for its covert intelligence it relied heavily on outside sources such as private detective firms and even other Divisions, whose reports were examined at NHQ by readers in a tiny branch called the Central Registry (CR).⁴⁶ American firms such as Pinkerton's and Burns Detective Agencies, along with domestic ones were operating on Canadian soil at the request of both federal and provincial governments assisting private companies. In 1919-1920 eight firms had been granted licences by the Ontario government to operate in the province.⁴⁷ Steps had

⁴⁴McLauchlan was also spelled in a myriad of ways in Force nominals and elsewhere such as McLaughlan, MacLaughlin, and MacLauchlin. In his 1971 RCMP Quarterly obituary it was spelled as McLauchlan which I have accepted.

⁴⁵Sergeant R.M. Millar quit in 1928 to join Whebell in the Bahamas.

⁴⁶A nice sketch of the CR is Inspector A. Goodman, "The Central Registry, Ottawa," RCMP Quarterly, 6,1 (July 1938), 57-60.

⁴⁷*Journals Of The Legislative Assembly Of The Province Of Ontario*, Session 1919, Fifth Session of the Fourteenth Legislation, vol. LIII, (Toronto, 1919), 47; They included by date: 1) McDonald Detective Agency, Ltd., 9 March 1918; 2) Sherman Detective Agency, Inc., 10 May 10, 1918; 3) The Thiel Detective Services Co., 1 May 1918; 4) Toronto Detective Agency, Ltd., 1 May 1918; 5) W.A. Pinkerton and A. Pinkerton, trading as Pinkerton's National Detective Agency of Chicago and New York, 17 May 1918; 6)

been taken in that province and in Quebec during the war to begin to regulate who was entitled to declare themselves as private “detectives.”⁴⁸ This step was long overdue. Obviously labour felt they should be outlawed altogether and repeatedly introduced such bills in the provincial house on a yearly basis to no avail.

The labour movement had good reason to concern itself with the practices of private firms. They were an outgrowth of the Employers Agencies formed in Southern Ontario shortly following 1900 whose primary goals were to ensure maintenance of the “open shop.” While Michael Piva’s work has drawn rather harsh conclusions with respect to “militant” labour’s successes in Southern Ontario up until 1920, his assessment of the work of Employers’ Agencies does reveal just how difficult it was to try to organize and combat anti-labour activities during these years. Private firms were part of the more coercive apparatus that could be employed when all else failed.⁴⁹ During the War the so-called “famous American detective,” Frank J. Burns, had been involved in numerous scandals in the US concerning anti-labour practices ranging from theft, unlawful entry, breaking and entering, bribery, other strikebreaking practices and was even tied to murder. In one instance he was “Rotten-Egged” by an angry “mob,” Hamilton’s conservative AFL paper The Labor News reported, and was “Driven Out of Marietta, A Small Town In the State of Georgia,” the paper’s headline declared.⁵⁰ His stories were often reported in Canadian papers. Some of his unsavory operatives in these

The Employers’ Detective Agency, Ltd., 17 July 1918; 7) The Wm. J. Burns International Detective Agency, 15 January 1919 (although license was dated 12 May, 1919 it was not issued until 3 September 1918; 8) The Anglo-American Detective Agency, 15 January 1919.

⁴⁸“Quebec Private Detective Legislation,” The Labor News, 29 October 1915, 2.

⁴⁹Michael Piva, The Conditions Of The Working Class In Toronto, 1900-1921 (Ottawa, 1979), esp., chap vi, 143-170.

⁵⁰“WM. J. Burns, ‘Detective’ Rotten Egged By Mob And Driven Out Of Marietta, A Small Town In The State Of Georgia,” The Labor News, 15 May 1914, 1.

US scandals turned out to be Canadians or had Canadian connections.⁵¹ His activities were so reprehensible that even the International Association of Chiefs of Police ousted him from membership in their organization and ordered him to remove their insignia from their letterhead in 1914. But Burns soldiered on. He lobbied congress and following the early wave of Red Scare activity was even hired to head the US Bureau of Investigation (BI) from 1921-1924 before being dismissed and replaced by J. Edgar Hoover. Burns' private detective agency survived and the Ontario licencing bureau had granted the firm a license to operate in the province even after the war despite its unsavory reputation.⁵² The intelligence reports that Burns' and other agencies generated were forwarded to "O" Division and deposited on its files. Through much of 1920 and 1921 Division intelligence personnel relied upon these private firms for much of their information. As a result the contribution "O" Division's detectives and regulars made to this system was minimal.

The Division's political investigations improved as CIB personnel began to follow more closely the shifts taking place in the labour movement. Still, this work remained challenging for several reasons and not simply because Division personnel lacked training and experience. State repression and the postwar labour revolt's collapse created uncertainty making it difficult for intelligence personnel to keep abreast of changes in the labour movement.⁵³ Many progressives already suspected that there were

⁵¹"Alleged Detective Is How Judge Termed W.J. Burns," The Labor News, 20 May 1914, 1.

⁵²"Good Bye Burns. He is Ousted By Police Chiefs," The Labor News, 26 June 1914, 8.

⁵³Gregory S. Kealey, "State Repression of Labour and the Left in Canada, 1914-1920: The Impact of the First World War," Canadian Historical Review, 73, 3 (1992), 281-314; Barbara Roberts, Whence They Came: Deportation from Canada, 1900-1935 (Ottawa, 1988); Barbara Roberts, "Shovelling Out the 'Mutinous:' Political Deportation from Canada Before 1936," Labour/ Le Travail, 18 (1986), 77-110; Gregory S. Kealey, "1919: The Canadian Labour Revolt," Labour/ Le Travail 13 (1984), 11-44; David Bercuson, Confrontation at Winnipeg: Labour Industrial Relations, and the General Strike (Montreal, 1974); Craig Heron [ed.] The Workers' Revolt in Canada, 1917-1925 (Toronto, 1998).

spies at work among them. They had good reason to be wary. Stories about Pinkertons, Burns, and Thiel agencies' activities were widely reported. When their agents and stools were caught sentences often did not seem to be much of a deterrent. There was good money to be made in spying and strikebreaking, especially with the Employers' Agency willing to top off "scab" wages as Piva has noted.⁵⁴ Even during the war one author in Hamilton's The Labor News, wryly commented, that the latter function "Pays Better Than U.S. Steel."⁵⁵ At the Calgary Western Labor Convention in March 1919 Robert Godsen was confronted and accused of being a spy, and shouted down from the convention floor. He defended himself enough to avoid being ejected, but the episode served as a reminder as to what length the State would go to ensure its survival.⁵⁶ Frank Zaneth (aka Harry Blask) another one of the Force's spies present in Calgary had his true colours revealed during the Winnipeg General Strike trials.⁵⁷ Sergeant Reames, who led Winnipeg CIB political investigations during the General Strike, and the Force more generally, were also roundly condemned by the working-class press during these months. The "Mounties," the editor of the One Big Union Bulletin chided, were the "quick-change artists" at least out west in the Crow's Nest Pass coal fields, where in collusion with the Dominion Government through the Minister of Labour and the Coal Controller "entered into a conspiracy with the coal operators and the International Mine Workers of America to do quite a number of criminal acts." While these claims were largely unsubstantiated, the presence of the Mounties was real and kept labour organizations on

⁵⁴"Detective Slugger Sentenced To Five Years In Prison," The Labor News, 19 April 1912, 1; "Private Detective Strike Breakers Get Prison Terms," The Labor News, 20 March 1914, 1; Piva, The Conditions of The Working Class in Toronto, 143-170.

⁵⁵"Strikebreaking Pays Better Than U.S. Steel," The Labor News, 15 June 1917, 1.

⁵⁶Leier, Rebel Life, 75-108; Dubro and Rowland, Undercover, 44-45.

⁵⁷Dubro and Rowland, Undercover, 39-100.

their toes.⁵⁸ This encouraged labour to remain alert for any signs of further infiltration and made the Force's job that much more difficult.

To make sense of many of the changes underway in the labour movement the position of RNWMP Secretary was established in Regina in 1919 and its title changed to Liaison and Intelligence Officer (LIO) following the amalgamation of the DP and the RNWMP. The LIO's position became one of the three principal offices and sections which shared intelligence responsibilities at NHQ (along with the Director of Criminal Investigations and the Central Registry) until a separate Intelligence Section was established in 1936. Until 1933 the position of LIO was filled by Colonel C.F. Hamilton, a former war correspondent for the Toronto Globe in South Africa during the Boer War, Assistant RNWMP Comptroller, and Deputy Chief Censor for Canada during World War I. Hamilton's responsibilities as LIO included:

Under the direction of the Commissioner of the R.C.M.P. to have charge of the secret and confidential correspondence of the Dept., to make confidential reports on such matters to the government, to have control of all negotiations with Scotland Yard and similar institutions with regard to the Secret Service of Canada.⁵⁹

As well Hamilton sat on various inter-departmental committees concerned with domestic security and produced regular weekly and bi-weekly intelligence summaries for Cabinet, the heads of other government departments and Force personnel charged with intelligence responsibilities.

RHQ CIB reports and Colonel Hamilton's summaries both began regularly documenting the changes in the revolutionary community. Through 1920 Divisions

⁵⁸"Mounties Quick-Change Artists," The One Big Union Bulletin, 17 April 1920, 1.

⁵⁹Betke and Horrall, *Canada's Security Service*, 386.

reported that the OBU's importance as a revolutionary centre had begun to wane.⁶⁰ During the Winnipeg General Strike its leading members were arrested, even those who had no direct relationship to the Strike, while international leaders were left alone.⁶¹ The OBU's influence had peaked by the October 1920 Port Arthur convention.⁶² Afterwards its decline was apparent in many centres. This was especially true in most parts of Southern Ontario. Early intelligence reports from Toronto described its membership as at best "stationary" and its finances as "completely broke."⁶³ OBU Ontario organizer Joe Knight's bi-weekly One Big Union Bulletin reports focused primarily on his work in Northern Ontario, while their silence on Southern Ontario activities often attested to the fact that little was being accomplished in that part of the province. By the end of the year when OBU units voted by referendum ballot on proposed amendments to the union's constitution only a couple of units still functioned in Southern Ontario, a general workers unit in Toronto and a second at Hamilton.⁶⁴

With the OBU's days seemingly numbered, intelligence reports noted that a new threat was emerging since many of its members and SPCers, SDPers, and others were "going over" to support the Third International.⁶⁵ Shaped by events south of the border,

⁶⁰ibid., SB #5, 31 December 1919, 23; ibid., SB #37, 19 August 1920, 52-53; ibid., SB #48, 4 November 1920, 262-263.

⁶¹Stuart Jamieson, Task Force On Labour Relations Study No. 22, Times Of Trouble: Labour Unrest and Industrial Conflict In Canada, 1900-1966 (Ottawa, 1968), 186-189.

⁶²David J. Bercuson, Fools and Wise Men: The Rise and Fall of the One Big Union (Toronto, 1978).

⁶³Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] The Early Years SB #37, 19 August 1920, 61; ibid., SB #47, 28 October 1920, 250; ibid., SB #36, 12 August 1920, 47; ibid., SB #48, 4 November 1920, 267; ibid., SB #47, 28 October 1920, 250.

⁶⁴"Result of Referendum Vote On Amendments to the O.B.U. Constitution," One Big Union Bulletin, 1 January 1921, 4.

⁶⁵Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] The Early Years SB #5, 31 December 1919, 23; ibid., SB #37, 19 August 1920, 75.

two communist parties had emerged in Toronto in 1919. They consisted of an eclectic mix of former SPCers, Russian Anarchists, and SDPers and a second wave that joined their ranks the following year as communists consolidated their position but their memberships remained small.⁶⁶ Nevertheless, as part of their effort to draw in new recruits and to broaden their support in the community, the two communist parties also established educational associations. Before long, the first of these, the Plebs League (PL), emerged in the city. Several others followed.

The Plebs League traced its origins to Great Britain to a similarly titled movement that sprung up during the War. The PL had taken its name from Daniel De Leon's pamphlet Two Pages of Roman History. PL antecedents included late nineteenth century mechanics' associations, workingmen's libraries, self-help societies, and perhaps most importantly British Labour Colleges where, as Stuart Macintyre has noted, two aspects of Marxist education, an exegetical format and ties to a wider working-class culture had come together.⁶⁷

In Toronto, the PL was established in January 1920 and run out of the Ontario Labour College's (OLC's) Wellington Street offices. Early intelligence reports suggested that the PL, like the Workers' International League (WIL), an opposition organization established during the same period with ties to the New York Workers' School, served the dual purpose of educating workers while at the same time acting as a transmission belt for CP recruiting.⁶⁸

⁶⁶Angus, Canadian Bolsheviks, 27-86.

⁶⁷Henry Pelling, The British Communist Party: A Historical Profile (London, 1958), 2; On the British Labour Colleges and working-class education see, Stuart Macintyre, A Proletarian Science: Marxism in Britain, 1917-1933 (Cambridge, 1980), chap.3., esp., 73-75.

⁶⁸NAC RG 146, 175/ P1639, Custance file, report, EDA operative, 18 October 1920; *ibid.*, report, source deleted, and Duffus to Commissioner, 26 October 1920; On the region's working class educational organizations see, Naylor, The New Democracy, 84-88; Angus, Canadian Bolsheviks, 65-66; Rodney, Soldiers of the International, 32-34; Angus, Canadian Bolsheviks, 64-66, 77-81; Joan Sangster, Dreams of

As colleges patterned on both British and American models began springing up in Canadian cities, Colonel Hamilton feared that they might achieve a similar success in this country. Frank Zaneth, who had assumed the alias of James Laplante in May 1920 and was working undercover in Montreal, had attended an OBU meeting in August in that city where he learned that the Soviet Bureau was planning to finance an even stronger Labour College in Canada at several centres.⁶⁹ Drawing upon this intelligence and similar information gained elsewhere, in September, Colonel Hamilton twice reported to his political bosses that the PL had arrived and opened its doors in Toronto and in other centres.⁷⁰

Anyone even remotely familiar with political developments in Toronto and Southern Ontario after 1916 knew full well the important role that educational associations had played. By October that year the Labour Educational Association of Ontario had been reestablished following many years of neglect. Under the leadership of Joseph Marks, it became active throughout centres in Southwestern Ontario where it had proved itself a successful catalyst, a source of inspiration and cohesion to a fragmented labour movement launching the ILP which eventually culminated in the provincial electoral victory in 1919 and led to the formation of a Farmer-Labour government. With such a strong educational tradition in the province which had an influential role in shaping policies and forming the government, it was anything but surprising that intelligence personnel strongly felt that progressive educational

Equality: Women On The Canadian Left, 1920-1950 (Toronto, 1989), 31, 33-35, 38, 39, 44-46, 50, 53, 60.

⁶⁹Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] The Early Years, SB# 40, 9 September 1920, 115; Macintyre, A Proletarian Science, 75, 78; By World War I in Britain they had become student protest centres with at least 100 classes operating in England and Wales, involving six hundred individual labour college activists and thousands of adherents; Dubro and Rowland, Undercover, 93-94.

⁷⁰Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] The Early Years, SB# 40, 9 September 1920, 104; ibid., SB# 41, 16 September 1920, 126; ibid., SB# 43, 30 September 1920, 177; ibid., SB# 44, 7 October 1920, 185-186

organizations such as the PL required immediate attention.

If by mid-1920 the PL was becoming an important centre for progressives, its fluidity also made it an ideal point of entry into the progressive movement for both special agents and private detectives. Using the PL as a springboard agents and operatives could assume aliases and gain immediate access to many prominent political agitators. The PL provided spies with an opportunity to build a strong base for subsequent intelligence-gathering. At one of the PL's outdoor Toronto events a private detective firm operative learned that the Toronto PL planned to launch a series of courses in the city in the fall, whose "teachings" promised to be "far superior" to those offered by the university. Soon after events the Toronto operative reported predicted similar success for the College.⁷¹

By October 1920 a private Toronto based intelligence firm, the Employers' Detective Agency (EDA), was contracted by the Force to secure more information on the PL and likely the operative who had reported previously on local outdoor activities successfully infiltrated the League. He began attending the PL's bi-weekly business meetings that month and reporting on its finances. The CIB wanted him to learn how much money was being raised, how much was being spent, and its origin.⁷² As important as tracking PL finances was reporting its strategies for expanding its influence in the community and providing any assessment as to how it might fare over the weeks and months ahead. This intelligence was promptly recorded too.⁷³ Through the private detective firm's operative the CIB tried to situate the PL and its activities in the context

⁷¹Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] The Early Years, SB# 40, 9 September 1920, 115.

⁷²NAC RG 146, 175/ P1639 Custance file, report, 18 October 1920; ibid., EDA report, 22 October 1920; ibid., report, source deleted and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 22 November 1920; ibid., EDA report, 27 November 1920.

⁷³Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] The Early Years, SB# 45, 14 October 1920.

of a changing industrial and political landscape.⁷⁴

Before long, as Colonel Hamilton feared, the EDA operative reported that the College's influence in Toronto was expanding. The PL was holding its meetings there. Furthermore, the OLC had become the central meeting place for the IWW, communists and other radicals who engaged in "revolutionary conversation" as well as an "organizing point" for many revolutionary activities. The OLC quickly emerged as the city's principal "depository" for revolutionary literature which was now arriving on a "regular basis." Not only had the PL under Florence Custance's leadership established ties to like-minded organizations overseas, but both the OLC and PL's base of support had been broadened among the city's ethnic groups. Those they had reached with some success included: Russians, Russian Jews, Bulgarians, Greeks, as well as a handful of British-born.⁷⁵

Since the CIB was getting its feet wet in local intelligence operations during these months and was understaffed especially with Darling away in Kingston it was not surprising that the Force had turned to the EDA for assistance. Commissioner Perry's previous experience with private firms in Western Canada might have been disastrous but there is little evidence to support Betke and Horrall's claims that he shied away from employing them in Ontario despite their sordid reputation. On the contrary at least in Toronto their services were being widely employed during 1920 and 1921. In 1921 as much as 70 to 80 per cent of intelligence deposited on the core Toronto CP files

⁷⁴NAC RG 146, 175/ P1639 Custance file, report, N.A. 18 October 1920; ibid., report, source deleted and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 26 October 1920; ibid., report, source deleted and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 17 November 1920.

⁷⁵Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] The Early Years, SB# 40, 9 September 1920, 115; ibid., SB #47, 28 October 1920, 251; NAC RG 146, 175P/1639, Custance file, report, source deleted and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 26 October 1920; ibid., report, source deleted, 18 October 1920; ibid., EDA report, 22 October 1920; ibid., report, source deleted and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 22 November 1920; ibid., EDA report, 27 November 1920.

originated with private firms. Their contributions to PHFs during this period was similarly significant.⁷⁶

By the spring of 1921 both Canadian communist parties were actively recruiting members to join their ranks. In April discussions to amalgamate the two Canadian parties were initiated. The Communist International (CI) had established a Pan-American Bureau earlier that year to unite the two US parties by June 1921 and if that was not possible then the Agency was under orders to create a new party. The same power was vested in the Agency for Canada.⁷⁷ The Pan-American Bureau sent Caleb Harrison (aka Charles Atwood) to Toronto in April to initiate discussions and to make as much headway as possible in uniting the two parties.

In May communists came from across the country and met in secrecy for three days in a barn outside of Guelph. At the CPC's "founding convention" they made plans to strengthen the revolutionary movement, if not bring it out into the open. The existing historiography suggests that the RCMP had infiltrated the organization by this point successfully enough to get an agent who was operating undercover to attend the event. The evidence to support this claim is simply not there.⁷⁸

Instead, what is clear is that an EDA operative, who was not a participant, had gathered considerable intelligence on the event's proceedings. He produced a second-hand account of discussions that had taken place there. His report was substantial. It was five foolscap pages in length, and its detail must have impressed Commissioner Perry and other intelligence personnel. The EDA operative's account of the Guelph Convention was derived from lengthy discussions with at least two event participants.

⁷⁶Betke and Horrall, *Canada's Security Service*, 240-241.

⁷⁷Rodney, *Soldiers of the International*, 36-38; Angus, *Canadian Bolsheviks*, 70-72.

⁷⁸Sawatsky, *Men In The Shadows*, 53-60; Rodney, *Soldiers of the International*.

One was likely the Pan-American Bureau's representative Charles Atwood and the second a close associate of Tom Bell.⁷⁹

The EDA agent's report began by describing the troubles several participants had in reaching the convention site, its setting, and the steps delegates had taken to maintain "great secrecy" in holding the event. Twenty-two delegates in total were present, he reported, fifteen representatives of the Communist Party, five United Communist Party delegates and two members from the SPC. The delegates represented revolutionary pockets of activity in Winnipeg, Vancouver, Hamilton, Toronto, Montreal, Sudbury and Regina. The EDA operative identified several of the participants by name: Lorne Cunningham, Tom Bell, Charles Atwood, Trevor Maguire, Florence Custance and Maurice Spector. Many others who had attended he was unable to identify since he was not a participant. The others names had likely not come up in discussion and the EDA operative obviously did not want to appear too interested in pressing his sources harder to obtain further specifics because he might compromise his own position.⁸⁰

The EDA operative then devoted most of his report toward detailing the plans revolutionaries had for future work. He reviewed the proceedings highlighting the discussions held in many of its sessions. The opening session was led by Atwood who spent a great deal of time sketching the events which led to the Russian Revolution as well as discussing the revolutionary climate in Europe and North America. The next session focused on plans the Pan-American Bureau had to establish five provincial organizers and to form a central executive body (as well as the issue of dues). The third session focused on the OBU question and whether it was better to try to "smash it up" or "try and form caucuses in each group to turn it into a Communist Party organization."

⁷⁹NAC RG 146, 175/P1712, Spector file, EDA report, 29 May 1921; Rodney, Soldiers of the International, 36-38;

⁸⁰NAC RG 146, 175/P1712, Spector file, EDA report, 29 May 1921.

This issue was settled when agreement was reached to adopt a mixed approach. Communists would try to get inside strong locals and form caucuses pulling them into the CP's sphere of influence while the weak ones were to be smashed. At subsequent sessions debates focused on the issues of imperialism, the dictatorship of the proletariat, mass action, parliamentary action and trade unionism.⁸¹

Before the event ended a temporary Central Executive Committee (CEC) was established. The EDA operative identified Custance, Spector, Maguire and a fourth person [name deleted] as the individuals who sat on the committee. Their election was at the "approval" of Atwood and they were instructed to form a permanent Canadian Executive Committee which would ultimately be responsible for issuing instructions to places where the CP and the UCP had locals. The Canadian Executive Committee was to form an executive body in each city and district and to see to it that its orders were carried out.⁸²

Finally, the EDA operative reported that the convention's proceedings were to be sent by special messenger to the Pan-American Bureau in New York, which in turn would see to it that it reached the Comintern in Moscow. If everything was satisfactory at that point, then Moscow would extend official recognition of the Communist Party of Canada. A stern warning was also issued at that point. Members arrested while conducting official work on behalf of the party would be provided for. Those arrested while doing something on their own responsibility would be on their own. Furthermore, members who discussed the work of the party, even among their own group, outside of a group meeting, were to be dismissed and blacklisted throughout the country.⁸³

⁸¹ibid.

⁸²ibid.

By the summer of 1921, with full knowledge of the plans revolutionaries made at Guelph and of the PL and other OLC ventures, CIB intelligence personnel felt their operations were inadequate. Both Superintendent Duffus and Colonel Hamilton became increasingly alarmed by the rapid growth of the revolutionary movement in the city and throughout the region. In fact for months, if not longer, the Force was also privy to United Kingdom CPC mail intercepts which provided further evidence of the strength of the movement internationally and its Canadian ties.⁸⁴ But there were many ironies even at this early juncture. At the same time Canadian intelligence personnel were becoming increasingly alarmed by the movement overseas, Lenin was abandoning any hope for revolution in the immediate future throughout Europe. Although Poland had been invaded the previous year, the German revolution had been crushed. By late 1921, the German KDP's membership (the largest communist party outside of the Soviet Union) had fallen to half its 1920 high of 360,000.⁸⁵

In September 1921, Duffus forwarded Commissioner Perry a memorandum classified "Secret and Personal" which conveyed many of his fears:

On reviewing the many reports I have submitted to you from time to time concerning the Communist Party of Canada I am of the opinion that the trend of the Communist movement has assumed such significance as to make it incumbent upon me to write you giving you my views of the situation in the Western Ontario District at the present time.⁸⁶

Duffus wrote of his desire to step up intelligence operations and to cover the movement in a more thorough manner. He felt that ever since the CP had arrived in the city, in the guise of the PL, the OLC and several other groups, there had been trouble covering the

⁸⁴Gregory S. Kealey, "The RCMP, the Special Branch, and the Early Days of the Communist Party of Canada: A Documentary Article," Labour/ Le Travail 30 (1992), 169-204.

⁸⁵Fernando Claudin, The Communist Movement: From Comintern To Cominform. Part One The Crisis of the Communist International (trans. ed., New York, 1975), 56,133.

⁸⁶NAC, RG 146, file "Re Information Concerning the CPC, USA, and GB as well as Communist Activities within DND," report, Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 14 September 1921.

movement. The fact that party members had recently decided to take the movement underground had made this task more difficult. He wrote:

Conditions today, as I view them, are serious and the continued steady growth of the Communist movement is to me no illusion but a dangerous reality to be grappled with. To my mind it is necessary that we should have at least another operative at work in Toronto whilst the Communist movement here is in its infancy. This can be accomplished more easily now than if we delay until later when the Party will have become more thoroughly organized.⁸⁷

Duffus believed that at present the CIB was “only touching the fringe” of the party’s operations, and added, that in making this claim he was not trying to devalue “operatives” already at work throughout the region. Nevertheless, he informed the Commissioner that the situation was “so grave” that “I consider the time has arrived when we must get in on the inside of the Communist ranks in Toronto so that at a later date we shall not be unprepared.” Finally, he had noticed a general trend unfolding throughout the region:

There can be no doubt but that the Communists are slowly but surely absorbing the Socialists and other radical elements in Eastern Canada into their ranks, and that there is a prospect of being faced at no very distant date, not so much with a multitude of small radical societies where strength is weakened by constant internecine strife, but rather with a strong and well organized body of callous revolutionists bent on achieving their aims by any means within their power.⁸⁸

No sooner had Duffus written the Commissioner with his alarming assessment of the revolutionary situation in Toronto, than the CPC’s Central Committee, in September, following through on May decisions, decided to launch a “legal party” to push for communist principles in Canada. Before long, both an underground and an above ground party would be established.⁸⁹

It was at this point that intelligence personnel decided that a member of the

⁸⁷ibid.

⁸⁸ibid.

⁸⁹Angus, Canadian Bolsheviks, 75.

Toronto RHQ should be detailed to carry out more concentrated counter-subversion work. The first step likely taken by the RHQ CIB, particularly Herbert Darling its officer in charge, in conjunction with Superintendent Duffus, was to review the intelligence they had gathered on the CP over the past year, much of which concerned the PL's OLC activities. Any plans Duffus and other senior personnel had to successfully develop an agent obviously depended on protecting their pending agent's cover. This meant they needed someone who had little outside experience. That ruled out the vast majority of the Division's personnel. Even many recent arrivals (at least five) were likely ruled out because they had been placed in smaller communities and were easily identifiable or had failed when being tested for competency as detectives.⁹⁰ One constable, however, had only arrived to the Division months earlier. He had successfully covered several political meetings for Darling and was a good prospect. Ultimately, Duffus and Darling chose him for the operation.

The detective was regular #9322 Constable Henry (aka Harry) Catt. Since Catt's service record has been destroyed we can only reconstruct his trajectory by tracing the scant evidence available to us through his reports and RCMP General Orders (G.O.). He was engaged by the RCMP at Ottawa for three years service in June 1920, appointed a constable, and immediately posted to "N" Division.⁹¹ In April 1921 Catt was transferred to "O" Division RHQ and the same month was selected for a trial run as probationary

⁹⁰RCMP G.O. 1334; RCMP G.O. 1424; "O" Division Nominal Rolls, April, October 1921 and June 1922; They note Constable P.B. Caveny was tried as a detective and ultimately returned to regular duty. By June 1922, he had been discharged.

⁹¹RCMP G.O. 545 noted that Reg. 9322 Henry Catt was taken on in Ottawa on 28-6-20; Just weeks after he was taken on a second G.O. 561 was issued. It read "G.O. NO. 545 Part 2, in so far as refers to Reg. No. 9322 Const. CATT, H. of "N" Div'n, should read Henry CATT, D.C.M., C. de G., and not as stated."

detective.⁹² He was confirmed in that rank eleven weeks later (and granted a pay raise).⁹³

Under instructions from Superintendent Duffus, Catt had attended several May Day demonstrations in Toronto. From these events he filled out what was likely his earliest intelligence report in the city. He attended the 30 April event at Queen's Park where along with 1,500 to 2,000 others, of whom, he reported, "about 60 per cent were foreigners," he listened to a series of speakers whose time was spent praising the Soviet Union and in a "general denunciation of all things British." His subsequent report identified the main speakers: Morris [sic] Spector, Mrs. J. Knight, J. Simpson, and "Beatty" McKenzie and the specific comments each made. He provided Duffus with a list of the literature being sold at the event which included: Lenin's "Against the Plague of Nations," Zinovieff's "N. Lenin, His Life and Work," McLaine's "Trade Unionsim at the Cross Roads," Somashke's "The Care of Health in Soviet Russia," and Lozovsky's "The Role of the Labour Unions in the Russian Revolution."⁹⁴

The following day Catt attended the May Day demonstration at the city's National Theatre. Attendance was again about 1,000 and mostly "foreigners," he reported. The speakers included Jack MacDonald, whose speech summarized the comments made the previous night. One question Duffus wanted Catt to answer was just how far were the speakers willing to go in their desire to transform the existing political and economic system? Catt concluded that "violence was not advocated by any of the speakers at either of these demonstrations." Before forwarding his report to Perry,

⁹²RCMP G.O. 1431, 3 April 1921; They were Corporal Rimmer and Constable Nelson; On Phillips transfer see RCMP G.O. 1369, transfer to HQ as of 1-3-21.

⁹³RCMP G.O. 1467, 16 April 1921, Notes Corporal Catt given pay of detective as of 11-4-21; RCMP G.O. 1684, Notes Corporal Catt's extra pay withdrawn 1-7-21; RCMP G.O. 1685, Notes Corporal Catt made Detective Corporal and granted extra pay.

⁹⁴NAC RG 146, 175/P1712, Spector file, report, Henry Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 2 May 1921.

Duffus added "The Moderate Labour Party took no part in these demonstrations and as I anticipated there was no disturbance of the Peace."⁹⁵

The absence of any further intelligence reports signed by Catt until the fall, suggests that Catt conducted other types of CIB investigations during the summer. He joined Toronto's progressive community around September 1921 immediately following Duffus' discussion with Perry. Catt's British roots and the fact that he was an ex-serviceman was most advantageous since his first assignment seemed to have involved reporting on the OBU and the Worker's Ex-Service Men's International League (WESL), a progressive veterans' association.⁹⁶ Commissioner Perry and Assistant Commissioner Routledge had considered both groups a threat since their establishment.⁹⁷ The WESL was resolutely anti-capitalist, internationalist, pro-worker, and in Canada it was endorsed by the OBU. Established in Geneva in mid-1920 at a conference of ex-servicemen from Britain, Germany, France, Italy, and several other countries, the WESL was presided over by Henri Barbusse, well known for his involvement in Foreign Affairs, and its delegates were unified under a common politics which recognized that capitalism was the ultimate cause of all modern war. They denounced secret diplomacy and passed a unanimous resolution condemning the League of Nations as "a league of capitalist Governments designed only to preserve the spoils of the conquerors."⁹⁸ The National

⁹⁵ibid.

⁹⁶NAC RG 146, 175/P1711, Thomas Bell file, report, secret agent Harry Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 30 and 31 October 1921; and ibid., report, secret agent Harry Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 9 November 1921.

⁹⁷NAC, RG 18, vol. 2380, Circular Memorandum 50, "Re Files, Diary Dates etc." Assistant Commissioner Routledge to Officer Commanding, 26 May 1919; NAC, RG 18, vol. 2380, Circular Memorandum 50, "Re Files, Diary Dates etc." Assistant Commissioner Routledge to Officer Commanding, 26 May 1919; Thousands of pages of materials on servicemen, for instance, are held in ATIP, Request 96-A-00109, NAC RG 146 vol. 3261, CPC Ont., pt. 1-6, "Information concerning the CPC, USA and GB as well as Communist Activities within DND".

⁹⁸A.E. Mander, "The Ex-Service Men's International," One Big Union Bulletin, 3 July 1920, 1,4.

Union of Ex-Service Men's statement of aims and policy stood well outside the goals and demands of more conservative veteran's associations.⁹⁹

There was a perceived need to confirm Colonel Hamilton's and other reports that the momentum was shifting in revolutionary quarters away from the OBU. If successful, Catt would provide further evidence. Joe Knight's Southern Ontario OBU reports which the Force obtained and based its assessments of existing conditions on were often contradictory since Knight provided a micro-level analysis and conditions changed monthly. Occasionally he was optimistic about OBU prospects in Southern Ontario. In one instance he noted that what it needed most "is a continuous circulation of literature" and in particular, "large quantities of the general pamphlet endorsed by the Winnipeg conference."¹⁰⁰ What was the CIB to make of this and other similar statements? Knight attended the CI's Third Congress during the summer of 1920 a fact that had not gone unnoticed by NHQ.¹⁰¹ When he returned home as the Soviet Red Cross's Canadian Representative, his job was to persuade the OBU to join the Comintern. Knight failed to get the OBU to affiliate at the OBU's Winnipeg Convention later that year and with his hopes dashed he swung over in support of the CP.¹⁰² How many others were following him, intelligence personnel wanted to know? Another reason that the OBU remained a target was simply because there was already a vast supply of intelligence available on the OBU boosting both NHQ and RHQ CIB personnel's confidence and

⁹⁹"National Union of Ex-Service Men," One Big Union Bulletin, 28 August 1920, 1.

¹⁰⁰"Organizer J.B. Knight's Report From May 18th to June 1st, 1920," One Big Union Bulletin, 19 June 1920, 3.

¹⁰¹Rodney, Soldiers of the International, 171.

¹⁰²ibid., 45.

helping insure that their preliminary round of investigations met with success.¹⁰³

Superintendent Duffus soon reported that Catt was performing effectively and had developed the “the necessary skills” to become one of the movement’s “prominent speakers.”¹⁰⁴ Within weeks Catt was promoted to Acting Corporal.¹⁰⁵ Eventually he would be promoted to Sergeant.¹⁰⁶ Both his intelligence reports and others that Hamilton received from elsewhere that month confirmed earlier reports that the OBU’s fortunes were declining.

In late September the RHQ CIB obtained some additional intelligence from an EDA operative which was focused on specific plans revolutionaries had for the months ahead in the city.¹⁰⁷ An improved PL educational program was announced with classes set to begin in October. As Rodney noted, it “occupied much of the executive Committee’s time.”¹⁰⁸ It also became the ideal opportunity for Catt to gain more access to the movement. With a brief experience limited to May Day events, and several OBU and veteran’s meetings, the PL now provided Catt with a chance to further his work in

¹⁰³Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] The Early Years, 501; The first Southern Ontario file (numbered 1332) was titled, “Members of O.B.U. attending Labour Congress at Hamilton,” which given what we now know about the functioning of the early “O” Division was likely opened by a private detective agent. Subsequent files on other centers such as “One Big Union Activities - Porcupine, Ont,” and “OBU Sarnia, Ont” were also opened in these months;

¹⁰⁴CSIS 175/P1711, Bell file, report, secret agent Harry Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 30 and 31 October 1921; and ibid., report, secret agent Harry Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 9 November 1921; CPC TO 1920s, report, Catt and Duffus to Commissioner, 3 December 1921;

¹⁰⁵RCMP G.O. 899, 2 October 1920, noted that Catt was appointed Acting Corporal from 13-10-20.

¹⁰⁶RCMP G.O. 3577, 2 September 1922, noted that Catt is to be promoted Sergeant from 1-9-22; RCMP G.O. 4125, 30 June 1923, noted Catt re-engaged for 1 year at “O” Division from 28-6-23

¹⁰⁷CPC TO 1920s, report, EDA operative, 2 June 1921; ibid., report EDA operative, 27 September 1921.

¹⁰⁸Rodney, Soldiers of the International, 44.

the revolutionary community.¹⁰⁹ Catt subsequently began attending the fall courses the College offered.¹¹⁰

Catt's first assignment was to identify the course instructors and to record the content matter of their lectures. He reported on Maurice Spector, who lectured on world history, and Florence Custance, who taught a course on "economics and economic geography," both of whom offered a materialist interpretation of history.¹¹¹ In a matter of weeks Catt had concluded: "[T]he whole teaching appears to be an effort to justify the methods of the Bolsheviks in the spread of propaganda."¹¹²

Some of Catt's earliest reports teach us something of his own politics. He was rather conservative politically and something of an elitist. For instance, when Custance described the deplorable conditions of early nineteenth-century British coal and cotton industries and how children were driven into the work Catt commented: "This is a typical example of what is handed out at the Labor College, and it is hard to exaggerate its effect on semi-educated men."¹¹³ With the courses the College was offering, the central theme, he concluded, "will be the failure of the present system of Society, the

¹⁰⁹CPC TO 1920s, report, EDA operative, 26 April 1921; *ibid.*, report, EDA operative, 2 June 1921; *ibid.*, memorandum, Superintendent Cawdron to DOC "O" Division, 7 June 1921; *ibid.*, report, EDA operative, 27 September 1921.

¹¹⁰NAC RG 146, 175/P1639, Custance file, report, Special Agent Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 7 October 1921; NAC RG 146, 175/P1712, Spector file, report, Special Agent Catt and Darling to Commissioner, 13 October 1921; CPC TO 1920s, report, Special Agent Catt, 24 October 1921; *ibid.*, report, Special Agent Catt, 27 October 1921.

¹¹¹NAC RG 146, 175/P1639, Custance file, report, Special Agent Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 7 October 1921; NAC RG 146, 175/P1712, Spector file, report, Special Agent Catt and Darling to Commissioner, 13 October 1921.

¹¹²NAC RG 146, 175/P1712, Spector file, report, Special Agent Catt and Darling to Commissioner, 13 October 1921; NAC RG 146, 175/P1639, Custance file, report, Special Agent Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 18 November 1921.

¹¹³NAC RG 146, 175/P1639, Custance file, report, Special Agent Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 18 November 1921.

avarice of capitalism and the slavery of the working class, i.e. the usual stirring up of class hatred.”¹¹⁴

Catt’s second assignment was to assess the broader purpose of the school. Intelligence personnel wanted a clear indication of future plans revolutionaries had for the movement. They wanted Catt to either confirm or reject Duffus’ and Hamilton’s original hypothesis that the PL (and the OLC) was the principal hotbed of radical activity in the city. Midway through the fall program Catt provided them with answers. He confirmed their worst suspicions: both organizations were indeed very much under communist control and through them communists were consolidating their hold in the region. In fact, those organizations that party stalwarts could not “capture,” he reported, were to be infiltrated and “smashed from the inside.”¹¹⁵ These reports only confirmed earlier intelligence that the Division’s EDA operative had acquired during the CP’s Guelph Convention. Catt’s reports reassured intelligence personnel of the accuracy of their agent’s analysis of the movement and his understanding of its strategies and tactics.

With these two tasks completed, Catt’s third assignment was to shift his focus to gather intelligence that would enable him to make decisions about where and how to proceed deeper into the movement by eventually joining the CP.¹¹⁶ His abandonment of

¹¹⁴ibid., report, Special Agent Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 7 October 1921.

¹¹⁵NAC RG 146, 175/P1712, Spector file, report, Special Agent Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 4 November 1921.

¹¹⁶CPC TO 1920s, report, Special Agent Catt, 17 December 1921; CPC TO 1920s, report, Special Agent Catt, 24 October 1921; ibid., report, Special Agent Catt, 9 November 1921; CPC TO 1920s, 28 December 1921, report, Special Agent Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 28 December 1921. Catt was also trying to slide into the above ground Workers’ Party which was having trouble getting off the ground. Catt reported, “The establishment of the central branch of the Workers Party in Toronto was also considered: party members are somewhat disgusted that nothing has been done here. Two attempts have been made to make a start with this work but owing to the failure of members to attend the meetings of the Workers’ Educational League nothing was done. Lack of party discipline, laziness of some members, and overlapping of work, were in the opinion of the members, the cause of this failure.”; NAC RG 146, 175/P1639, report, Special Agent Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 4 November 1921; NAC RG 146, 175/P1711, Bell file, report, Special Agent Harry Catt and Superintendent Duffus to

the PL in favour of the party was cautiously pursued. Yet it was facilitated with the help of CP stalwarts like Bell and Moriarty with whose work he was already quite familiar. During the transition Catt was invited to attend many CP English Branch meetings where he identified committee members, the leaders of the City Central Committee (CCC) and members serving on various branch trade and industrial committees, proving his worth as an agent.¹¹⁷

After party meetings Catt sometimes held informal discussions with Bell and Moriarty. He hinted at joining the party and made subtle inquiries as to the initiation fee and regular dues members paid.¹¹⁸ On at least one occasion following a meeting Catt visited Bell's house where they continued to debate the future of the 'political side' of the revolutionary movement. When asked by Bell what he thought the radicals' potential was for expanding their influence across Canada, Catt later reported that he had given Bell the answer he wanted to hear, namely, that if any attempt were to be successful then the "communists must surely take the lead." He told Bell that he had only just recently reached this conclusion because of the party's "experiences gained in Russia."¹¹⁹

In time Catt's friendship with these stalwarts paid dividends. He overcame obstacles as the opportunity arose to become more active in the CP's affairs. Soon he began participating fully in the life of the party. At party meetings he sided with Bell and Moriarty in the CP's factional disputes and against Custance and Harry Reigate.¹²⁰

Commissioner, 9 November 1921.

¹¹⁷CPC TO 1920s, report, Special Agent Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 11 and 12 January 1921..

¹¹⁸CPC TO 1920s, report, Special Agent Catt, 24 October 1921.

¹¹⁹ibid.

¹²⁰Harry Reigate served on a couple of CP committees in the early 1920s and little else is known about his career.

Initially this seemed to have been a smart tactical move on the part of the agent since the former had the backing of Pan-American Bureau. Custance's credentials were being questioned because of her former ties to Alexandra Kollontai, the daughter of a Tsarist general who had toured the US during the War. At this juncture Catt also assisted Bell in trying to draw others into the party.¹²¹

Catt attended the CP's December 1921 Toronto Labour Temple Conference. By that point he was close to Moriarty and Bell. He attended the caucus two days earlier at Moriarty's house where the CP's underground leadership joined Charles Scott in discussions over strategy and tactics for the pending conference. The conference was organized to broaden the party's base. At the event various committees were struck in preparation for the party's first national convention which was scheduled for later that year.¹²²

Catt participated in party plans to 'liquidate' the PL since its influence among the working class of the city had begun to wane.¹²³ The PL's closure was a CI Executive condition of affiliation demanded of all western communist parties since the CI felt that reformist Labour College movements of any sort could not be "relied upon" to fulfil communist aims. Instead, communist parties were instructed to establish their own educational schools. The PL's demise in 1922 and its rebirth within the CP months later did not have the serious repercussions in Canada that it did elsewhere. The Canadian movement was small and it was controlled by the party hence making its rebirth within

¹²¹NAC RG 146, 175/P1711, Bell file, report, Special Agent Harry Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 9 November 1921; Rodney, Soldiers of the International, 43; Although Alexandra Kollontai had swung over in support of the Bolsheviks, she ultimately broke ranks with Lenin and was accused of anarcho-syndicalist tendencies.

¹²²CPC TO 1920s, report, Special Agent Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 17 December 1921.

¹²³ibid.

the party apparatus a relatively painless feat. In fact, the only reservation most stalwarts had concerning the PL's demise, was that they were under contractual obligations in Toronto at their present premises.¹²⁴

Catt was also asked by Bell to assist him in organizing the February 1922 Workers' Party of Canada (WPC) convention (intended to bring the party above ground), another milestone in the party's history.¹²⁵ Knight attended the event as the newly-established CP Calgary branch's accredited member. The RCMP had another agent positioned in the Regina movement by this point. His name was John Leopold and he had assumed the alias of J. W. Esselwein. Jack MacDonald, party secretary, had met with him in that city during a western tour to drum up interest in the Toronto convention which was formally arranged to seek affiliation with the Third International. Scott was also sent secretly out west to gain support. The activities of both individuals were reported on during their tours. Neither were successful in convincing R.B. Russell and the OBU executive to join forces, nor was the SPC willing to join.

"O" Division's CIB successes with Catt inside the party were many. The intelligence he gathered exposed some of the CP's own counter-measures taken to protect its membership from the RCMP and other spies.¹²⁶ His sleuthing uncovered the CP's entire regional structure and revealed the true identities of party stalwarts who had assumed aliases to protect themselves during their period of underground activity. Catt also identified many of the District organizers as well as their plans for future organizing

¹²⁴Pelling, The British Communist Party, 22; Macintyre, A proletarian science, 80.

¹²⁵CPC TO 1920s, report, Special Agent Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 11 and 12 January 1921; ibid., report, Special Agent Catt, 7 February 1922; ibid., report, Special Agent Catt, 17 February 1922.

¹²⁶CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 14 June 1922; ibid., report, Special Agent Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 8 January 1922.

activity.¹²⁷ He secured party membership figures (which were the most important checks intelligence organizations throughout the world had against budding revolutionary movements) and in so doing also tried to place them in context.¹²⁸ He reported the establishment of new party branches or groups in the city and the region as a whole and kept tabs on factional debates (both within the party and those that drove a wedge between the party and other left-wing organizations).¹²⁹ He also gathered intelligence on the state of party finances and made further contributions to advance the Force's knowledge of the CP activities in both the political and industrial realm.¹³⁰ He focused on the activities of foreign-paid agitators in Canada, such as the Pan-American Bureau and acquired intelligence for dossiers (PHFs) and 177 files securing copies of revolutionary literature.¹³¹ Dozens of reports on key national CP stalwarts were filed thanks to Catt in 1921 and 1922.¹³² His access to the party and his subsequent reports proved Catt's worth as an agent.

¹²⁷CPC TO 1920s, report, Special Agent Catt, 12 January 1922; NAC RG 146, 175/P1639 Custance file, report, Special Agent Catt, 23 January 1921.

¹²⁸CPC TO 1920s, report, Special Agent Catt, 13 November 1921.

¹²⁹CPC TO 1920s, report, Special Agent Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 12 January 1922; *ibid.*, 13 November 1921; *ibid.*, 17 November 1921; *ibid.*, 17 December 1921; *ibid.*, 28 December 1921; *ibid.*, 11 and 12 January 1922.

¹³⁰CPC TO 1920s, report, Special Agent Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 17 December 1921; *ibid.*, What appears to have been his first Toronto CP main core report dealt with these issues see, report, Catt, 24 October 1921; also, *ibid.*, report, Catt and Duffus to Commissioner, 17 December 1921; *ibid.*, 12 March 1922.

¹³¹CPC TO 1920s, report, Special Agent Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 23 and 24 November 1922; *ibid.*, report, Special Agent Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 23 November 1921; *ibid.*, report, Special Agent Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 28 December 1921.

¹³²Following one conference alone in which Catt secured intelligence nine PHFs were ordered to be conducted by Cawdron proving his effectiveness as an agent. NAC RG 146 175/P1753, Maguire file, memorandum, Cawdron to Commanding Officer "O" Division, 8 February 1921; J. Counsell earned RCMP PHF# 1749 see, Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] *The Early Years*, 419; again, *ibid.*, for Maguire's PHF see # 1753.

Although Special Agent Catt accomplished a great deal as an operative, his surveillance of the party was also fraught with considerable difficulty. Catt encountered at least five major hurdles in trying to secure intelligence. First was a basic access problem; simply put there were limits to what could be achieved because of his relatively low-level penetration. Although he worked with Bell and Moriarty, he was not privy to some of the key intelligence on the national party and its operations that intelligence personnel most certainly would have liked him to obtain. In fact, some of his intelligence could be secured through open sources.¹³³ Catt's ethnicity (hence his position in the English Branch), while an asset in many respects, was also limiting because it meant that he had trouble keeping tabs and securing information on the Finnish, Ukrainian and other language branches in the city and the region whose numbers grew.¹³⁴ Then there was the question of the accuracy of the information he secured. Sometimes he had grossly underestimated and in other instances overestimated the strength of the movement.¹³⁵ In part this was the result of his alliance building and in particular his siding with the Bell faction which sometimes clouded his judgement. Bell had the reputation for being something of a "fire-brand," a fact Catt even recognized. Yet ultimately his friendship with Bell constantly led him to conclude that

¹³³CPC TO 1920s, report, Special Agent Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 28 December 1921; *ibid.*, report, Special Agent Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 28 December 1921.

¹³⁴John Manley, "A British Communist MP in Canada: Willie Gallacher Builds the Popular Front, 1936," *Communist History Network, Newsletter 6* (October 1998), 5. Notes that upwards of 75 per cent of CP members were Ukrainians, Finns and other eastern Europeans. At times this number increased to upwards of 90 percent.

¹³⁵CPC TO 1920s, report, Special Agent Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 12 January 1922; *ibid.*, memorandum, Duffus to Commissioner, 24 February 1922; *ibid.*, memorandum, Superintendent Cawdron, DCI, to Commanding Officer "O" Division, 31 March 1922; *ibid.*, report, Special Agent Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 24 March 1922; *ibid.*, memorandum, Superintendent Cawdron, DCI, to Superintendent Duffus, 20 September 1922; *ibid.*, reply, Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 22 September 1922.

the Custance faction (Bell's arch nemesis) would soon be finished and done away with and that she would no longer be a force within the party. Nevertheless, Bell had made a tactical mistake during the December 1921 Unity Convention in Toronto when he avoided trying to stand for any major party office supposedly in the "larger interests" of the party. This along with his personal problems ultimately helped ensure that Custance who was in Toronto afterwards eventually defeated the Bell faction. Catt failed to see this clearly.¹³⁶ A fourth problem Catt encountered was the overriding issue of completeness in the reports he generated. In several instances he left out key information or had no idea of how to obtain it. Finally Catt's intelligence seldom achieved the level of content consistency that other agents' reports would in subsequent covert operations. Some of his earliest intelligence had little or no direct bearing on the party's city organization or even its Southern Ontario District, but rather concerned Western Districts. While useful to the overall NHQ operation, it was clearly intelligence that was peripheral to "O" Division personnel's primary concerns.

In the work that he conducted Catt often encountered "collection" as well as "analysis" problems. While his accomplishments were many, we can never know with any certainty the full extent of his activities and involvement in party life. While he had helped Bell and Moriarty by drawing in party recruits and as an organizer, Catt's operation was a rather cautious one compared to the RCMP's activities in the 1960s and 1970s as revealed in several Royal Commissions. Nevertheless, and conversely, when measured against the standards of the time, his involvement inside a party for such an extended period of time was a radical departure from what had taken place in Canada

¹³⁶CPC TO 1920s, report, Special Agent Catt, 9 November 1921; *ibid.*, report, Special Agent Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 8 February 1922; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 25 February 1921; *ibid.*, report, Special Agent Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 1 and 2 March 1922; *ibid.*, report, Special Agent Catt and Superintendent Duffus to Commissioner, 13 March 1922; *ibid.*, report, Special Agent Catt, 9 November 1921.

before the war.

For reasons that are not known to us, Catt was withdrawn from undercover work at some point during the winter of 1922-1923. His withdrawal was a blow to RHQ counter-subversion operations. For many months thereafter, there was a significant reduction in both the quality and frequency of intelligence the Force was able to obtain against Toronto revolutionaries. To make matters worse, similar problems were encountered elsewhere in the national intelligence network at this juncture. In Winnipeg detective Constable J.L. Halliday, who had joined the OBU in 1920 and made the transition to the WPC by 1922, had to be withdrawn since he was 'unmasked' shortly thereafter. The exact same problem befell another agent in Western Canada, Robert L Trolove in Vancouver, whose story we shall examine in more detail later on in this study.¹³⁷

The evidence is lacking to reach any definitive conclusions about whether Catt had fallen under suspicion or was simply withdrawn for other reasons. In October 1923 Catt was transferred to "N" Division.¹³⁸ In May 1925 he was returned to duty and ceased to draw extra pay as a detective.¹³⁹ Several weeks later Catt purchased his discharge.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁷Betke and Horrall, *Canada's Security Service*, 445-447.

¹³⁸RCMP G.O. 4334, 13 October 1923, noted Catt's transfer from 1-10-23.

¹³⁹RCMP G.O. 5295, 23 May 1925, noted Catt had returned to regular duty and ceased to be a detective as of 14-5-25.

¹⁴⁰RCMP G.O. 5309, 6 June 1925, noted he purchased his discharge from "N" Division as of 28-5-25.

Phase II: Special Agent J.T. Goudie, 1924-1927

“O” Division had grown appreciably during its first three years of existence. By 1923 its strength had risen from 20 to 37 personnel. Its number of detachments had increased by two during the same period, first in 1921 when one was opened at Hamilton and during the winter of 1922-1923 when a second was opened at Brantford bringing the Division’s total to eight. Both centres were hotbeds of radical activity and had a long history of political and industrial strife. Both had established labour papers and had elected labour candidates by 1919 at the provincial and municipal level.¹⁴¹ Workers in both centres had challenged the police and other authorities on numerous occasions during the war and afterwards. By 1920 Hamilton had the sixth largest number of union locals in Canada with 75 branches of internationals and nationals and of the 57 that reported to the Department of Labour for its annual report more than 5,200 members. Brantford was the 21st largest trade union centre in Canada with 29 branches and more than 1,400 organized.¹⁴²

In April 1923 Henry Montgomery Newson arrived in Toronto to assume command of the Division.¹⁴³ Like his predecessor, Newson brought considerable administrative experience to the Division, some of it being in an intelligence capacity. Much earlier in his career Newson served as the Force’s leading fingerprint expert before Edward Foster joined the Force with the DP’s amalgamation. Newson had

¹⁴¹“Ontario Candidates,” Industrial Banner, 7 December 1917, 1.

¹⁴²“Organized Labor Grows By Leaps And Bounds,” The Labor News, 18 June 1920, 1.

¹⁴³NAC, RG 18 vol. 3449, file 0-160, service record of H.M. Newson, (hereafter cited as RCMP Personnel File -- Henry Newson); *Henry Montgomery Newson* - born in Hlesworth, Middlesex, England in 1880, in his early twenties Newson emigrated to America and eventually came to Canada. He arrived in Regina in 1906, applied to join the Force, and was engaged in September, days after his 26th birthday.

traveled extensively in the west introducing personnel to this new scientific identification system then being adopted on a wide scale.¹⁴⁴ He had also provided escorts accompanying the Duke of Connaught, Canada's Governor General, on two trips through the western provinces. He was sent to England and elsewhere in Europe on several occasions during the 1910s as a member of Perry's contingent representing Canada at King George V's Coronation, as a detective assisting in a fraud investigation, and during the war as second-in-command of an RCMP contingent of more than 800 troops.¹⁴⁵

Newson's negotiating skills in the field of "industrial relations" were tested in 1918 when a miners' strike broke out in Drumheller and turned ugly. He was the commanding officer of Regina sub-division at the time. The strike occurred largely because Rosedale mine manager and part owner James Moodie refused recognition of the UMWA despite their success in organizing miners. When two hundred striking miners stood off against Moodie and two associates who had armed themselves near company property, Newson brokered a temporary peace by arranging a meeting between the two parties to settle the dispute. When conciliation failed because Moodie still refused recognition, Newson was largely responsible for sending in machine-gun equipped troops under the command of Major Fitz Horrigan enlisted on the side of

¹⁴⁴RCMP Personnel File -- Henry Newson, "Col. H.M. Newson, R.C.M.P., Retiring; Inspector Marsom Moving to Brandon," Edmonton Journal, 21 April 1938; *ibid.*, Newson, "Memorandum for Fyle No:- Officer 160," Order-in-Council P.C. 13/2317, dated 19 November 1910; On Edward Foster's career see Larry Hannant, The infernal machine: Investigating the Loyalty of Canada's Citizens (Toronto, 1995), 49-51

¹⁴⁵RCMP Personnel File -- Henry Newson, "Col. H.M. Newson, R.C.M.P., Retiring; Inspector Marsom Moving to Brandon," Edmonton Journal, 21 April 1938; RCMP Personnel File -- Henry Newson, "Col. H.M. Newson, R.C.M.P., Retiring; Inspector Marsom Moving to Brandon," Edmonton Journal, 21 April 1938; On the Overseas Cavalry Draft see, Canada, Report of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police, 1918, (Ottawa, 1919), 9; (hereafter cited as RNWMP/RCMP, Annual Report, Year).



Assistant Commissioner H.M. Newson under whose tutelage
the most important 1920s "O" Division penetration operations bore fruit.

Source: NAC RG 18, Service Record of H.M. Newson, p.384
(Originally taken from the Calgary Herald, 11 April 1938)

company owners.¹⁴⁶

For three years until his Toronto transfer Newson served as Force adjutant in Ottawa which pulled him away from intelligence matters. The term “adjutant” had a much wider implication in a para-military organization like the Force than it did in a strictly military one. At NHQ Newson’s primary duties concerned the organization of the hundreds of detachments that the Force had in communities across the country as well as the larger Division formations. As adjutant he concerned himself with personnel and staffing issues from the moment a recruit was engaged until he was released.¹⁴⁷ It was not until much later in the Force’s history that a separate Personnel Department was organized.¹⁴⁸

By the time Newson had arrived in Toronto to assume command of “O” Division, the RHQ’s intelligence operations had virtually collapsed. The previous year had been a hard one for the Division, in general, and more specifically its CIB. The untimely withdrawal of Special Agent Catt from undercover work had closed down the CIB’s most successful sustained operation in the city. Furthermore, while intelligence work was still being supervised by Darling and outside investigations led by Fish, a number

¹⁴⁶ RCMP Personnel File – Henry Newson, “2000 Miners Strike at Drumheller and M. Police on Pot,” Lethbridge Daily Herald, 4 February 1918; “Mounties Held at Bay Infuriated Mob of Miners,” Lethbridge Daily Herald, 5 February 1918; “Demand Removal of Machine Gun,” Lethbridge Daily Herald, 13 February 1918; “Drumheller Miners May go Back to Work,” Lethbridge Daily Herald 16 February 1918; “Drumheller Strike Situation Unchanged,” Lethbridge Daily Herald, 19 February 1918; “District Board Orders Miners Back to Work,” Lethbridge Daily Herald, 20 February 1918; Canada, House of Commons, Debates, First Session, Fourteenth Parliament, 12-13 George V, 1922, volume CLI, (King’s Printer, 1922), 4 April 1922, 671; (hereafter cited as Canada, House of Commons, Debates, year); See the debates for J.S. Woodsworth’s reference to the Drumheller Strike.

¹⁴⁷RCMP, Annual Report, 1920, 30; RCMP G.O. 433, 5 June 1920; RCMP G.O. 43, 14 February 1920; Vernon A.M. Kemp, Without Fear, Favour or Affection: Thirty-Five Years with the RCMP (Toronto, 1958), 155.

¹⁴⁸F.J. Mead, “R.C.M.P. Personnel Department,” RCMP Quarterly, 12,2 (October 1946), 121-122.

of transfers and discharges had taken place which reduced the CIB's overall strength.¹⁴⁹ When replacements for constables discharged and transferred out of the Division finally arrived for the most part they were stationed on a reservation at Osweken and were little concerned with the CIB's counter-subversion operations.¹⁵⁰ The only boost the RHQ CIB got during this period was that Constable J.E. Robson joined its ranks during the spring. He had begun conducting piecemeal and ad-hoc investigations of a more passive nature, was given temporary detective status, and confirmed in rank in June. Nevertheless, he was never developed during this period as a penetration agent.¹⁵¹

For months following his transfer Newson simply focused on reacquainting himself with Divisional operations.¹⁵² Most of the summer and fall was given over to basic personnel considerations such as transfers into and out of the Division which initially had little impact on the RHQ CIB.¹⁵³ His intelligence work focused primarily on pleasing NHQ by answering requests the Commissioner and the DCI made concerning communist activities. During the fall he sent Darling out into the field to

¹⁴⁹"O" Division Nominal Rolls, October 1922; also Constables Alexander, formerly attached, was discharged under RCMP G.O. 3646 as of 9-9-22.

¹⁵⁰"O" Division Nominal Rolls, June 1923; Those at Oshweken included: Corporal Coventry and Constables Jacomb, Smaridge, Chisholm, Rodgers, McKenzie and McMahon.

¹⁵¹"O" Division Nominal Rolls, June 1923; also RCMP G.O. 4629; noted Robson's promotion to Detective Corporal in March 1924 (Robson had been "present" from "N" since October 1922 and was placed on "O" Division nominal rolls as of December 1922).

¹⁵²Rivett-Carnac, Pursuit In the Wilderness, 173.

¹⁵³RCMP G.O. 4105; "O" Division Nominal Rolls, October 1923, transferred that month were Constables Curleigh, Goodfellow and Nelson; Constable Pearce was on leave from 3-10-23 (RCMP G.O. 4342); *ibid.*, November 1923, transfers that month included Sergeant Henderson, Constables Covell, Veitch, from "HQ", "N" and "N" as of 1-11-23 under RCMP G.O.'s 4398 and 4418; Constables Goudie and Chartrand were transferred to "O" Division as of 1-12-23 under RCMP G.O. 4434; Those transferred out during this period included Constable Grier who was transferred to "N" as of 1-9-23 under RCMP G.O. 4289; Constable Rogers transferred to "N" as of 1-7-23 under RCMP G.O. 4133; Constable Mortimer transferred to "N" as of 1-7-23 under RCMP G.O. 4161; Corporal Rimmer transferred to "Hdqs" as of 1-8-23 under RCMP G.O. 4241.

conduct an investigation of revolutionary literature. Darling, however, had turned up little new intelligence.¹⁵⁴ Perhaps the collapse of the Farmer/Labour government and the resurgence of conservative forces had temporarily reduced the perceived sense of urgency in monitoring revolutionary activities.

Developments elsewhere, especially in Britain since 1920, certainly encouraged continued monitoring of communist activity. In 1920 Britain had signed an Anglo-Soviet trade agreement. As a consequence Soviet representatives established offices in London that year and kept the British security services busy because their trade office quickly became a centre and source of revolutionary activity. In late 1922 Comintern special representative Michael Borodin, was caught 'spying' by the police in Great Britain and eventually deported.¹⁵⁵ In the General Election of November 1922, two of seven communist candidates, one under the Labour Party banner, the second as a communist (but without Labour opposition) won seats in Britain for the first time.¹⁵⁶ Tension only increased in 1923 after the Curzon ultimatum which was monitored between May and the fall and with Britain's Government Code & Cipher School (GC&CS) inability to intercept and decode Soviet messages being transmitted to London from Moscow once the Soviet Union introduced new codes and ciphers.¹⁵⁷ The Labour Party in Great Britain campaigned in the November 1923 elections on the full restoration of diplomatic

¹⁵⁴CPC TO 1920s, report, Detective Staff Sergeant Darling to Superintendent Newson, 16 November 1923.

¹⁵⁵Pelling, The British Communist Party, 21.

¹⁵⁶Pelling, The British Communist Party, 25.

¹⁵⁷Balawyder, Canadian-Soviet Relations, 60-61; Andrew, Secret Service, 295-296; British Foreign Minister Lord Curzon demanded compensation from Russia for the loss of property and life of ten British Fisherman engaged in fishing off the coast of Murmansk who drowned because of Russian neglect. As well he pressed for compensation for the execution of C.F. Davison, an alleged British spy, and for the arrest of Stan Harding a journalist, and a serious of other charges. Russia had ten days to reply or the British would move to abrogate the 1921 Anglo-Soviet Agreement.

relations with the Soviet Union. So too, did the Liberals. Following Labour's success and formation of a minority government conservative concern steadily increased.¹⁵⁸

Many developments taking place elsewhere influenced the Canadian service and suggested a greater need to cover communist activities in a more thorough manner in centres like Toronto where work had fallen off during the proceeding year. The federal government of Canada was under considerable pressure to follow the lead of the British government and to adhere to the terms of the trade agreement even if continentalist impulses helped to off-set some of the British influence in Canadian-Soviet relations. By mid-1922 Canada had signed the Agreement even if it was a further sixteen months before a Soviet delegation established offices in Montreal and *de jure* recognition was granted.¹⁵⁹

Only in hindsight are many of the period's ironies risible. For instance, while a lack of intelligence on the home front and knowledge of Soviet designs instilled fear, this analysis ran contrary to developments in the CI and its leading theoretician's assessment of events. Lenin's articles of this period displayed skepticism, doubt and hesitancy about the prospects for the future of the Soviet Union and for world revolution. It was in these months that the idea of revolution in advanced western capitalist countries was subjugated to second place in importance in favour of both possibilities in the "third" or developing world and this was also the platform which Stalin used a year later to advance the concept of "socialism in one country".¹⁶⁰ While the CI was on the defensive, like other services, "O" Division saw multiple opportunities and a need to act.

¹⁵⁸Balawyder, Canadian-Soviet Relations, 60-63.

¹⁵⁹Balawyder, Canadian-Soviet Relations.

¹⁶⁰Claudin, "The Communist International," 66-71.

The decision to deploy another penetration agent in the CP's Toronto English Branch, occurred in late 1923 after months of inactivity. During this period sight had been lost of leading revolutionaries, dossiers not added to, and requests the DCI made went unanswered.¹⁶¹ Probably with many of these issues at the forefront of his mind, Starnes had forwarded Newson a secret memorandum in December raising his concerns. It had been brought to his attention from a source outside the Division that WPC offices had recently moved. He had also learned that with the move party members felt that these new premises would likely "reinvigorate the party" and enable them to "get some life into the organization."¹⁶² Starnes must have questioned why was he unable to get this type of intelligence from within the Division. Furthermore, if such basic intelligence was slipping through the RHQ intelligence network, then how could any of the larger questions be adequately addressed? How could the DCI, the LIO and other senior Force personnel responsible for NHQ's intelligence work undertake the kind of analysis necessary to make informed decisions about the party, its relationship to the broader labour movement and its efforts to challenge the existing order? It was bad enough that some international sources had likely dried up and the need was now greater than ever to keep those at home open, especially in Toronto.

Newson had "acknowledged" receipt of the Commissioner's "secret memorandum" and not wanting the Commissioner to believe that intelligence work was being neglected, he informed him that it confirmed information he had already obtained. Yet almost nothing during this period had been forwarded by "O" Division to NHQ and

¹⁶¹NAC RG 146 vol. 64, 96-A-00111, Tim Buck File, part.5; They had lost sight of him in late 1922; NAC RG 146 vol. 64, 96-A-00111, Tim Buck File, part.3; Take as an example Buck's file which drops off at the end of 1922. There is only one report filed in March and April 1923 in Toronto. Then there is not another until the end of July in Toronto and in fact the next Toronto report is not until spring 1924; CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 13 August 1923.

¹⁶²CPC TO 1920s, memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to DOC "O" Division, 3 December 1923.

had the DCI and the Commissioner not obtained this intelligence from sources outside of "O" Division's RHQ CIB, they would have been led to believe that few developments were taking place in Toronto. Receipt of this information only confirmed that until this point Newson had made intelligence gathering a low priority.¹⁶³

With the Commissioner's prodding, movement to develop a new RHQ CIB agent took place in January 1924. Superintendent Newson learned that the Workers' Defense Committee (WDC) under the auspices of the TDLC were planning to hold a meeting at the Labour Temple in support of the release of J.B. McLachlan who was jailed for his leadership in Nova Scotia miners' strikes (and more generally for his progressive views).¹⁶⁴ Superintendent Newson had identified so-called "subversives" such as Jack Young, president of the TDLC, James Simpson a prominent socialist, former SDPer, (later to become Toronto CCF Mayor), Jack MacDonald and Malcolm Bruce, as the individuals behind the move to secure McLachlan's release.¹⁶⁵ Newson saw both an opportunity and a need to reinvigorate his CIB and instructed James Thomas Goudie, one of his RHQ constables, to cover the event. Goudie attended the meeting and subsequently filled out what was likely his first intelligence report for the RHQ CIB.¹⁶⁶

Goudie was one of the 150 British recruits the Force had engaged in 1920 when

¹⁶³ibid., and reply, memorandum, Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 4 December 1923.

¹⁶⁴J.B. McLachlan earned PHF# 1253 (Springhill, N.S.), see Gregory S. Kealey and Reg Whitaker [eds.] R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins: The Early Years, 1919-1929 (St. John's, 1994), 409; The meeting was not reported in The Worker; David Frank, J.B. McLachlan: a biography (Toronto, 1999); Since his life has been well documented, most recently by the work of David Frank, it need not detain us here. "O" Division RHQ was well acquainted with McLachlan's earlier agitation. Furthermore, his position on issues was regularly featured in The Worker.

¹⁶⁵James Simpson earned PHF #1660 (in Toronto); Jack MacDonald earned PHF #1741 (in Toronto); Malcolm Bruce earned PHF #962 (in Regina); see Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] The Early Years, 417, 419, 403.

¹⁶⁶NAC RG 146 file 175P/1741 Jack MacDonald file, report, Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 21 January 1924 and; CPC TO 1920s, report, Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 28 January 1924. The meeting took place on the 18th Goudie reported.

the RCMP had been granted permission by the government to strengthen the organization bringing it up to 2,500 personnel (which was later reduced to 2,000).¹⁶⁷ The Force hired Lawrence Fortescue, a RNWMP original and former Comptroller, as a London-based recruiting agent, to secure these candidates.¹⁶⁸ After several months of searching, conducting interviews, and medical examinations (which proved less rigorous than required given the number of men later rejected after reexamination in Canada), Fortescue had basically met the quota.¹⁶⁹

Goudie was originally from Cheshire, England. Yet he was living at the time of his application at Lisgard, Wallasey. It is doubtful that he had any military experience. Likely he had seen local flyers advertising positions in the RCMP and had applied at Fortescue's London office. He had met the height and chest requirements and passed the medical exam. He joined about 100 other recruits on the first of two ships, the steamer Minnedosa, which left Liverpool on 1 October headed for Quebec.¹⁷⁰

After a brief stopover in Ottawa, Goudie left for Regina for basic training. By April 1921 he had finished up at the Regina school and was ready to work. He was then sent to "G" Division.¹⁷¹ For unknown reasons, he purchased his discharge in December 1921. Yet sometime between then and the fall of 1923 he re-enlisted because in

¹⁶⁷RNWMP, Annual Report, 1919, 7.

¹⁶⁸Longstreth, The Silent Force, 278-279; Lawrence Fortescue, joined the Force in 1873 and by 1913 had assumed the comptrollership. He had gone to England on at least one previous occasion to secure candidates in 1913 with Force Secretary Sergeant George Hann. Longstreth described him as "a short, stout man with a weak hold on urbanity, but a most competent passion for the Force and some determined views as to its improvement..."

¹⁶⁹NAC RG 18 vol.3149, file 185 (1920) Recruiting in England, "RCMP Schedule of Recruits."

¹⁷⁰NAC RG 18 vol.3149, file 185 (1920) Recruiting in England, "RCMP Schedule of Recruits."

¹⁷¹RCMP G.O. 1470, as of 1-4-21.

November 1923 he was transferred from "N" to "O" Division.¹⁷²

Goudie's earliest forays were successful.¹⁷³ In January and February 1924 he was sent out on numerous occasions to report on revolutionary activities. He began attending the popular WPC 'propaganda' meetings and Sunday night forums held in the party's Church Street hall. Like the PL meetings and the OLC forums that Catt attended two-years before, these forums, attracted a broad group of committed progressives from the IWW, the OBU, and the CLP. These events regularly drew in an audience of 80 to 100 which helped facilitate his entry into the revolutionary community without drawing unwarranted attention.¹⁷⁴ He added reports to many PHFs that had already been constructed but had had gaps for months.¹⁷⁵ His reports identified the speakers at events, the numbers who attended, and the main points of the speeches.¹⁷⁶ His work

¹⁷²RCMP G.O. 301, notes that Constable Goudie purchased his discharge on 10-12-21; RCMP G.O. 4434, notes that Constables J.T. Goudie was transferred from "N" to "O" Division as of 10-10-23; NAC RG 18 vol.3149, file 185 (1920) Recruiting in England, "RCMP Schedule of Recruits".

¹⁷³RCMP G.O. 4735, notes Goudie drew 50 cents per diem from 23-1-24 while employed as Detective on probation.

¹⁷⁴"Toronto Party Forum," The Worker, 19 January 1924, 4, Tim Buck spoke on "the unity of interests between unemployed and employed,"; ibid., 26 January 1924, 4, Mrs Lunday (Laura Hughes) on "International Obstructions to Peace,"; ibid., R.G. Ross on "How to Prevent Wars and Strikes"; ibid., 2 February 1924, 4, Leslie Morris spoke on "Karl Leibknecht: His Life and Work"; CPC TO 1920s, report, Special Agent Goudie and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 25 and 26 February 1924; NAC RG 146 file 175P/1741 Jack MacDonald file, report, source deleted, 18 February 1924; Comrade Machin gave the talk on "Evolution or Revolution," "Toronto Labor Party Forum," The Worker, 9 February 1924, 4; ibid., 8 March 1924, 4, notes that Comrade Lockhart introduced the subject "Lessons from the struggles of the workers of Germany," but since he could not speak at any length on account of illness was followed by Mrs. Knight; ibid., 29 March 1924, 4, Mrs. Knight spoke on the "Paris Commune".

¹⁷⁵J.R. Knight had earned PHF #13 (in Edmonton); Mrs. J.R. Knight, likewise, earned PHF #14 (in Edmonton); similarly, George Lockhart earned PHF #1869 (in Kitchener); see Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] The Early Years, 383, 422; Many of these stalwarts also wrote articles featured in The Worker. Their activities and travels were also regularly highlighted in the organ's "Party News" column. See for instance, "Party News" The Worker, 15 January 1923; Perhaps least prominent of this group was George Lockhart, party organizer in the Kitchener region; Lockhart, for instance, penned, "Oil, War and the Working Class," The Worker, 1 November 1922, 4.

¹⁷⁶CPC TO 1920s, report, Special Agent Goudie and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 28 and 30 January 1924; ibid., report, Special Agent Goudie and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 4 and 5 February 1924.

supplemented OSINT easily obtained through the CIB's and the CR's reading of the party organ.¹⁷⁷

By early February Goudie had been invited to attend both English Branch and business meetings.¹⁷⁸ The party organ only commented briefly on these meetings so the Force relied upon Goudie's intelligence reports. Soon afterward Goudie joined the party and by the spring of 1924 he had managed to work his way onto the CCC which oversaw the party's work in Toronto and indirectly exerted great influence over the surrounding region. His advancement had likely occurred at the April city convention or just prior to it. On the CCC sat representatives of the English, Finnish, Ukrainian, Jewish and Bulgarian city branches and among its more prominent members were: Jack MacDonald, Fred J. Peel, Florence Custance, Amos T. Hill, John W. Alquist, and Mike Huculiak. All of them had earned PHFs and in several cases, Goudie gained their trust and friendship.¹⁷⁹

As Goudie worked his way deeper into the movement it was not long before he was asked and had accepted the task of chairing the Young Communist League's (YCL's) first Anniversary celebration. Before an Alhambra Hall audience of 250 he had had the opportunity to listen to Leslie Morris, who spoke on "the history of the League and its activities." Morris had earned his PHF in Toronto only weeks earlier and likely

¹⁷⁷Open Source Intelligence is simply information obtained through non-clandestine means. It generally refers to print materials, such as books, papers, etc.

¹⁷⁸CPC TO 1920s, report, Special Agent Goudie and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 7 and 8 February 1924.

¹⁷⁹"Toronto City Convention," The Worker, 5 April 1924, 3; The convention was held on 5 April; see Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] The Early Years, 422, 428, 406, 429; In addition to those individuals previously mentioned, Fred Peel earned PHF #1876 (in Toronto); Amos T. Hill earned PHF #2175 (in Toronto); Mike Huculak [RCMP one spelling incorrect] earned two PHFs, PHF #1127 (the Pas) and PHF #2196 (the Pas); CPC TO 1920s, "City Central Committee: Minutes of Meeting March, 18th" n.d.

as a result of Goudie's work.¹⁸⁰ Days after the Anniversary celebration Goudie was asked by two members of the WPC to "to go in and try to reorganize the League and endeavor to put it on its feet..."¹⁸¹ Intelligence personnel instructed Goudie to proceed cautiously and not to get drawn too heavily into the YCL's work.¹⁸² This was probably because the YCL's best days lay ahead and Goudie was already too valuable as an agent to concern himself with this organization at that juncture. His handlers had other designs for their star Mountie.¹⁸³

In only two months Goudie was having considerable success in monitoring revolutionary activities and he was also expanding his own sphere of influence within the party. He soon became District #3's financial auditor and also temporarily served as the CCC's secretary.¹⁸⁴ On several occasions Special Agent Goudie was also sent out to monitor and report on A.E. Smith's public events. In short order, Goudie had befriended a group of key party stalwarts, Smith among them.¹⁸⁵

Newson took some personal delight in the success his secret agent was having

¹⁸⁰NAC RG 146 175P/2440 Leslie Morris file, report, Special Agent Goudie and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 26 February 1924; On Morris' PHF see Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] The Early Years, 434.

¹⁸¹NAC RG 146 file 175P/2440 Leslie Morris file, report, Special Agent Goudie and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 27 February 1924.

¹⁸²Still the YCL city convention was held on the same day as the regular Toronto city convention and it was likely that Goudie was aware of its activities, "Toronto City Central Convention," The Worker, 19 April 1924, 3.

¹⁸³Stewart Smith, Comrades and Komsomolkas: My Years in the Communist Party of Canada (Toronto, 1993) 75-77.

¹⁸⁴CPC TO 1920s, "Minutes of City Central Committee April 1st," forwarded along with a report, Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 4 April 1924; also see "Toronto City Convention," The Worker, 5 April 1924, 3.

¹⁸⁵NAC RG 146 175P/392, A.E. Smith file, see for instance, report, Special Agent Goudie and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 11 February 1924; ibid., report, Special Agent Goudie and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 19 May 1924.

in infiltrating the organization. To reassure the Commissioner that RHQ CIB work was a priority, Newson sent him a memorandum highlighting some of his agent's results. Goudie's enthusiasm and his ability to rise quickly through the CP increased his worth as an agent. Furthermore, he elevated the stature of the RHQ CIB in the eyes of senior NHQ personnel.¹⁸⁶

Goudie's initial success as an agent can be measured not only by study of his penetration of the party, but also by his intelligence contribution. The volume of intelligence he acquired was large and valuable. While Goudie's ability as an agent can be judged by the number of reports he deposited on core Toronto CP files, there are other ways to assess his contribution. One of the best ways to evaluate Goudie's performance were his additions to dossiers of many leading Toronto-based revolutionaries, which saw a substantial increase during these months.

In March, building on his initial surveillance work, Goudie attended two 'propaganda meetings' where party stalwart William Moriarty was the key speaker.¹⁸⁷ Goudie subsequently filled out three reports for Moriarty's dossier.¹⁸⁸ He attended a CLP meeting addressed by Florence Custance the same month, filling out one report for her file and another from comments she made at a WPC meeting held a month later.¹⁸⁹ He had befriended these two stalwarts who soon became his best intelligence sources. In

¹⁸⁶CPC TO 1920s, memorandum, Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 26 February 1924.

¹⁸⁷Ian Angus, Canadian Bolsheviks: The Early Years of the Communist Party of Canada (Montreal, 1981), 79-80; note that Moriarty emigrated from England in 1910. He joined the Socialist Party during the War and was one of the first SPC members to join the Communist movement. He became a member of the CEC at the May 1921 convention and was National Secretary of the Workers Party in 1922. He later on became the business manager of The Worker.

¹⁸⁸NAC RG 146 175P/2017 William Moriarty file, report, Special Agent Goudie and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 3 and 4 March 1924; ibid., 6 March 1924.

¹⁸⁹NAC RG 146 175P/P1639, Florence Custance file, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 10 and 11 March 1924; ibid., 7 and 10 April 1924.

addition, between March and May Goudie filled out several reports on Thomas Bell.¹⁹⁰ Leslie Morris, too, was closely watched and his activities reported on.¹⁹¹ Even Jack MacDonald, who was out of town during much of this period, had his activities reported on by Goudie through liaison with other party stalwarts who shared considerable information on the party's General Secretary. When MacDonald was in town, Goudie asked him many questions and gained considerable intelligence on the party's structure, its organization, and also when and where the City, District, and the National Conventions were to be held.¹⁹²

Goudie breathed new life into the RHQ CIB. For more than a year the RCMP was without a composite assessment of the total number of party branches functioning within Ontario. Within months of Goudie's development as an agent Superintendent Newson was able to provide NHQ with a picture of the revolutionary situation in the region. One report forwarded in March and a second in mid-April explained to CIB personnel how the CPC had reorganized itself in District #3 and provided detailed membership figures. District #3 which comprised roughly 3,000 of the CPC's 4,800 members nationally had too large a membership so it was decided that the interests of the party would be better served by breaking the District up and reorganizing it into a series of five sub-districts. The new classifications saw the Port Arthur and Fort William area become the Western

¹⁹⁰NAC RG 146 175/P1711, Thomas Bell file, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 6 and 7 March 1924; For instance, Goudie reported that Bell would soon travel to the US for meetings, that he would subsequently tour Canada and would also attend the party convention in April. He also reported that Bell was living at home (one assumes for financial reasons) and that he intended to make the city his base for the next few months.

¹⁹¹NAC RG 146 175/P2440, Leslie Morris file, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 16 May 1924; *ibid.*, 29 March 1924; *ibid.*, 30 April 1924. During this period Goudie reported that Morris was recently reelected Secretary of the YCL, that he was trying to get a paper started and would likely serve as its first editor.

¹⁹²NAC RG 146 175/P1741, Jack MacDonald file, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 21 March 1924; *ibid.*, 14 April 1924; *ibid.*, 31 March 1924; *ibid.*, 17 April 1924.

Sub-District with a special focus on grain shipping and a membership of 600; the Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie region became the Middle Sub-District, with a membership again of 600 and a special focus on copper mining, logging and smelting; the Timmins, Cobalt, region, forming the Northern Sub-District, with a similar membership of 600 and a special emphasis on gold and silver mining; Toronto and Lower Ontario formed the new Southern Sub-District, its emphasis being manufacturing and a membership of 1,000; and the Montreal area formed what comprised the Eastern Sub-District, with a membership of 200 and a special emphasis on manufacturing and shipping. Goudie predicted that this move was "one of the most important steps so far, in the effort to get the party more firmly established in Ontario," and he concluded, it "will certainly put more spirit into each District."¹⁹³ His report did not stop there. It listed the locations of the 11 branches functioning throughout Southern Ontario outside of Toronto and detailed the membership strength of each.¹⁹⁴ He also reported that various centres such as Welland and Thorold, which once had healthy Ukrainian Branches no longer had functioning organizations, but that attempts were being made to reestablish branches in these important centres. In total this and another hand-written list noted that there were approximately 65 CPC Branches operating within various centres in Ontario during this period for which the RCMP had opened intelligence organizational files. While only a small portion of this work was undertaken by Goudie, his contribution was a seminal one.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹³RG 146, vol. 3261, file, 96-A-00109 pt.1, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 8 and 10 May 1924.

¹⁹⁴Guelph had an English Branch with 20 members, London an English Branch with 10 members and Oshawa a Ukrainian Branch with 10 members. Kitchener, Hamilton, Windsor and St. Catharines, his report noted, each had two branches often an English one and either a Ukrainian or Finnish one, or sometimes two "foreign language" branches with memberships of anywhere between 5 and 57.

¹⁹⁵RG 146, vol. 3261, file, 96-A-00109 pt.1, list of "C.P. in Ontario," n.d.

Goudie's work compared well especially when measured against other accounts of labour spies and stools being uncovered. Their stories, as well as the tactics private firms such as the Sherman Detective Company employed, their instructions and training methods for labour spies, had been exposed and were being dragged through the labour press in a bid to warn workers.¹⁹⁶ Even the RCMP months earlier had suffered a fiasco in Vancouver which led to the dismissal of several Force personnel who were charged for illegal activities. These events had resulted in stories of Zaneth being dredged up with calls for the Force's disbandment.¹⁹⁷ In Britain, in April 1924, political police were discovered hiding under the stage of a theatre where the CPGB were scheduled to hold an Executive meeting. This event was reported in the press and would have been known to both members of the CPC and Force personnel.¹⁹⁸ By comparison, Goudie's operation was a great success.

Through the spring of 1924 much of Goudie's investigative work took place at indoor forums, then as summer approached he turned to street-corner meetings. In July, senior intelligence personnel at "O" Division rewarded their agent for his excellent work with a promotion to detective and a pay increase of a dollar per day.¹⁹⁹ During these months Superintendent Newson grew increasingly concerned by Goudie's intelligence reports which noted tremendous party growth. From Goudie's reports Newson concluded that the party was getting bolder. An early sign of its new-found strength, he believed,

¹⁹⁶"Labor Spy Revelations Show How Sherman Agency Workers," The Worker, 28 June 1924, 2; "Labor Faker Found to Be Vicious Spy," The Worker, 17 July 1924, 1; "Labor Spy Agency Revelations Continued," The Worker, 17 July 1924, 2; "Another Instalment Of The Spy Revelations," The Worker, 26 July 1924, 3.

¹⁹⁷Editorial, "The Mounted Police," The Worker, 22 December 1923, 2; James Dubro and Robin Rowland, Undercover: Cases of the RCMP's Most Secret Operative (Toronto, 1991).

¹⁹⁸Pelling, The British Communist Party, 28-29.

¹⁹⁹RCMP G.O. 4893, Goudie was confirmed in his rank and appointed detective from 23-7-24.

was its April Convention when the party had taken itself into the open changing its name from the WPC to the CPC. For these reasons Newson tasked Goudie to get more involved in its activities and to devise a plan of action.²⁰⁰

The CI arranged a series of anti-war demonstrations in July and August 1924 and again the following year. They were held to protest aggressive Japanese and American economic activities in China and in South America. The CI argued that both Japan's and the US's interests in oil and other resources would "be the cause of the next war."²⁰¹ Communists, the world over, were drawing upon the works of leading revolutionary theoreticians such as Lenin whose analysis of capitalist development suggested that western capitalist societies were entering a new stage in their economic life as nations in which monopolies were giving over to higher forms of "Imperialist" organization.²⁰² Both Japanese and US capitalist interests were an expression of this higher form of development.

In Britain, these demonstrations grew in significance. Just a week before the events were set to be held J.R. Campbell, acting editor of the CPGB organ The Workers' Weekly, had published an article, "The Army and Industrial Disputes -- An Open Letter to The Fighting Press" with what became a famous "Appeal to Soldiers," encouraging

²⁰⁰CPC TO 1920s, report, Special Agent Goudie and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner 29 April 1924; *ibid.*, report Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 30 April 1924, "Communist Leaders Address Gathering," Globe and Mail, 21 April 1924, and; "Talks of Red Army to Force Anarchy Upon this Country," Globe and Mail, 21 April 1924, and; "Communist Barque Now Sails Into Sight On Political Waters," Toronto Star, 19 April 1924. Days after the convention both Toronto Star and The Globe and Mail columnists had also reported its seemingly new-found strength; Smith, Comrades and Komsomolks, 71.

²⁰¹CPC TO 1920s, quote from "Declares War's Aims Ever Capitalistic," Toronto Globe, 2 August 1924; *ibid.*, report, source deleted, 29 July 1924; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 29 and 31 July 1924; *ibid.*, 5 and 12 August 1924; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Inspector Frere to Commissioner, 3 and 5 August 1925; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 5 and 7 August 1925; "Police Back Down," The Worker, 9 August 1924, 4; "Anti-Imperialist-War Week Was Successful Concerted Campaign," The Worker, 16 August 1924, 1; also see, "Montreal Anti-War Campaign," The Worker, 16 August 1924, 1.

²⁰²V.I. Lenin, Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism esp. chap. 7.

workers to line up against exploiters and the capitalist class. Party members were also encouraged to organize among the soldiers and to get inside the military generally to sway their fellow labourers to the cause. Campbell was arrested on 5 August and was charged with 'incitement to mutiny' during what subsequently became known as the 'Don't Shoot' anti-war appeal campaign.

The British Labour Party (LP) was in power under Ramsay MacDonald during these events. The LP had established a minority government and was supported in a tenuous coalition by the Liberals. Circumstances surrounding the Campbell arrest consolidated Liberal and Conservative opposition to Ramsay MacDonald who was considered "soft on communism". MacDonald proposed a compromise proposition to appease Liberals by establishing a Select Committee of the House to study communist activities, but it failed to garner support. A vote of non-confidence followed in the House. It forced the dissolution of the British parliament. During the election campaign that followed just before election day, the "Zinoviev letter," a so-called secret document was uncovered and released to the press providing further details of Soviet revolutionary designs on British soil. The "Zinoviev letter" became the icing on the Conservative party's cake and sealed the Labour Party's fate ensuring its defeat at the polls. The fact that the letter's authenticity was later rejected as a plot concocted by the British security forces and a tiny group of Conservatives did nothing to undo the initial political impact.²⁰³

Goudie helped to organize and run these demonstrations in Toronto. His involvement in these anti-war demonstrations was a reflection of the RHQ CIB's continued expansion of its operational objectives. His work emphasized the ongoing international dimension of the struggle. These early anti-war demonstrations also

²⁰³Pelling, The British Communist Party, 29-31; Macfarlane, The British Communist Party, 106-109; Klugmann, History of the Communist Party of Great Britain (vol. 1), 342-346, 366-367.

provided an opportunity to increase the party's profile in the community and hence its membership. For the 1924 demonstrations Goudie reported on the activities of the event's key organizers.²⁰⁴ He also acted as one of the party's spokespersons and was interviewed by a local Globe reporter in this capacity. His comments were subsequently published in an article in which the reporter noted that despite the Mayor's refusal to allow anti-war meetings in the city, Communists were going ahead with plans to demonstrate:

Yesterday, James Goudy, [sic] a secretary of a branch of the Communist Party, addressed a communication to Chief Constable Samuel Dickson, stating that the party proposed to hold an anti-war week, giving the dates and places of the meetings and stating he expected the usual protection would be provided for the meeting in Queen's Park.²⁰⁵

Both the August 1924 and 1925 Toronto anti-war demonstrations proved a huge success.²⁰⁶ Hundreds turned out in both instances and many arrests followed which also increased the publicity surrounding the party's campaign.²⁰⁷ If in the August 1924 demonstrations Goudie was a spokesperson, he was also active in the 1925 demonstrations on the streets assisting speakers.²⁰⁸ In one instance, a detective who did

²⁰⁴ibid. He reported that a 'lengthy bulletin' was being prepared for party branches and 50,000 copies of a party anti-war leaflet were being printed and would soon be ready to go out for national distribution.

²⁰⁵CPC TO 1920s, "Communist Party Persists in Plans," The Globe, 26 July 1924; "Orators On Street Take Up Collection and Police Appear," The Globe, 28 July 1924; "Police Break Up Red Rally, Confiscate \$15 Collected," The Mail & Empire, 28 July 1924; forwarded along with a report, Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 28 July 1924.

²⁰⁶"Police Back Down," The Worker, 9 August 1924, 4; "Anti-Imperialist-War Week Was Successful Concerted Campaign," The Worker, 16 August 1924, 1; also see, "Montreal Anti-War Campaign," The Worker, 16 August 1924, 1.

²⁰⁷"Anti-Imperialist-War Week Was Successful Concerted Campaign," The Worker, 16 August 1924, 1; CPC TO 1920s, report, Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 28 July 1924.

²⁰⁸CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 23 July 1925; CPC TO 1920s, Clipping "Communists Plan Free Speech Week Police Are Active," N.D.

not know that Goudie was an agent reported:

Moriarty and Goudie stood aside and let the Police break the meeting up, and Moriarty decided to hold a meeting on a vacant lot on Dundas Street, facing McMurray Avenue. Goudie got the box and took it over there and a meeting was then held with Moriarty as the speaker and Goudie the Chairman, but no further arrests were made.²⁰⁹

Moriarty and Goudie managed to hold the attention of 200 persons on this occasion and prior to its close it was also reported that as:

questions were called Goudie made an appeal for membership, stating that it was hoped enough members would come forward as they are desirous of forming a branch there. He also appealed for anyone who witnessed the arrests, if they were willing to give evidence on behalf of the accused, to come forward and give their names.²¹⁰

By the middle of the week, Goudie was not only leading demonstrations, but was carrying out a variety of tasks. At one meeting a plainclothes detective reported that:

Goudie was asked to see that the sidewalks were kept clear and that no obstruction took place, but towards the close of the meeting a religious speaker took over the opposite corner and started a meeting. As he could get nobody to listen to him, he came alongside the Communist Meeting and the sidewalk became blocked. Although there were several uniformed policemen and detectives there, they took no notice as Goudie endeavoured to keep the sidewalks clear, by mistake he asked two detectives to move as they were obstructing the sidewalk, and he was told that if he wasn't careful they would arrest him for molesting, so he quit keeping the sidewalks clear.²¹¹

Goudie's involvement in the demonstrations as one of the CP's chief spokespersons enhanced his position within the party.²¹² Before long, he was chairing key meetings, sitting on the highest CP committees, and overseeing A.E. Smith's work.

²⁰⁹ CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Inspector Frere to Commissioner, 3 August 1925.

²¹⁰ CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Inspector Frere to Commissioner, 3 and 5 August 1925.

²¹¹ CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 5 and 7 August 1925.

²¹² CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 20 June 1924; With Goudie inside the party it was also easy for the SS to stay on top of these cases as they worked their way through the courts.

Through the first winter Goudie attended English Branch meetings, Sunday forums (which lasted until April), CCC mass meetings, expanding his contacts at the local and city level.

When Marxist classes resumed in Toronto during these months with Goudie well-established there was little need to send another agent out to attend them.²¹³ Instead, Superintendent Newson, Darling and Fish simply sent Detective Robson, Detective Constable S.M. Roberston and Constable J.E. Smaridge out to handle some of the more mundane investigations which did not require an agent.²¹⁴

Goudie's involvement in local activities saw him climb to the pinnacle of his undercover career during summer of 1925 although he would continue to make his presence felt and remained influential through the following year. By this point he had been elected as the DEC's secretary and had chaired meetings in which as many as 1,500 persons attended. He was stirring up crowds at these events demanding the withdrawal of troops during strikes, denouncing the use of the militia, and introducing party luminaries who followed with similar resolutions.²¹⁵

Immediately following the August 1925 anti-war demonstrations Goudie was elected acting District #3 Secretary filling in for Tom Burpee, who was overseas, until

²¹³"Marxist Course Starts in Toronto," The Worker, 1 November 1924, 2.

²¹⁴RCMP G.O. 4565; "O" Division Nominal Rolls, January- February 1924, Detective Constable Robertson transferred from "A" as of 1-2-24.

Stuart Millar Robertson, b. 1886 left the Force at the rank of constable. He died at Toronto on 23 December 1944. RCMP Quarterly, 11,1 (July 1945), 79, "obituary section".

John Eric Thomas Smaridge, b. 15 May 1899, Newton Abbot, Devonshire, England. He joined the Force on 11 October 1920. He served at Toronto and London until taking his discharge on 10 October 1925. He re-engaged in 4 May 1932 and subsequently served in "A" and "O" Division until his retirement in 1953 at the rank of Sergeant Major. He died on 27 November 1991 at Ottawa. RCMP Quarterly, 57,2 (Spring 1992), 79, "obituary of J.E.T. Smaridge."

²¹⁵CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 22 June 1925.

the CP's Fourth National Convention.²¹⁶ In short order he was also elected to represent the city at an approaching District Convention.²¹⁷ He was also serving in some capacity on the Central Executive Committee (CEC), which gave him access to key intelligence since it was the CP's most powerful body, its inner circle.

In less than eighteen months Goudie had risen to significant party leadership. On the CEC he was seated in the inner chambers of its Leninist central nervous system alongside Tim Buck, who chaired the sessions, and William Moriarty, Amos Hill, Trevor Maguire, Malcolm Bruce, A.E. Smith, John Boychuck and several others. The decisions this inner group made affected the Canadian party from coast to coast and its relationship to the broader international revolutionary movement.²¹⁸

After the fall 1925 of Convention Goudie's standing within the party began to wane and the quality of the intelligence he secured also dropped. His intelligence lost its national perspective and increasingly focused on more regional and local activities. He managed to remain on the CEC as District #3 "representative" for its first post-Convention meeting and had secured a copy of its official minutes.²¹⁹ But when the Toronto CCC met shortly thereafter and decided that they would double as the District Executive Committee's (DEC's) "administrative body" during intervals between full sessions of the DEC, Goudie was not elected to any of its senior positions. This was

²¹⁶CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 17 August 1925.

²¹⁷CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 23 and 24 July 1925.

²¹⁸CPC TO 1920s, For instance, see report, source deleted, and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 15 June 1925; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 23 July 1925. This reads "In addition to these both H.T. Burpee and J.T. Goudie will be at the District Convention from the District Executive, and will also probably attend the National Convention."

²¹⁹CPC TO 1920s, 1925, CEC minutes "First Meeting of the C.E.C. After the Fourth Conv'tn." (N.D. probably September 1925); *ibid.*, "Minutes of CEC," 16 August 1925, W. Moriarty, Acting Secretary, forwarded with, report, Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 26 August 1925.

another sign that he had peaked in the party.

What ultimately caused Goudie's drop within the party is not entirely clear. Tom Burpee had returned for the Fourth Convention and perhaps Goudie was simply shut down by his arrival. A second related development was the Convention election results. Superintendent Newson informed the Commissioner that a group which "Bruce dubs as the 'MacDonald clique,'" which included Spector and Buck emerged more fully in control at this particular juncture in the CP's history. Goudie had been much closer to Bell, Moriarty and this surely influenced his prospects. He had less in common with Spector as did Catt since neither of them were theoreticians.²²⁰ Soon afterward, Bell permanently left Canada in search of work elsewhere. Before long, other concerns interested intelligence personnel. Most important was party reorganization and Goudie turned his attention to this activity. His descent in the party and fall from grace was cushioned at this point as he consolidated his support by returning to work actively in English Branch meetings and at Sunday night 'forums.'²²¹ In the winter he resumed his party responsibilities with vigor. Soon he was chairing smaller meetings and was returned to the CCC serving as area group "O"'s representative.²²²

For the next eighteen months Goudie's CIB work remained focused on counter-subversion investigations. While Goudie never again rose to the highest levels of the party, he experienced some of his greatest successes as an agent in this period. Ever since A.E. Smith and his wife had joined the party back in 1924 Goudie along with

²²⁰CPC TO 1920s, report, Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 28 September 1925.

²²¹CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted, 26 January 1926; *ibid.*, report, source deleted, Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 22 and 23 February 1926; "Toronto Communist Party Open Forum," The Worker, 30 January 1926, 2.

²²²CPC TO 1920s, minutes of meeting (title deleted), signed A.E. Smith, organizer, 25 February 1926; His branch appeared to have peaked during this period with a membership of 12-15, of which, by and large the majority of its members were Bulgarian.

MacDonald and Moriarty had secretly "supervised" Smith's work.²²³ Goudie had been instrumental in monitoring many of Smith's activities and also helped to insure Smith's election to the Presidency of the Ontario Labour Party in 1926 by encouraging Branch delegates to attend the CLP London convention and to vote for Smith.²²⁴

In the winter of 1926 Goudie also assisted Smith in carrying out the CP's reorganization from shop and language groups into branches primarily along geographic lines. This was a massive undertaking, which began in Toronto and was carried out nationally. Goudie used this event and the ensuing organizational debates which were among the most divisive in the party's history until that point to foster dissension among the various factions when he ultimately spoke out against Smith in opposition to the CP leadership's plans at several CCC and mass membership meetings.²²⁵

²²³NAC RG 146 175P/392, A.E. Smith file, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 1 and 2 December 1924.

²²⁴CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 11 March 1926; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 24 March 1926; *ibid.*, report, Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 15 March 1926; NAC RG 146 175P/392, A.E. Smith file, cross-reference sheet, dated 15 April 1926; CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 29 March 1926; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 15 June 1925. Intelligence was cross-indexed from file# 175/6360 the SS specifically generated on the CLP London Ontario Convention and subsequently deposited in Smith's file. CSIS has blocked out Newson's comments on this event which would be most informative.

²²⁵Jack MacDonald, "Our Party At The Turn Of The Year," The Worker, 26 December 1925, 2; "With the Communist Party: Re-Organization in Toronto," The Worker, 23 January 1926, 3; "Toronto Communist Party Open Forum," The Worker, 30 January 1926, 2; "The Communist Party In Action" The Worker, 20 February 1926, 3; CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 21 January 1926; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 26 January 1926; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 18 February 1926; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 22 and 23 February 1926; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 28 February 1926; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 11 March 1926; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 3 March 1926; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 12 April 1926; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 22 March 1926; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 25 March 1926; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 26 March 1926; *ibid.*, report, Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 21 May 1926; *ibid.*, A.E. Smith Report, Minutes of the CCC, 1 June 1926, 3.

In the spring of 1926 Goudie was also nominated by Custance to attend the CLP's Convention. Yet he declined at MacDonald's request in favour of Buck who was expected back in town from a trip to Eastern Canada.²²⁶ In the summer of 1926 Goudie was elected to the City Central's Political Committee where he worked alongside Hill and Custance.²²⁷ His timing in this respect was impeccable. It was only once city reorganization had been completed that he turned his attention elsewhere, in particular, to the Political Committee's activities.²²⁸

In the fall when Scott Nearing, a socialist author and former Professor of Sociology at the University of Pittsburgh, was scheduled to give a convention lecture in Toronto as part of an international tour, Goudie was in charge of the distribution of 2,000 cards advertising the event.²²⁹ The CP's District #3 held its Annual Conference in mid-November at which point the Buck/MacDonald faction further strengthened its control.²³⁰ Although Goudie may have represented the CCC at the District Conference it was clear that his principal allies were no longer a force within the city.²³¹

An intelligence report at the end of November 1926 suggested that party activities were dismal. One of Goudie's final intelligence reports noted that: "Up until

²²⁶CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted, Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 29 and 31 March 1926.

²²⁷CPC TO 1920s, "minutes of City Central Committee meeting, June 1, 1926," signed A.E. Smith, Secretary of CCC.

²²⁸Reorganization remained a contentious issue with stalwarts for years, well after Goudie was gone. Yet its heyday as an issue to stir up factionalism had passed.

²²⁹CPC TO 1920s, "minutes of City Central Committee meeting, September 21, 1926," signed A.E. Smith, Secretary of CCC; Many months later an overture had been made to Nearing for a return visit to give a series of lectures. He declined. See *ibid.*, report, source deleted, Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 15 and 16 May 1927; On Nearing's life see his autobiography, The Making Of A Radical: A Political Autobiography (New York, 1972).

²³⁰CPC TO 1920s, "CPC District Number Three Conference Agenda," 14 November 1926.

²³¹CPC TO 1920s, "The City Central Committee," 2 November 1926.

present time no propaganda meetings have been held by the C.P. of C. on Sundays as in previous years, and it is very doubtful now whether any will be held at all this Winter..."²³² Party activity within the region was at a standstill:

This goes to further add to previous reports that no activity is going on in Toronto at all. No encouragement is being given to present members or to those who might become members.

The only activity at the present time is the Educational Classes in History and Economics. No other classes could be formed owing to lack of interest.²³³

Goudie arrived late to a couple of fall CCC meetings. By early 1927 after three years of undercover work Goudie was withdrawn from counter-subversion operations. But he still remained stationed at "O" Division's RHQ and he worked there as CIB detective for the next two years undertaking many assignments such as race track duty and other unspecified regional investigations.²³⁴ This suggests that Goudie had not tired of detective work although he might have grown tired of his work inside the CP.

A new Pleb's League program was announced just as Goudie exited the party. It provided the ideal opportunity to develop another agent. Yet for reasons unknown it was never pursued. Instead as the key issues changed within the party and as it devoted increasing attention towards launching a "Hands Off China" campaign, the CIB responded by detailing another member of its RHQ staff, former RHQ CIB clerk Constable Rolph, to gather more passive intelligence on this activity.

Intelligence personnel soon recognized the need to get another agent within Toronto CP branches since the limited intelligence they acquired noted that the party was growing and expanding its influence in the city. So in time, even while Goudie was

²³²CPC TO 1920s, source deleted (likely Goudie) and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 26 November 1926. At best the report suggest one good rally might be held one Sunday a month.

²³³CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted (likely Goudie) and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 26 November 1926.

²³⁴"O" Division Nominal Rolls, 1927-1928.

working in Toronto's CIB another agent was developed.²³⁵ Goudie eventually was sent for many months on command throughout the Western Ontario District where he conducted various assignments for the CIB, although not political investigations. On 18 June 1929 he was discharged "Time Expired." His contact with Force personnel was sustained once he left the service, although his subsequent occupation is not known. Many years later he turned up at a Force reunion.

3.3

Phase 3: Special Agent, John Leopold, 1927-1928

The withdrawal of Special Agent Goudie from covert Toronto CP counter-subversion operations by early 1927 marked a turning point for the Division's CIB personnel. By then the RHQ CIB and NHQ were accustomed to having considerable intelligence gathered by a penetration agent at the CP's national headquarters. Fortunate for intelligence personnel for several months little of consequence took place among Toronto revolutionaries.²³⁶

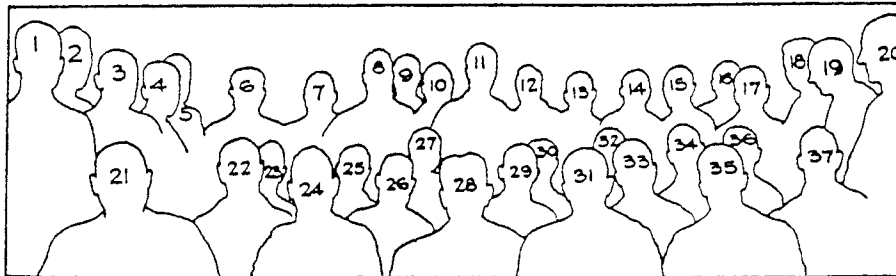
After a general slowdown in activity during the winter of 1927, by the spring both NHQ and the RHQ CIB had begun to reassess their operational needs and to set new objectives in their Toronto counter-subversion program.²³⁷ With Goudie withdrawn "O" Division CIB personnel had sent out Detective M.J. Walsh and Detective Constable

²³⁵Only in November that year was he listed on command (O/C) Western Ontario District CIB. By January 1928 he was returned to Toronto CIB. But from March til May once again he was listed as O/C Western Ontario District then for July and September CSIS has deleted the months' nominal rolls so we can speculate with no certainty what activities preoccupied him. In August he was listed as O/C Race Track Duty and then in October and November O/C CIB.

²³⁶CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 26 November 1926.

²³⁷ibid., report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 2 February 1927.

GUESTS AT THE R.N.W.M.P. VETERANS' ASSOCIATION BANQUET



From left to right: (1) Reg. No. 9877, S/Sgt G. McLewin; (2) Reg. No. 11926, ex-Cst. F. W. Thompson; (3) Reg. No. 11516, D/Sgt F. E. Smith; (4) Reg. No. 4328, ex-Cst. R. L. Hornidge; (5) Insp. S. Bullard; (6) Reg. No. 12001, D/A/Cpl W. Kelly; (7) Reg. No. 8865, ex-Cst. E. J. Quinn; (8) Insp. G. B. McClellan; (9) Supt V. A. M. Kemp; (10) Reg. No. 6151, ex-Cst. E. A. Simmen; (11) Reg. No. 7677 ex-Cst. J. H. Ticehurst; (12) ex-Deputy Commr (Lt-Col) T. Dann; (13) Reg. No. 704, ex-Sgt P. Kerr; (14) Reg. No. 9520, ex-Cpl C. G. Fairman; (15) Reg. No. 3661, ex-Cst. E. H. Jones; (16) Insp. F. W. Schutz; (17) Reg. No. 4673, ex-Cst. T. G. Coventry; (18) Reg. No. 9531, ex-Cst. J. T. Goudie; (19) Reg. No. 10539, ex-Cst. E. McVeity; (20) Reg. No. 5627, ex-Cst. A. C. Armstrong; (21) Reg. No. 5491, ex-Sgt (Lt-Col) C. J. Whebell; (22) Reg. No. 12597, ex-Cst. W. Windsor; (23) Reg. No. 5379, ex-Sgt A. Moss; (24) Reg. No. 10262, ex-Cst. M. Inglis; (25) Reg. No. 2132, ex-Cst. J. W. LeMessurier; (26) Reg. No. 6101, ex-Sgt A. J. Stretton; (27) Reg. No. 3837, ex-Cst. W. Hayward; (28) Reg. No. 5838, ex-Cst. G. J. Purrott; (29) Reg. No. 5067, ex-Cst. B. H. Boulton; (30) Unidentified; (31) Reg. No. 2788, ex-Cst. H. P. E. Francis; (32) Unidentified; (33) Reg. No. 6309, ex-Cst. W. W. Allison; (34) Reg. No. 4499, ex-Cpl Rev. R. J. Shires, M.A., B.D.; (35) Reg. No. 691, ex-Cst. J. Hayes; (36) Reg. No. 5388, ex-Cst. G. S. Dellinger; (37) Reg. No. 1073, ex-Cst. C. E. Helmer.

18 – Ex Secret Agent J.T. Goudie and other notables at a Mountie Veterans' Banquet in 1941.

Source: RCMP Quarterly, 9,3 (January 1942), 317.

Rolph to monitor a few events.²³⁸ Yet Walsh, for reasons unknown, was ultimately withdrawn from conducting investigations into communist activities and fewer than half a dozen low-grade intelligence reports were filled out on Toronto CP activities and deposited on Toronto's core CP file in as many months.²³⁹ Perhaps he was unable to escape his notoriety during the Sault Ste. Marie fiasco years earlier?

After months of inactivity, Commissioner Starnes again realized that "O" Division was providing inadequate coverage of Toronto CP activities.²⁴⁰ He felt that it was time to resurrect Toronto CIB's covert counter-subversion operations. Toward that end, he transferred the Force's star Special Agent Sergeant John Leopold (aka J.W. Esselwein) from Winnipeg to Toronto.²⁴¹

John Leopold's story has been the subject of several scholarly articles and therefore only a brief recapitulation of his early career is necessary. John Leopold (alias

²³⁸ "O" Division Nominal Rolls 1920s; Constable Walsh arrived to "O" Division in May 1920. He subsequently worked during the 1920s at Sault Ste. Marie, Toronto, Bridgeburg, London, Niagara Falls on various assignments such as motorcyclist and taxation guard. He spent the better part of 1925 and 1926 working in "O" Division RHQ's CIB. He was floated on command throughout the Division in the late 1920s, yet as of December 1928 he was listed back in Toronto as a Detective where he remained (with the brief exception of March 1929 when he was listed as On Command CIB Western Ontario) up until his transfer to "N" Division as of 1-7-32.

²³⁹ CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Detective Constable Ralph, 12 and 14 February, 1927; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner Starnes, 2 February 1927; *ibid.*, 23 April 1927; *ibid.*, 22 and 23 April 1927. Nearly all of the intelligence deposited was easily obtained by a plainclothes member sent out to monitor public meetings, most of it concerning the "Hands Off China" Conference, demonstrations, and the CP's preparations for its upcoming Fifth National Convention.

²⁴⁰ *ibid.*, report and memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to OC "O" Division, 19 February 1927; *ibid.*, report, source deleted (undoubtedly Leopold), Winnipeg, 28 April 1927. In fact, it was easy for them to see that Leopold's talents were being wasted elsewhere. Especially when their best intelligence on Toronto CP activities came from Leopold, who was stationed in Winnipeg, not Toronto. Even earlier in February 1927, the Commissioner had turned to Leopold to assist "O" Division which was having trouble filling out a dossier. In April, Leopold had secured minutes from a Toronto CEC meeting which were also sent from "D" Division RHQ to NHQ to "O" Division RHQ.

²⁴¹ Steve Hewitt, "Royal Canadian Mounted Spy: The Secret Life of John Leopold/ Jack Esselwein," *Intelligence and National Security* 15, 1 (2000), 144-167; Andrew Parnaby and Gregory S. Kealey, "How the "Reds" Got Their Man: The Communist Party Unmasks an RCMP Spy," *Labour/ Le Travail* 40 (1997), 253-67.

Johan Leopold) was born in 1890 near Rudolfstadt, in the Ukraine, to Jewish parents.²⁴² He had emigrated to Canada in 1912, settling as a homesteader near Topland, Alberta. He applied for engagement in the Force at Regina in September 1918 and his language skills which were in great demand in the Force's counter-subversion work (he spoke fluent English, German, Czech, and imperfect Polish and Ukrainian) secured him a position.²⁴³

Leopold soon found himself engaged in plainclothes duty. By February 1919, he was used "to keep in touch" with radicals in the Regina District where he quickly developed a knack for spying and was soon performing the duties of a Secret Agent, rather than a detective. By September 1920, he was known to Regina's radical organizations as J.W. Esselwein.²⁴⁴ He had infiltrated the OBU and as the OBU's fortunes declined joined the wave of progressives who swung over in favour of the Third International. His handlers instructed him to try to secure a position as a WPC party

²⁴²RCMP Personnel File - John Leopold, "Questionnaire Setting Forth Qualifications In Profession or Trade," 25 November 1968; He had a college education, was a graduate of College of Agriculture and Forestry in Bohemia. He had worked as an Assistant Administrator on a large estate and for a period as an Instructor in Economics at the College of Agriculture in Bohemia.

²⁴³RCMP Personnel File - John Leopold, "Royal North-West Mounted Police," reference sheet. Vol. 'Historical Carding' sheet, 16 August 1984; *ibid.*, "Form 59 A" 26 September 1918; Frank Zaneth entered the Force because of similar skills, Gregory S. Kealey "Introduction," Gregory S. Kealey and Reg Whitaker [eds.] RCMP Security Bulletins: The Depression Years, Part I, 1933-34 (St. John's, 1993), 8-18; also his, "The Surveillance State," 205; which has a list of 25 agents who operated in 1919-1920, many of them whose names suggest "exotic" backgrounds; as well see, Gregory S. Kealey, "Spymasters, Spies, and their Subjects: The RCMP and Canadian State Repression," in Gary Kinsman, Dieter K. Buse, and Mercedes Steedman [eds.] Whose National Security?: Canadian State Surveillance and The Creation of Enemies (Toronto, 2000), 18-36; footnote 17; Kealey has also estimated that 50 per cent of early spies were European immigrants with "special language skills." On Zaneth see, James Dubro and Robin Rowland, Undercover: Cases of the RCMP's Most Secret Operative (Markham, 1991), 25; When Zaneth was paraded before Commissioner Perry following basic training, he learned that "he was the first man specially recruited for the new Royal North-West Mounted Police 'Secret Service.'"

²⁴⁴RCMP Personnel File - John Leopold, G.T. Hann, Departmental Secretary, "Synopsis of the service of Reg. No. 7495 Sergeant John Leopold," 12 April 1937; RCMP GO 128; noted that Constable Leopold was appointed a Detective and granted \$1.00 per diem extra pay from 1-3-20.

organizer.²⁴⁵ Shortly thereafter he became a WPC district secretary and a member of its secret underground organization known as the “Z” party. From that point forward he attended all the party’s 1920s national conventions until 1928.²⁴⁶

Leopold also became active in the Regina Trades and Labour Council and eventually he was elected its Secretary.²⁴⁷ On two occasions in the 1920s, Leopold’s mishandling by others nearly resulted in his being exposed. The first instance occurred at the TLC’s annual convention in Vancouver 1923. Secret and confidential information Regina TLC Secretary Leopold had been privy to concerning fellow Regina delegate Bruce planning to attend the convention had been compromised and leaked and put to misuse in Vancouver. Later on, in a second instance, Leopold fell under suspicion because he was flush with money, and although unemployed was found by comrades to be travelling a lot which peaked their interest.²⁴⁸

Leopold performed effectively, although in several instances Commissioner Starnes forwarded a memorandum to his DOC encouraging more work from their agent. Starnes would begin by informing his DOC (Leopold’s chief handler) that it had been “some time” since he had last heard from his agent, and his previous report had been a particularly “good one.” When could he expect the next one? Starnes would remind his

²⁴⁵Parnaby and Kealey, “How the ‘Reds’ Got Their Man,” 255; also cited in Kealey, “Spymasters, Spies, and their Subjects,”; RCMP Personnel File - John Leopold, report, Detective Sergeant Salt to OC Southern Saskatchewan, 2 July 1921; A search of the One Big Union Bulletin (OBUB) between 1919 and early 1922 has uncovered neither agent being mentioned.

²⁴⁶Rodney, Soldiers of the International, 44-47; Parnaby and Kealey, “How the ‘Reds’ Got Their Man,” 255; I searched The Worker during the early 1920s and Esselwein does not appear in any articles emanating from Regina or elsewhere. He worked silently in that centre.

²⁴⁷ibid., report, Detective Sergeant Kempston, Superintendent Lindsay and Assistant Commissioner Knight to Commissioner, 18 and 21 March 1927.

²⁴⁸The first near exposure took place in late 1923; see ibid., report, Special Agent Leopold to CO Southern Saskatchewan District, 1 November 1923; ibid., “Telegram,” Superintendent Allard to Commissioner, 1 November 1923; ibid., 2 November 1923; ibid., 5 November 1923; ibid., memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to Superintendent Allard, 5 November 1923; ibid., 6 November 1923.

DOC, that Leopold should be gently nudged to produce something and whenever Leopold seemed to fall off the path he was never to be dealt with firmly because he was so “valuable” as an agent. Part of the problem was Leopold’s own habits. He was difficult to control. At times he drank heavily and his handlers often complained of his tendency to act independently.²⁴⁹

A general decline in revolutionary activities in Regina and a desire to step up their control over their agent earned Leopold a transfer to Winnipeg in the fall of 1926.²⁵⁰ In Winnipeg, Leopold was instructed to get inside the CP to check out developments in that city. His DOC soon reported that he performed effectively, but at the same time raised serious concerns about his failure to report back.²⁵¹

A third issue in understanding Leopold’s trajectory by the time he arrived in Toronto was an operational matter. In Regina Leopold had been provided a safe house to store his materials such as intelligence reports. The safe house was a room located in his handler Staff Sergeant Mercer’s (a future “O” Division OC) home. The room was rented by the Force for the agent’s use. This practice had met with both Leopold’s DOC’s and Commissioner Perry’s approval and was a common feature of early investigative work. For instance, in Calgary during the 1919 General Strikes, J.W. Spalding rented rooms so that both he and other handlers could meet with agents to

²⁴⁹ibid., memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to Assistant Commissioner Knight, 18 October 1926; ibid., memorandum, Assistant Commissioner Knight to Commissioner Starnes, 8 December 1926.

²⁵⁰RCMP Personnel File – John Leopold, memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to Assistant Commissioner Knight, Regina, Saskatchewan, 31 August 1926; ibid., report, source deleted (Leopold), Detective Sergeant Salt and Superintendent Allard to Commissioner Starnes, 17 and 19 July 1921; ibid., report, Assistant Commissioner Knight to Commissioner Starnes, 9 September 1926.

²⁵¹ibid., report, Inspector Dann, OC “D” Division, to Commissioner Starnes, 12 October 1926; ibid., report, Inspector Dann to Commissioner Starnes, 29 November 1926; ibid., memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to Inspector Dann, 4 December 1926; ibid., Commissioner Starnes to Assistant Commissioner Knight, 4 December 1926.

discuss matters. So did other personnel.²⁵² When he moved to Winnipeg, Leopold kept up this arrangement since he traveled periodically back to Regina on business. He also wanted a similar safe-house arrangement made in Winnipeg which resulted in an inquiry into the practice. Unlike Perry, Starnes was unfamiliar with this practice. He acted hastily and ordered the arrangement stopped which set a new precedent.²⁵³ Henceforth only under exceptional circumstances would a room be rented to meet and to store files for an agent. Instead an agent was instructed to keep files hidden at his own residence, and drop offs would be made once reports were prepared.²⁵⁴

It was during this investigation that Starnes also reconsidered his allocation of human intelligence resources. Clearly, to operate effectively intelligence had to be collected from Toronto since it was the CP's national headquarters. Yet "O" Division's RHQ CIB was in a dismal state in the winter of 1927. Starnes concluded that Leopold would better serve the Force's intelligence operations by being transferred to Toronto. Starnes felt that the general slowdown in radicalism in Western Canada during the mid-1920s could be adequately handled by regular personnel who would be sent out to conduct more passive investigations. DOCs at both Regina and Winnipeg were informed of Commissioner Starnes' decision and Leopold's own reluctance to relocate was

²⁵²Dubro and Rowland, Undercover, 56-57.

²⁵³RCMP Personnel File – John Leopold, memorandum, Special Agent John Leopold, Sergeant Mercer, Superintendent Lindsay and Assistant Commissioner Knight to Commissioner Starnes, 7 and 8 March 1927; ibid., memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to OC Regina, 12 March 1927; ibid., memorandum, Detective Staff Sergeant Mercer to OC Regina, 18 March 1927; ibid., report, Detective Sergeant Dempster, Superintendent Lindsay, Assistant Commissioner Knight to Commissioner, 18 and 21 March 1927; ibid., memorandum, Assistant Commissioner Worsley to Superintendent Knight, 14 March 1927; ibid., Assistant Commissioner Knight to Commissioner Starnes, 21 March 1927; ibid., memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to Assistant Commissioner Knight, 25 March 1927; ibid., report, Special Agent John Leopold, Assistant Commissioner Knight to Commissioner Starnes, 28 March 1927.

²⁵⁴The Force, never able to distinguish between Leopold's practice when he was based in Regina versus when he had relocated to Winnipeg, had made a hasty decision. Ultimately, the Force's penuriousness and its unwillingness to listen to its field officers, its handler, and its agent, at least in Leopold's case, would come back to haunt them.

overruled.²⁵⁵ In early May Leopold was on his way to Toronto.²⁵⁶ His transfer was an example of the RCMP repositioning an agent to meet national objectives.

On his way to Toronto, Leopold made a stopover in Ottawa to be briefed by Starnes. At Ottawa, they discussed both his next assignment and several operational matters, including his undercover status. Starnes informed Leopold that his first Toronto assignment was essentially to pick up where Goudie had left off months earlier and “to prepare an appropriation of the situation in Eastern Canada (including the effect of the reorganization upon the Communist Party) as he finds it on arrival...” He was also to provide a similar analysis “of the situation in Saskatchewan and Manitoba on his departure from there.”²⁵⁷ Other issues discussed in Ottawa included: Leopold’s concerns that he had fallen under suspicion once again (apparently some comrades again doubted his cover because of all his traveling and lack of employment); the idea of the agent travelling to Montreal occasionally to investigate revolutionary activities in that centre and; the need for a secure place – a safe house – where he could write his reports.²⁵⁸ These issues were subsequently made known to Newson by Starnes in a secret

²⁵⁵ibid., report, Assistant Commissioner Knight to Commissioner Starnes, 29 March 1927; ibid., report, Superintendent Lindsay, Commanding Officer Southern Saskatchewan District to Commissioner Starnes, 4 April 1927; ibid., memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to Assistant Commissioner Knight, 6 April 1927; ibid., report, Assistant Commissioner Knight to Commissioner Starnes, 11 April 1927; ibid., report, Inspector T. Dann, CO “D” Division to Commissioner Starnes, 2 May 1927.

²⁵⁶ibid., report, Superintendent Lindsay, CO Southern Saskatchewan District to Commissioner Starnes, 9 May 1927.

²⁵⁷RCMP Personnel File - John Leopold, memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to Superintendent Newson, 10 May 1927.

²⁵⁸Intelligence would later reveal that a party stalwart had gone to California and while there had come into receipt of some information with respect to Leopold.

memorandum. But they were never satisfactorily addressed.²⁵⁹

Commissioner Starnes and Assistant Commissioner Worsley both wanted Newson to keep a tight reign on their agent.²⁶⁰ Montreal too was notified of the agent's Toronto transfer.²⁶¹ From the outset Newson followed Starnes' instructions in this respect. He turned down Leopold's request to travel to Montreal until the CP's 5th National Convention was held because intelligence personnel were counting on Leopold's coverage of the event.²⁶² They did not provide Leopold with a proper safe house to store his files. Instead he kept them under lock and key in a trunk at his apartment along with his Mountie uniform. Nor did they have Leopold reporting to just one handler who should have been Superintendent Newson. Instead Leopold sometimes met with Constable Rolph, other times with Inspector T.H. Irvine, while on other occasions he met with Newson. This sort of chaotic handling arrangement was a breach of the RCMP's own internal protocol. "O" Division's own RHQ undercover personnel were to meet with the Division's OC. For whatever reason or reasons (perhaps to try to tighten up their control over the agent?), this guideline was not being followed in Leopold's handling. When Leopold missed a couple of meetings with Constable Rolph or informed him that he was busy working his way inside the party, intelligence

²⁵⁹RCMP Personnel File - John Leopold, memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to Superintendent Newson, 10 May 1927.

²⁶⁰ibid.; RCMP Personnel File - John Leopold, memorandum, Assistant Commissioner Worsley (NHQ) to "O" Division's DOC, 7 June 1927.

²⁶¹ibid., and reply, Superintendent Newson to Commissioner Starnes, 13 May 1927.

²⁶²RCMP Personnel File - John Leopold, report, Superintendent Newson to Commissioner Starnes, 2 June 1927; "Fifth National Convention Communist Party of Canada," The Worker, 9 July 1927, 1,4.

personnel panicked.²⁶³ NHQ demonstrated restraint and instructed Newson to sit tight and to judge Leopold on the quality of the reports he secured.²⁶⁴

Leopold made the transition to Toronto without any major mishaps proving his continued worth as an agent. He and a second agent from Montreal (whose identity is not known but who was being handled by Montreal Detective Corporal A.W. Appleby) both attended the CP's Fifth National Convention.²⁶⁵ Leopold secured a copy of Buck's Trade Union Report and Starnes wanted additional copies so after discussing the matter with Leopold, his handler Irvine promised Starnes that more would be forwarded to NHQ as soon as they were received.²⁶⁶ In forwarding Buck's trade union report to NHQ Leopold also whet his handlers' appetite for more intelligence by informing them that "the [full] report of the recent convention [expected soon] will be the most comprehensive report ever issued (covering approximately 90 mimeographed pages) and will be similar (in composition) to my report of the 1924 convention."²⁶⁷ MacDonald and Moriarty had been working on the report for weeks and Leopold expected that they would have it completed in about ten days.

Eventually Leopold secured a copy of the final convention report. His copy was shared with the Department of Labour's Deputy Minister H.H. Ward on the condition

²⁶³RCMP Personnel File - John Leopold, memorandum, Superintendent Newson to Assistant Commissioner Worsley, 23 June 1927.

²⁶⁴CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner Starnes, 2 February 1927; *ibid.*, 22 and 23 April 1927; *ibid.*, 6 June 1927; RCMP Personnel File - John Leopold, memorandum, Assistant Commissioner Worsley to Superintendent Newson, 26 June 1927.

²⁶⁵CPC TO 1920s, supplementary file on the 1927 Convention, report, Superintendent Newson to Commissioner Starnes, 22 June 1927; Convention activities were highlighted in the Toronto Daily Star, copies of which Newson forwarded to NHQ.

²⁶⁶*ibid.*

²⁶⁷*ibid.*, report, No. 30 and Inspector T.H. Irvine for Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 14 and 15 July 1927.

that it was returned to Starnes after review. Ward found the material so instructive that he sought permission to publish a substantial portion of it in an upcoming Labour Gazette. Yet for Starnes, the first consideration was the possible repercussions this action might have on his network of agents and informants. The last thing Starnes wanted was a channel closed, an agent exposed by another Department, especially when the Force already felt that federal government departments and politicians were notoriously sloppy, already too careless with their handling of intelligence provided them.²⁶⁸ Leopold was consulted on the matter.²⁶⁹ He felt that once the conference report was mailed to stalwarts there was no problem with the Department of Labour putting them to use since the party had no way of tracking reports and furthermore the post office would ultimately be blamed.²⁷⁰

After the Fifth National Convention there was a noticeable drop in the volume of intelligence deposited on "O" Division's core Toronto CP file. Leopold attended several sessions of the YCL's 4th National Convention held in the city in June but delayed submitting reports on the event. Through July he hardly contributed anything to "O" Division's core Toronto CP file. That month he filed two reports which dealt with students planning to attend Finnish summer camps in Northern Ontario and British

²⁶⁸ibid., report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner Starnes, 21 July 1927; ibid., memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to H.H. Ward, Deputy Minister, Department of Labour, 30 July 1927; ibid., reply, H.H. Ward to Commissioner Starnes, 2 August 1927.

²⁶⁹ibid., memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to Superintendent Newson, 30 July 1927.

²⁷⁰ibid., report, Superintendent Newson to Commissioner Starnes, 19 August 1927; ibid., report, Superintendent Newson to Commissioner Starnes, 15 September 1927; ibid., memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to H.H. Ward, Deputy Minister, Department of Labour, 19 September 1927; ibid., reply, 20 September 1927; In forwarding a copy, Commissioner Starnes made a suggestion as to how the document might be put to use: "It had occurred to me that it may not be amiss to publish some portions of it, as it exhibits these people as regretting the absence of distress among the working population."

Columbia.²⁷¹ In mid-July Starnes wrote "O" Division's OC a curt secret memorandum noting the drop in intelligence being gathered and he added: "So far I have received no report upon the convention of the Young Communist League. When may I expect it?"²⁷² Leopold informed NHQ that the YCL's executive were still working on a final report and he promised to forward a "comprehensive" account of this event along with a copy of the final proceedings once the YCL executive made it available. Leopold also informed NHQ that he had not generated a report earlier since he did not have access to the YCL's resolutions.²⁷³

Toward the end of the month a full report was forwarded to Newson along with a copy of the YCL's 4th National Convention final report.²⁷⁴ What use Starnes made of this intelligence remains unclear, although previous YCL convention reports had been sent to other DOCs.²⁷⁵ As well, since the YCL often passed resolutions condemning the Boy Scouts which it considered part of a larger militaristic culture that outlasted the war and dominated young boys lives, sometimes intelligence was also shared with officials from the Boy Scouts organization.²⁷⁶ In 1925 Starnes passed the Boy Scouts' national executive intelligence on the YCL in the hope that steps could be taken to undercut the work of the CP's Young Pioneers. In forwarding that report, he had cautioned:

²⁷¹*ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner Starnes, 22 and 31 July 1927; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner Starnes, 30 July and 2 August 1927

²⁷²*ibid.*, secret memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to OC "O" Division, 11 July 1927.

²⁷³*ibid.*, report, No. 30 and Inspector T.H. Irvine for Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 14 and 15 July 1927.

²⁷⁴*ibid.*, report, Superintendent Newson to Commissioner Starnes, 25 July 1927.

²⁷⁵*ibid.*, secret memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to OC "K" Division, Lethbridge, 16 October 1925.

²⁷⁶On youth and militarism see, Mark Moss, Manliess and Militarism: Educating Young Boys in Ontario for War (Oxford, 2001).

You will observe that I have quoted from the League's own confidential report. It is important that they do not know that I possess this, and accordingly I must ask you to be extremely discreet in any counter-measures you may take in consequence of this information. I must ask you, for example, not to quote me as authority, and to betray no familiarity with the actual phraseology of these reports and plans.²⁷⁷

Before long, the defense of Sacco and Vanzetti, two American anarchists whose lives were threatened with execution after seven years of imprisonment in Massachusetts, captured the party's attention as it did progressives throughout the world.²⁷⁸ Leopold's coverage of local communist activities had improved by this point. He reported that protest meetings were arranged for 6 August across Canada to condemn Massachusetts Governor Fuller's planned execution of the men, and that a follow up demonstration was to be held in front of the American Consulate on 9 August.²⁷⁹ In forwarding these reports to NHQ Newson promised to keep Ottawa "in touch with this matter."²⁸⁰

Both Toronto Sacco and Vanzetti demonstrations were held as scheduled. The first at Queen's Park drew more than 2,500 people. The composition of the crowd was identified as were the main speakers and the comments they made during speeches given which was standard practice for covering an event of this kind. A city police presence

²⁷⁷CPC TO 1920s, personal and confidential letter, Commissioner Starnes to Assistant Chief Commissioner, Boy Scouts Association, 16 October 1925.

²⁷⁸This issue gained momentum during the spring and summer. At the CLP Ontario Section's convention it had caused a major row when two reactionaries refused to sign a petition condemning Massachusetts governor Fuller. See, "Ontario Labour Party In Annual Convention," The Worker, 30 April 1927, 1-5; On Sacco and Vanzetti see Paul Avrich, Sacco and Vanzetti: The Anarchist Background (Princeton, 1991).

²⁷⁹ibid., report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner Starnes, 25 and 26 July 1927; ibid., report, source deleted, 4 August 1927; "Sacco and Vanzetti," The Worker, 23 April 1927, 4; "Get Into Fight to Release Sacco and Vanzetti," The Worker, 30 April 1927, 1; "Capitalism Murders Sacco and Vanzetti," The Worker, 3 September 1927, 1.

²⁸⁰CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner Starnes, 7 and 8 August 1927.

was also noted as was “the ease” with which they had dispersed the “orderly crowd.”²⁸¹ The second demonstration took place as scheduled the following week in front of the American Consulate. It resulted in the arrest of five activists including Leopold.²⁸²

Given what we know of Goudie’s earlier participation in Toronto anti-war demonstrations, it is not the least bit surprising that Leopold was involved in similar activities. In fact, an agent’s arrest at some point in Toronto operations was all but inevitable. The five accused were taken to Court Street Station and charged with vagrancy. They were released on bail, bond being set at \$25 each, which was furnished by party activist James Blugerman. The following morning the five appeared before Magistrate Browne. They were defended by labour lawyer J. L. Cohen, and each entered a plea of ‘not guilty,’ but were convicted and fined \$50 each and costs or sentenced to 30 days imprisonment. Since the fines were not paid immediately, Darling added, they were taken to the Don Jail. Later on that day the Canadian Labour Defense League (CLDL) raised the money and the five were released pending an appeal.²⁸³

With his arrest Leopold was under heat from intelligence personnel. No doubt, fearing possible repercussions, they asked Leopold to account for his actions. In a lengthy report, days afterwards, Leopold provided them with his analysis. He reflected upon the event and explained the circumstances surrounding the demonstration. He made it “abundantly clear” in his report (which was only a half truth) that the demonstration was “spontaneous,” not planned in advance in any detail. It was largely the result of “an eleventh hour decision arrived at the Communist Party Headquarters...”

²⁸¹CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner Starnes, 7 and 8 August 1927.

²⁸²Betcherman, The Little Band, 69, 167, 187; Rodney, Soldiers of the International, 138.

²⁸³CPC TO 1920s, report, Inspector Darling to DOC “O” Division and Commissioner, 11 August 1927.

in which he had not been involved. In fact, he had only shown up at Toronto party offices shortly before it unfolded.²⁸⁴ Within ten minutes of his arrival at party headquarters, Leopold informed senior intelligence personnel, he had been selected as a “banner carrier” and there was little he could do.²⁸⁵ Soon they were at the Consulate, a deputation led by MacDonald interviewed senior consul officials and presented them with a petition. Since there was no press coverage afterwards, MacDonald had gone over to the Toronto Star offices to provide a full account of the event. It was while MacDonald was there that the arrests on the street had taken place.²⁸⁶

During the period between the initial arrests, the appeal, and the judge’s final sentencing, Division personnel kept tabs on similar meetings held throughout Southern Ontario. Once again the CIB’s intelligence network was expanded as circumstances required. Detachments forwarded reports to NHQ along with clippings of protest meetings held across the country.²⁸⁷ On 8 September Leopold’s case was dismissed and the Force escaped the episode unscathed.²⁸⁸ This event only put a temporary brake on

²⁸⁴CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted, Inspector Irvine for Superintendent Newson to Commissioner Starnes, 12 and 13 August 1927; He arrived there with Trevor Maguire. It was not even all that surprising that Leopold had befriended Maguire. Maguire had become one of the more prolific of the party stalwarts during the previous winter and spring and had penned a regular column in The Worker. In other words, he was a particularly good source for intelligence purposes.

²⁸⁵Labour Organization in Canada, 1927, 24; As the Labour Gazette account later reported, the banners read “Stop the Hand of the Capitalist Murders.”

²⁸⁶CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted, Inspector Irvine for Superintendent Newson to Commissioner Starnes, 12 and 13 August 1927

²⁸⁷CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner Starnes, 24 and 26 August 1927; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner Starnes, 30 and 31 August 1927.

²⁸⁸CPC TO 1920s, report, Superintendent Newson to Commissioner Starnes, 2 September 1927; Blugerman, had already earned a PHF PHF #1856 at Crowland Lake for earlier labour activities: see “Jim Blugermann” [sic] in Kealey and Whitaker [eds.], The Early Years, 422.; CPC TO 1920s, “Toronto Disturbers Pay Fines of \$50.00: Paraded in Front of United States Consulate,” Ottawa Journal, 12 August 1927.

copy of the report if possible.²⁹²

Leopold's coverage of communist activities continued through early 1928 with reports on the January Hart House debate over the "pro's and con's" of communism, and the YCL's celebrations in commemoration of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht.²⁹³ In February, he provided NHQ with intelligence on the CP's annual Lenin Memorial Meeting in Toronto, as well as the the Party's Sixth Anniversary Toronto Celebration, and a report from an enlarged CPC Executive Committee meeting.

Leopold was no slouch. In fact during his previous ten months of undercover activity in Toronto, Leopold was able to secure intelligence of national significance. He was most active in the work of the YCL and the CP's National Executive. But he never shied away from participating in many other local party functions. Leopold was successful in obtaining almost any intelligence that Starnes and other personnel formally requested of him in secret and confidential memorandums. He was truly a great salesman. He effectively promoted his own worth as an agent by repeatedly emphasizing the quality of the intelligence he secured which cut him some slack when he meandered and failed to report.

The major industrial activity that received coverage during this period in the Division was the General Motors Strike in Oshawa. Commissioner Starnes and other senior Force personnel were in constant contact with Deputy Minister of Labour H.H. Ward during the dispute. Leopold made a significant contribution in the CIB's

²⁹²CPC TO 1920s, report, No. 30 and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 19 December 1927.

²⁹³CPC TO 1920s, "Red Flag Seen At Hart House," Toronto Daily Star, 17 January 1928; report, source deleted and Inspector G.F. Fletcher, 28 January 1928; "Hart House Debaters Oppose Communism," The Mail & Empire, 19 January 1928; "Votes of Students Against Communism," The Globe, 19 January 1928; report, Inspector G.F. Fletcher, 19 January 1928; "Red Doctrine Voted Down By Students," The Evening Telegram, 19 January 1928; ibid., report, source deleted and Inspector G.F. Fletcher for Superintendent Newson to Commissioner Starnes, 21 January 1928; ibid., report, source deleted and Inspector G.F. Fletcher for Superintendent Newson to Commissioner Starnes, 24 and 27 January 1928.

monitoring of these activities by generating reports that had detailed the travel of stalwarts between Toronto and Oshawa.²⁹⁴

Leopold's success lay in the fact that he had befriended many national figures in the party. Through years of cultivating alliances and through his work he had earned the respect of many colleagues. Since his Toronto transfer he had spent many weekends during the winter months visiting the Buck and MacDonald homes. Right up until May during the winter slowdown in party activity he managed to secure considerable intelligence.²⁹⁵ No wonder it was a shock to him when in mid-May the CEC sent him the infamous letter informing him of his expulsion and the steps they were taking to notify the labour movement at large of his position as a spy.²⁹⁶

It was subsequently revealed, but not until 1931, that although Leopold had drawn suspicion for some time, his downfall was the result of his intelligence reports, papers and other memorandum that had been kept at his home in a trunk. The documents were discovered by an Austrian acquaintance of his whom he had put up from time to

²⁹⁴CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner Starnes, 28 February 1928; *ibid.*, memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to H.H. Ward, 30 March 1928; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner Starnes, 29 and 30 March 1928; *ibid.*, memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to H.H. Ward, 31 March 1928; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner Starnes, 30 March and 2 April 1928; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner Starnes, 4 and 5 April 1928; *ibid.*, memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to H.H. Ward and reply 10 and 11 April 1928.

²⁹⁵CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted, and Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner Starnes, 13 May 1928.

²⁹⁶S.W. Horrall, "Canada's Security Service A Brief History," *RCMP Quarterly* 50, 3 (1985), 38-49. The letter dated 15 May read as follows:

"This is to inform you that the C.E.C. at a recent meeting decided to expel you from the Party. You are aware that there have been suspicions against you for some time, but we were not in possession of any evidence to substantiate same. We now have incontrovertible evidence that you are and have been for some considerable time in the employ of a certain department of the Government. We are notifying your group secretary and the general membership and also through the columns of the Worker the labor movement at large."

time when he visited Toronto. A Toronto Star reporter, Frederick Griffin, brought these revelations to light in a piece written in February 1931 following an interview with Jack MacDonald, who had long since left the party.²⁹⁷

From an intelligence perspective the overriding lesson here was quite simple. The Force had repeatedly failed to listen to their star undercover sleuth in several instances. They never provided him with a proper storage place for his intelligence reports and Mountie regalia in Winnipeg nor in Toronto despite his pleas. For the most part senior intelligence personnel were more concerned with the quality and frequency of the intelligence that their star Mountie acquired and ultimately they spent far too much time trying to rein in and control their agent. Leopold's career in the 1920s was truly an example on the one hand of the parsimonious nature of the early organization. It was also a clear instance of the paramilitary nature of the Force interfering with its security and intelligence work. Leopold operated without the full backing of his DOC and the Commissioner and that probably more than anything else led to his exposure.²⁹⁸

What lessons can be drawn from this narrative of the 1920s? "O" Division's 1920s counter-subversion operations conducted against key branches of the communist movement occurred in a series of waves. By the end of 1921 reliance upon private detective firms' operatives in key branches of the Toronto communist movement was largely abandoned in favour of the Force's own personnel who were sent in to operate undercover. In the higher stages of capitalist development as class conflict became more pronounced further rationalization occurred in industrial relations. While regulating workers' collective aspirations in the legal arena saw something of a return to industrial

²⁹⁷RCMP Personnel File – John Leopold, report, Sergeant John Leopold to Commissioner MacBrien, 15 November 1931; also see, Frederick Griffin, "Leopold Was Betrayed by Man he Befriended," Toronto Daily Star, 13 November 1931; Parnaby and Kealey, "How the 'Reds' Got Their Man," Labour/ Le Travail 40 (1997), 253-267.

²⁹⁸Hewitt, "Royal Canadian Mounted Spy," 149.

voluntarism that had been suspended during the war, this shift happened in a larger arena of a significantly transformed field of government involvement in industrial relations. Against the backdrop of a “return to voluntarism” the potential need to resort to more coercive instruments when this kind of conciliation failed resulted in an extension by government of new powers through the rationalization of a national policing apparatus with an anti-labour agenda and particularly the socialization of domestic intelligence operations.

Henceforth, during much of the 1920s the RHQ CIB relied heavily upon the work of a single penetration agent placed inside the CP’s key Toronto branches as its primary intelligence source. The agent’s work was supplemented by detectives, plainclothes constables and other operatives sent out to conduct piecemeal investigations as the need required. The key Toronto agent was probably also joined by other agents in the Division who operated undercover in other umbrella organizations, although this is largely speculative and something that requires further investigation and lies outside the scope of this study.²⁹⁹

Each of the Division’s major 1920s RHQ counter-subversion operations in Toronto began with the simple recognition that for a variety of reasons there was a need to get inside the revolutionary movement in a more thorough manner. As the 1920s progressed, more often NHQ prodded the Division’s CO to undertake this kind of activity. From small beginnings, with an overriding dependence on private detective firms agents and operatives, the Division’s senior intelligence personnel made adjustments and established the type of operation, which given their limited resources, they felt was the best solution to keep tabs on communist activities. The preferred method of entering the movement was through fluid associations such as educational

²⁹⁹I did not use the ethnic files for Toronto.

classes and public forums which for various reasons provided the Force with an opportunity to avoid the issue of backstopping. Once inside the party an agent's success was measured largely by the intelligence they were able to secure as well as their ability to rise up through the organization. So both in terms of budgets and at the micro level in many respects intelligence organizations and the networks they established were intimately tied into capitalist markets which helped to account for their successes.

While Division personnel such as Herbert Darling became more experienced as the 1920s unfolded and was better apprised of local developments NHQ's increased awareness of national and international developments ensured that penetration work was continued, albeit with a series of prolonged interruptions when agents were withdrawn from undercover work or exposed. Although the CP became larger and more experienced as the 1920s unfolded, it was unable to stop the Force from successfully infiltrating its party. The Division's first penetration operation inside the revolutionary movement in Toronto was tested during the spring of 1921, but not followed through until the fall of that year. It lasted until late 1922 or early 1923. The second operation commenced in early 1924; it was concluded by early 1927 and the third began in May 1927 and it lasted for a year. Although the hurdles and challenges each agent faced were unique, on balance they performed remarkably well given the fact that they lacked training and much of their work was learned on the job. When they were successful agents provided both RHQ and NHQ intelligence personnel with information about the CP's ongoing operations and future plans, perhaps even in a "timely" and "usable" manner. Chapter four turns to examine the consequences of 1920s penetration operations and the exposure of Leopold and its impact in the next period of the Division's intelligence history.

Chapter IV
“O” Division’s Intelligence Interlude:
Success and Failure in an Age of OSINT,
1928-1931

In May 1928 “O” Division’s CIB entered a new period in its inter-war operational history. The uncovering of John Leopold had enormous consequences not only for the agent’s career, but for the Division’s intelligence operations too. For the next few years Toronto CIB personnel were unable to develop another penetration agent in any sustained capacity and their primary form of gathering intelligence on local CP activities therefore came from passive means. We know very little about this period in Canada’s intelligence past, even less about the Division’s history. Who was involved in this work? What preliminary results did this operational change produce in 1929 and 1930? Why by 1931 had intelligence personnel divided over its utility? Had its shortcomings become readily apparent? Where did it leave both NHQ and “O” Division by the end of that year? In answering these questions, and analyzing the successes and failures of “O” Division RHQ counter-subversion operations, we must turn first to changes in the Force and the objective conditions in which it existed.

4.1

The Changeover, 1928

In 1928 the RCMP reentered into a contract policing arrangement with the Saskatchewan government. The absorption of the Saskatchewan Provincial Police (SPP) and the RCMP’s assumption of provincial duties took affect on 1 June.¹ In anticipation of these responsibilities, transfers between divisions were arranged during the winter and spring

¹Fetherstonhaugh, The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, 214; RCMP, Annual Report, 1928, 7-9; R.C. Macleod, “The RCMP and the Evolution of Provincial Policing,” in his and David Scheiderman’s, Police Powers in Canada: The Evolution and Practice of Authority (Toronto, 1994), 44-56; Rivett-Carnac, Pursuit in the Wilderness, 177.

months. In May, Superintendent Newson prepared to leave "O" Division after five years as its DOC.² His Toronto successor, Superintendent George Leslie Jennings, arrived in the city early that month.³

Jennings' appointment as DOC ultimately strengthened "O" Division in many respects.⁴ He was originally from Toronto. He had strong establishment ties and he brought vast administrative experience to the position. Much earlier in his career he had served as officer in charge of Regina CIB, during the War he had commanded the RNWMP CEF contingent sent to France. When he returned home in 1919, he was rushed by train with troops to Winnipeg to assist Starnes during the General Strike.⁵ His professional relationship with "O" Division personnel predated his Toronto appointment and these ties were strongest with Newson, Darling, and Fish, those individuals directly responsible for the Division's intelligence work.⁶

²His new assignment was OC Vancouver, "E" Division.

³NAC RG 18, vol. 3487, file 0-147, Service Record of G.L. Jennings, (hereafter cited as RCMP Personnel file – G.L. Jennings); *George Leslie Jennings*, was born in Toronto in 1875, educated at Paris, Ontario, and later Woodstock College (affiliated with McMaster University) and the Canadian Business College at Hamilton. He joined the 48th Highlanders in Toronto, later the 37th Haldimand Rifles, and served as a Trooper with the 2nd Canadian Mounted Rifles in South Africa. He joined the RNWMP in 1906, married Commissioner Perry's daughter in 1912, headed the RNWP CEF contingent in 1918-1919 and served extensively across the North and West. He became "O" Division's OC in May 1928, was transferred to Ottawa as DCI in February 1932, subsequently promoted to the rank of Deputy Commissioner and retired to pension in 1938. He died in 1958.

⁴McDonald Commission, Second Report, Vol.1, 111, 155-156; He eventually became DCI in the 1930s and could perhaps be considered as the Force's 'father of wire-supervision' for his role in encouraging its use after 1936. This was two years before they hired an electrician who specialized in these kinds operations and sent him to Montreal "C" Division RHQ.

⁵RCMP Personnel File– G.L. Jennings, "Deputy Commissioner G.L. Jennings, O.B.E." 1938; *ibid.*, "Officer's Record of Service". As a CO Jennings had served briefly as Force adjutant during 1919-1920, then at Depot and at "G" Division at Edmonton and "F" Division at Prince Albert.

⁶RCMP Personnel File– G.L. Jennings, "Deputy Commissioner G.L. Jennings, O.B.E." 1938; *ibid.*, "Officer's Record of Service."; The Canada Who's Who 1938-39, Vol.3 (Toronto, 1939),352; Both Newson and Darling had served under his command in the RNWMP CEF contingent. Fish had worked with him in



DEPUTY-COMMISSIONER G. L. JENNINGS, O.B.E.
1906 - 1938

Occasionally a picture tells all.

Source: RCMP Quarterly, 6,3 (January 1939), 150.

Once he assumed command of "O" Division Jennings arranged an Ottawa meeting with the Commissioner to discuss matters of a "private and confidential" nature. One issue concerned the signing of transfer papers, as the Division's stores and supplies were not in order.⁷ It was at this juncture that Leopold's exposure took place. Jennings immediately worked to minimize possible repercussions and to assess what had happened. Force personnel, however, were without a clear blueprint of steps to be taken under such circumstances and as a result the investigation was poorly handled.

The first mistake senior Force personnel made was that by trying to limit the potential fallout they only slowly expanded the scope of their investigation to draw upon intelligence personnel from outside "O" Division.⁸ They demonstrated that they lacked the analytical skills needed to analyze the events surrounding the exposure. They were suspicious of Leopold, felt he had not told them everything, and held him largely responsible for what had happened.⁹ Leopold, who was instructed to submit a brief considering how he

Winnipeg during the General Strike. Jennings had complete confidence in Darling: he had written Commissioner Perry a glowing letter of support to help Darling secure his reinstatement in the Force after the war

⁷RCMP Personnel File— G.L. Jennings, 'telegram,' Adjutant Vernon to Superintendent Jennings, 14 April 1928; *ibid.*, reply, Commissioner Starnes to Superintendent Jennings, 17 April 1928; *ibid.*, memorandum, Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner Starnes, 7 May 1928; *ibid.*, "transfer account form" Superintendent Jennings and Inspector LaNauze, 14 May 1928.

⁸RCMP Personnel File— John Leopold, report, Detective Sergeant Hildyard and Sergeant Drysdale and Inspector Acland to Commissioner Starnes, 28 May 1928; *ibid.*, translation from ULN, 28 May 1928, CEC message, "Uncovered a Police Agent".

⁹RCMP Personnel File— John Leopold, vol.4, 'Notes on word deleted's (Leopold's) Case," probably 29 May 1928; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Inspector Phillips, OC Quebec District, to Commissioner, 2 June 1928; and *ibid.*, 4 June 1928; *ibid.*, memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to OC "O" Division, 9 June 1928; *ibid.*, 'Cross Reference Sheet,' 16 June 1928, (original report was dated 7 June 1928); *ibid.*, report, Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 30 May 1928; *ibid.*, memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to Inspector Fletcher, OC Maritimes District, 30 July 1928; *ibid.*, report, Inspector Fletcher, OC Maritimes District to Commissioner Starnes, 3 August 1928; *ibid.*, report, Inspector Fletcher to Commissioner Starnes, 3 August 1928; *ibid.*, memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to Inspector Fletcher, 8 August 1928; *ibid.*, memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to Superintendent Ritchie, OC "G" Division,

had been exposed, blamed extraneous factors such as his handlers and those who shared his intelligence with Divisions and with other government departments. It took several years before the true circumstances surrounding his exposure became known.¹⁰

Once Superintendent Jennings determined that Leopold's "usefulness" as an agent had ended, he recommended a further safety precaution that he be removed from this work and transferred to the MacKenzie District.¹¹ Leopold was sent to Ottawa to discuss his future with Starnes and the DCI. They agreed with Jennings' assessment. A contingency account was set up for travel and incidental expenses, and Leopold soon left Ottawa banished to the North.¹² But Leopold was not the only casualty. Herbert Darling, who was involved with the running of the agent, was also directly affected by the fiasco. Before Newson had transferred to Vancouver Darling was recommended for a promotion. It had been six years since his last one. The exposure had occurred before Starnes had made any final decision on the matter. The event shelved any such plans Starnes was considering and it would be several years later before Darling's position would again be reevaluated.¹³

With Leopold gone the Division's intelligence work collapsed. For many months

Edmonton, 9 August 1928.

¹⁰RCMP Personnel File— John Leopold, vol.4, (date marred best copy available), report, Sergeant John Leopold to OC "O" Division, (likely mid-May 1928); *ibid.*, report, Sergeant John Leopold to OC "O" Division, 24 May 1924; *ibid.* memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to Superintendent Jennings, 21 May 1928; *ibid.*, memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to OC's Winnipeg, Regina, Edmonton, 21 May 1928; *ibid.*, Frederick Griffin, "Leopold Was Betrayed by Man He Befriended. Fellow Native of Bohemia 'Sold Out' Mounted Police Investigator," Toronto Daily Star, 13 November 1931.

¹¹*ibid.*, memorandum, Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner Starnes, 26 May 1928.

¹²*ibid.*, memorandum, Inspector Vernon, Adjutant, to OC "O" Division, 28 May 1928; *ibid.*, memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to OC "O" Division, 29 May 1928.

¹³RG 18, vol. 3159, file 0-232, Service Record of Herbert Darling, (hereafter cited as RCMP Personnel File -- Herbert Darling) vol.1, memorandum, Superintendent Newson to Commissioner Starnes, 28 March 1928. *ibid.*, memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to Minister in Control of the RCMP, 25 February 1931.

thereafter no intelligence reports were deposited on the core Toronto CP file.¹⁴ Twice earlier in the Division's history in 1923 and 1927 when the RHQ CIB was without an agent the results were disastrous in terms of intelligence acquisition as CIB personnel had learned next to nothing from an operational standpoint.¹⁵ Nevertheless, since agents had not been exposed (at least publically), intelligence personnel had felt comfortable returning to covert counter-subversion operations months later. Not so in this new era.

Signs had already existed well before Leopold's uncovering that the Division's intelligence work had become a lower priority. A reduction in strength from 45 to 39 personnel, added seasonal responsibilities such as race track duty and escort for harvesters' trains, cases which had become more difficult and required more individual attention, and much else took away from the resources available for intelligence work. They made late hours "compulsory" during much of the year, "[T]he pinch was occasionally so great," Jennings wrote, "that chauffeurs and staff men had to assist" in these "duties".¹⁶

Personnel changes also hurt RHQ intelligence operations. In January Superintendent Newson had sent Staff Sergeant Fish to Windsor to oversee investigations in that part of the province. As a result his daily expertise was lost to Toronto CIB.¹⁷ That month Darling also released Corporal Rolph from CIB clerking duties, further evidence that other work had become a priority as Rolph's subsequent assignments were not political in nature. Until April, when a permanent replacement for Rolph was found, several personnel shared

¹⁴The one exception was a single report generated in Montreal and subsequently deposited on the Toronto CP files. It identified the six people working out of CPC national headquarters.

¹⁵CPC TO 1920s. For instance, only 17 pages of intelligence was deposited in 1923 on the core Toronto CP file in the aftermath of the withdrawal of Catt.

¹⁶RCMP, Annual Report, 1928, 46.

¹⁷"O" Division, Nominal Rolls, January and February 1928.

responsibility for RHQ CIB clerking, each on a part-time basis. But neither they, nor Rolph's eventual successor, Constable J.F. Sheridan, had any CIB records training.¹⁸ Finally, Inspector Fletcher, who had occasionally assisted Newson in supervising the Division's intelligence work, was transferred out in March.¹⁹

Fortunately for the CIB, local communist activity slowed during much of 1928 offsetting the Division's own shortcomings. Objective conditions had changed. The economy had improved. The annual unemployment rate had dropped and at 2.6 per cent nationally in 1928 reached its lowest level in the inter-war period.²⁰ Although strike activity increased in 1928 the CP's District #3 often failed to capitalize on changing conditions in either the political or industrial work it undertook.²¹ Its enlarged Executive Committee met at the beginning of the year when Leopold was still operating undercover and he reported that it was accomplishing little.²² In February, District #3 groups reported activity was at a standstill. One reason was they were without a permanent organizer and the funds were simply not there to maintain one.²³ Comrade Erlich eventually assumed this responsibility in addition to editing the Yiddish paper Der Kampf, but both jobs required a full-time worker which meant that neither task was performed satisfactorily. Not until the following

¹⁸RCMP G.O. 7073, notes Constable J.F. Sheridan granted a pay raise of 25 cents per diem as of 1 April 1928; RCMP G.O. 7081, notes his transfer to Depot as of 29 April 1928.

¹⁹"O" Division, Nominal Rolls, March 1928.

²⁰John Herd Thompson with Allen Seager, Canada 1922-1929: Decades of Discord (Toronto, 1985), Table XIIIa, 350.

²¹Cruikshank and Kealey, "Canadian Strike Statistics," 134.

²²CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Inspector Fletcher to Commissioner, 21 and 23 January 1928.

²³ibid., report, source deleted and Inspector Fletcher to Commissioner, 21 January 1928; ibid., report, source deleted and Inspector Fletcher to Commissioner, 13 and 14 February 1928.

year was Sam Lapides appointed permanent organizer.²⁴ Often the turnout at CP District #3 public events was poor. "Slackness" was rampant across the District and factional infighting had increased. A group led by Annie Buller, Rebecca Buhay, and Sam Carr had emerged, and along with Spector they pushed the CP to adopt a more radical position on issues while an anti-Spector group led by Stewart Smith and Leslie Morris left the CP divided.²⁵

The CP District #3's industrial work also accomplished little, intelligence reports suggested. In several industrial sectors such as mining, and pulp and paper, enthusiasm was tempered by seasonal downturns, uncompetitive pricing for exports, high energy costs, while elsewhere organizing work was less than satisfactory. The CP failed to establish a Canadian Auto Workers Industrial Union (instead an AFL union was formed) and Superintendent Newson felt that as a result all the CP gained there was increased exposure.²⁶

In the summer of 1928 the Communist International's Sixth World Congress was held. The CI's position radically changed and the CPC adopted its class versus class strategy. In the process conservative internationals were fully abandoned in favour of national union structures. Before long, for stalwarts it seemed clear that Lenin's tactics of broad alliance building from within organizations such as the TLC were less relevant since conditions had changed dramatically. Conservative unions had often demonstrated their commitment to

²⁴AGO CP, 2A 1129, National Organizing Secretary to S. Lapides, Toronto, 25 March 1931.

²⁵CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 25 and 28 February 1928; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Inspector Fletcher to Commissioner, 13 and 14 February 1928; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 12 and 15 March 1928.

²⁶John Manley, "Communism and Auto Workers: The Struggle for Industrial Unionism in the Canadian Automobile Industry," *Labour/ Le Travail* 12 (1986), 105-133; CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 30 March and 2 April 1928; Ewen, *The Forge Glows Red*, 143-144; Ewen noted that it also eventually formed the basis for the Steel Workers Industrial Union.

containing militancy and reformism rather than class struggle.²⁷ These issues emerged front and centre in the late 1920s and along with “Trotskyism,” Canadian Independence and the “war” question, and the threat of other forms of right deviation within the party, dominated the CP’s agenda during much of this period.²⁸

Following the CI’s policy shift fall work in shop nuclei, namely organizing at the point of production, in Toronto and throughout the District declined and by early 1929 it was entirely abandoned.²⁹ It was only much later in January 1930 that the WUL, a new revolutionary centre for industrial unions, was formed. Even then its success was centred primarily in the mining sector and among clothing and textile workers. It was not until 1931 that much headway was made in organizing the unemployed in Southern Ontario.³⁰ These were the conditions that Superintendent Jennings inherited from Newson. They indirectly influenced intelligence operations.

Toronto’s municipal police force (TCPD) was transformed in the late 1920s; this development also impacted the reorientation of the RHQ CIB’s intelligence operations. The TCPD’s war against subversion escalated following Brigadier-General Denis Draper’s appointment as Toronto municipal police chief on 1 May 1928.³¹ Draper was a staunch anti-communist who believed that communists were undermining the nation’s political and

²⁷Ewen, The Forge Glows Red, 139.

²⁸CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Newson to Commissioner, 25 and 28 February 1928; ibid., report, source deleted and Inspector Fletcher to Commissioner, 13 and 14 February 1928.

²⁹Avakumovic, The Communist Party in Canada, 71.

³⁰Ewen, The Forge Glows Red, 137

³¹Betcherman, The Little Band; Smith, All My Life, 100.

economic system.³² Shortly after assuming his new duties, Draper and the other Board of Police Commissioners passed an edict banning meetings held in foreign languages as part of a broad policy to stamp out bolshevism in the city.³³ Prosecutions increased, hall owners were intimidated, and Draper created his notorious Red Squad to enforce the edict. The campaign heated up in the fall and was simply the beginning of a major clampdown against the reds.³⁴

With Draper's edicts in place the Toronto CP's public activities centred on the issue of "Free Speech."³⁵ The issue gained broad support in the community. It was about more than simply deciding who would be heard in meeting halls, on street corners, and in other public places. Far more important it was about the essence of what it meant to be Canadian.³⁶ The Free Speech struggle encouraged "O" Division personnel to strengthen their intelligence operations without developing a penetration agent. Darling, who was frustrated and exhausted by the fallout from the Leopold affair, had taken leave during much of August but had returned fully reinvigorated in September.³⁷ A few months later he and other CIB

³²Lita-Rose Betcherman, The Swastika and the Maple Leaf: Fascist Movements in Canada in the Thirties (Toronto 1975), 58; Petryshyn, "Class Conflict and Civil Liberties," 43; D.G. Draper, "Good Citizenship," Empire Club of Canada: Addresses Delivered to the Members During the Year 1928 (Toronto, 1929), 174.

³³Betcherman, The Little Band, 12-28.; Ewen, The Forge Glows Red, 171-182.

³⁴CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner Starnes, 15 May 1928; Betcherman, The Little Band, 1-28; Michiel Horn, "Keeping Canada 'Canadian': Anti-Communism and Canadianism in Toronto 1928-29," Canada: An Historical Magazine, 3,1(1975), 34-47; Ewen, The Forge Glows Red, 171-182.

³⁵NAC RG 146 175/P1741, MacDonald file, "Head Of Communists Is Taken By Police To Interview Chief," The Globe, 21 December 1928.

³⁶Horn, "Keeping Canada 'Canadian,'" 34-47; Betcherman, The Little Band; Smith, All My Life, 99-113.

³⁷"O" Division, Nominal Rolls, August 1928.

personnel turned to Draper and to Red Squad officers Nursey, Simpson and Mann for intelligence on communist activities and over the next two years a close liaison developed between the two organizations.³⁸

By the fall Constable J.F. Sheridan, who assisted Darling in the CIB office, had several months' experience in records and had survived, largely through baptism by fire, the most difficult period in the Division's intelligence history. Fish remained in Windsor and although his skills were lost to Toronto, Jennings had the assurance that regional investigations, where the need was also great, were being supervised by someone with considerable experience.³⁹ In Toronto, in these months many outside investigations were supervised by Inspector C.D. LaNauze, the Division's second in command. While LaNauze's strength undoubtedly lay elsewhere, the fact that he concerned himself with CIB investigations following Leopold's exposure suggested Jennings' desire to have his senior personnel more directly involved in this work.⁴⁰

Increasingly field investigations in Toronto were conducted by detectives Corporal R.E. Nelson and Constables H.P. Mathewson and A.M. Veitch, all of whom had many years of experience in this capacity.⁴¹ As the CIB relied more and more upon Veitch and

³⁸We will never know the full extent of this development since much information was transmitted orally and not committed to paper. Furthermore, the TCPD's minute books have been destroyed as have most reports. Still, the improvement was noticeable and the Force had gone a long way since Newson had informed Draper's predecessor that they had a secret service at work in the Division.

³⁹"O" Division, Nominal Rolls, 1928.

⁴⁰"O" Division, Nominal Rolls, August 1928. La Nauze was transferred to the Division in March 1928. He briefly served as its Acting DOC during the transfer of power from Duffus to Jennings. He returned to the Division in the mid-1930s and eventually served as its DOC.

⁴¹All of them joined in 1920. RCMP G.O. 117, notes their transfer from Depot to "N" Division, 1 March 1920; *Hugh Patrick Mathewson*, b. 1902 (place unknown), he joined the Force in August 1919 and retired to pension in 1954. Much of his career was spent at "O" Division. He eventually became its officer in charge of the CIB. Later on he was transferred to Saskatchewan where he was stationed at Swift Current and Saskatoon. He also served as OC Whitehorse Sub-Division and OC Calgary Sub-Division. He retired at

Mathewson, in particular, they carved their own niches in local investigations: "As time went on, we formed a criminal investigation branch. I did the general investigations and Hugh Mathewson did the narcotics end of it.... gradually, we developed more until we had a real investigative organization going here...."⁴² They also participated in the Division's secret intelligence work and Darling also had at least three former secret agents working in the Division sometimes serving as floaters throughout the District. Frank Zaneth was there and could be consulted.⁴³ Goudie was a second expert available and a third was Robert L. Trolove.⁴⁴

In December 1928 Starnes began to piece together the circumstances surrounding Spector's expulsion. The Toronto information he obtained on this matter was derived largely from Open Source Intelligence (OSINT) and reports from several public meetings.⁴⁵ His most important source, however, was a closed CP mass-membership meeting at Alhambra Hall at the end of November at which Stewart Smith, who had recently returned from Russia where he had studied since 1926 at the Lenin School, had spoken of the events that had led to the CP severing ties with the so-called working-class "traitor". Security was extremely tight at the event. Only members in good standing were admitted. Even some from outside

the rank of Superintendent and died in 1956. RCMP Quarterly 21,4(April 1956), 360, "obituary of H.P. Mathewson."

Raymond Eric Nelson, little is known about this individual. His obituary simply notes he achieved the rank of corporal. He died in Toronto on 22 December 1982. RCMP Quarterly, 48,3 (Summer 1983), 80, "obituary of R.E. Nelson"

⁴²Dubro and Rowland, Undercover, 104.

⁴³RCMP G.O. 5792, notes Sergeant F.W. Zaneth transferred from Depot to "O" Division as of 1 March 1926.

⁴⁴Betke and Horrall, *Canada's Security Service*, 374 B, 446-447.

⁴⁵Simply put Open Source Intelligence is material that can be obtained through non-clandestine means. It usually refers to widely dispersed public records such as newspapers, books etc., On intelligence types see, Hibbert, "Intelligence and Police,"; and Herman, "Intelligence and Policy".

the city who were paid up like Joe Gilbert and Trevor Maguire were refused admittance until they had proven their identity.⁴⁶ How the CIB managed to infiltrate the event is not known, although, the manager of the Alhambra Hall was cooperative with authorities and was resolutely anti-communist. Since October, the only events that RHQ intelligence personnel provided any coverage on (other than OSINT) were those held at Alhambra Hall.

Tim Buck chaired the meeting and at its opening he announced that Smith would “go into full details of the Trotsky question and prove how according to the ruling of the C.I. it would be impossible to tolerate avowed advocates of Trotskyism within the ranks of the C.P.” Annie Buller, Mike Buhay, Beckie Buhay, Buck, Carr and Shapiro all spoke in “justification” of Spector’s expulsion seeking a unanimous resolution be passed endorsing this action. MacDonald was not present.⁴⁷ The event tested the executive’s patience when a great deal of time was subsequently taken up by James Blugerman who came to Spector’s defense, and who accused the CEC of railroading the membership at large. He was so critical of the CP leadership that the undisclosed source’s report informed intelligence personnel that “[i]t is evident that he will be now regarded as a reactionary and steps taken to force him out of the party.” The vote was not taken until 4.15 a.m., the undisclosed source reported, and it was not unanimous, Blugerman and four others remained seated.⁴⁸

The Spector expulsion was an event of historic proportions in the history of the CPC. This CP meeting to explain the so-called “true” circumstances surrounding the event to the membership was almost as important to intelligence personnel for the insight it provided. Perhaps most surprising from an intelligence perspective was Superintendent Jennings’

⁴⁶NAC CP/DND file, “cross-reference sheet,” 14 December 1928.

⁴⁷CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 30 November and 5 December 1928.

⁴⁸ibid.

delayed response. He was rather nonchalant in his handling of the report and it took him a week before it was forwarded to NHQ. Starnes was much more intrigued by these developments than his OC. His analysis of the situation was astute and he was especially interested in any comments Smith made.⁴⁹

By December 1928 the RHQ CIB's intelligence apparatus had begun to rebound. By Boxing Day Jennings felt confident enough about Division intelligence work to issue a circular memorandum to all District NCO's to be on the "lookout" for two Ukrainian men whose whereabouts and movements he wanted established.⁵⁰ His faith in the network was rewarded. Days later, information from informants and Division personnel turned up valuable information on the subjects which resulted in the generation of PHFs.⁵¹ Slowly then the RHQ CIB's intelligence operations began to function much as they had earlier with one significant exception. In this new period RCMP work against the core CP branches in Toronto was done without developing a penetration agent. The remarkable coverage of the CP mass membership's secretive meeting at the end of November to discuss Spector's expulsion was an exception to what generally transpired in the emerging age of OSINT.

4.2

The Heyday of OSINT, 1929

⁴⁹ibid.

⁵⁰NAC RG 146 Access-Request 96-A-00109, "Information concerning the CPC, USA and GB, as well as Communist Activities within DND," (hereinafter cited as NAC CP/DND file), "circular," Superintendent Jennings to All NCOs, 26 December 1928.

⁵¹CPC TO 1920s, report, Corporal R.E.R. Webster to Superintendent Jennings, 29 December 1928; ibid., report, Staff Sergeant F.A. Blake to Superintendent Jennings, 12 January 1929; ibid., report, Sergeant G.W. Fish to Superintendent Jennings, 23 January 1929; ibid., report, Sergeant G.W. Fish to Superintendent Jennings, 27 January 1929; ibid., memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to Superintendent Jennings, 14 January 1929.

By early 1929 the RHQ CIB's political investigations had become a balancing act. From an operational standpoint Jennings, Darling, LaNauze, and other RHQ personnel juggled their use of detectives and the occasional operative or informant during the next couple of years with their primary reliance on OSINT. The more confrontational policies announced at the Sixth Congress of the CI, which had explicitly emphasized the importance of "mass demonstrations" as a weapon of class warfare, increased the likelihood that events earned coverage by the non working-class press facilitating the CIB's reliance on OSINT.⁵² In particular, the press coverage afforded the "Free Speech" fight helped convince some intelligence personnel that it might be possible to keep abreast of the CP's general activities by essentially monitoring press clippings.

"O" Division RHQ was at a comparative advantage over other Divisions who might attempt a shift to OSINT because Toronto had four mainstream daily papers. Each had a substantial circulation of between 100,000 to 200,000.⁵³ Mounties such as Bill Kelly, who was eventually involved in intelligence in the Division later on in the decade, explained that Division personnel established a rapport with newspaper men. It was an extremely competitive market with reporters vying for scoops. The consequence was that many progressive events were reported in the local press.⁵⁴

Clippings deposited on the CIB's core Toronto CP file rose dramatically as a result of the shift in the RHQ's intelligence operations. Whereas in 1928 just 7 clippings (and 25 reports) were deposited on the core Toronto CP file, in 1929, a remarkable 122 clippings were obtained (almost three times as many clippings as other items in that year), which is

⁵²B. V. "Mass Demonstrations," The Communist International, 6,1 (December 1928), 6-8.

⁵³Horn, "Keeping Canada 'Canadian', 36. The Star had the largest circulation followed by the Evening Telegram, the Mail and Empire, and the Globe.

⁵⁴Kelly with Kelly, Policing in Wartime, 15-16.

by far the best evidence that in the absence of a Catt, Goudie or Leopold a new strategy was being pursued. Similarly in 1930 more than three times as many clippings were deposited as other materials. OSINT deposits in these years also increased in additions to dossiers made by "O" Division personnel. Furthermore, without an agent on the inside, in general, the reports produced during these years were of a poor caliber.⁵⁵

Much could be accomplished through an operational strategy which relied on OSINT and passive investigations.⁵⁶ Through clippings CIB personnel kept abreast of the Board of Police Commissioners' edicts which upheld their ban on speaking in "foreign" languages at meetings as well as the Left's mobilization in opposition to the edicts.⁵⁷ Similarly the activities of umbrella and affiliate organizations such as the YCL and the CP's Opposition Group were reported in this manner. For instance, copies of the Young Comrade and J.P. Cannon's The Militant, were obtained and digested as were all progressive organs and later on unemployed bulletins, shop circulars, and many other materials.⁵⁸ For brief periods,

⁵⁵Examples of the material forwarded include: "Run Candidate for Free Speech," Mail and Empire, 30 January 1929; editorial "Reds At Home and Abroad," and "Freedom of Speech is not Threatened, Commissioners Say," Toronto Globe, 25 January 1929; "The Communist Method," "Bridling the Communists," and "No Reds Rampant in University; 'Varsity's Story Exaggerated," Toronto Globe, 31 January 1929.

⁵⁶CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 24 and 29 January 1929; ibid., "Meeting of Communists Is Dissolved in Tears," Mail & Empire, 23 January 1929; ibid., "'reds' Accuse Police of Using Tear Bomb But Draper Denies It," The Toronto Daily Star, 23 January 1929; Smith, All My Life, 103-104; Betcherman, The Little Band, 23-25.

⁵⁷ibid., "Ban Foreign Languages When Sedition Involved," Mail & Empire, 24 January 1929; ibid., "Non-Communist Bodies Protest Police Edict," Mail & Empire, 29 January 1929; ibid., "Reds Urge Crusade for Free Speech," Mail & Empire, 28 January 1929; ibid., "War To The Finish For 'Free Speech'," Mail & Empire, 28 January 1929; "Freedom Of Speech Is Not Threatened Commissioners Say," Toronto Globe, 25 January 1929; ibid., "Run Candidate for Free Speech," The Toronto Daily Star, 30 January 1929.

⁵⁸ibid., issue 2, 21 January 1929 of Young Comrade; ibid., report, source deleted and Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 14 and 15 February 1929; ibid., report, source deleted and Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 22 and 23 February 1929; "C.L.D.L. To Publish Paper," The Worker, 19 April 1930, 3.

almost every other day articles, mostly concerning the "Free Speech" fight, were deposited on the CP's core Toronto file which exemplified the intense monitoring of Toronto CP activities.⁵⁹

Both public and private institutions played an enormous role in this process too. The CP's leading organs were printed in Toronto. Copies were readily available by paying printing establishments office visits. Copies were also easily obtained from the Post Office. So were subscription lists since the CP had to provide them to the Post Office if they hoped to receive bulk rates for domestic mail outs which were set by weight and further divided into two classes: rates for "regular subscribers," and rates for copies sent to non-subscribers which were fixed at a much higher premium.⁶⁰ The Department of Labour also established its own "Labour Intelligence Branch" and created the position of Chief of Labour Intelligence, a position given to Frank Plant. Plant provided the Force with copies of their annual publications such as *Labour Organizations in Canada*.⁶¹ He also diligently renewed subscriptions to many organs such as The Worker, Canadian Labour Monthly, and The Party Organizer, taking every precaution to ensure that subscriptions were not canceled, nor issues missed, and he was available to lend a hand to Force personnel.⁶² His work was undertaken

⁵⁹ibid., "Dance and Concert Banned By Police," Mail and Empire, 8 February 1929: "Demand The Right Of 'Free Speech,'" Mail and Empire, 15 February 1929; ibid., "Communists Speak to Hearts Content," The Globe, 18 February 1929; ibid., "Six Arrests Are Made At Open-Air Meetings Of Red Sympathizers," The Globe, 23 February 1929; ibid., "In Opposing Moscow Must We Copy Moscow?" Toronto Star, 26 January 1929; ibid., "Senator Lewis On Education For Newcomers," Toronto Star, 26 January 1929.

⁶⁰AGO CP, 7B 1972, letter, Arthur Webster, Secretary, Post Office Department to Amil S. Buller [sic], Business Manager, Canadian Labour Monthly, Toronto, 27 January 1928; AGO CP, 7B 1913, "List of subs for Post Office," 15 July 1930; AGO CP, 7B 1913, "List of subs for Post Office," 15 July 1930; CPC TO 1930s, memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to DOC "O" Division, 25 February 1931.

⁶¹Betke and Horrall, *Canada's Security Service*, 499.

⁶²AGO CP, 7B 1926, letter, Frank Plant, Chief of Labour Intelligence Branch, Department of Labour, to The Manager, The Party Organizer, 21 April 1931; ibid., reply, Business Manager to Department of Labour, 22 April 1931.

separately from the Department of Labour's own library which also requested copies of the same party organs. So if one agency failed to obtain an issue there were always other branches in a position to provide CIB personnel with copies.⁶³

Starnes was keenly aware of these changes to the Division's intelligence operations and what they meant with Leopold gone. When Division CIB personnel fell short of his expectations in conducting these operations he was quick to let them know that they had failed and encouraged them to improve the work being conducted.⁶⁴ A case in point came as a consequence of a Stewart Smith interview with a Toronto Star reporter in late 1928. The article is well known in the annals of Canadian labour history and therefore serves as a particularly instructive example. In the published article Smith apparently had stated that before long "blood would be running in the streets" of Toronto. The interview was mentioned in Jennings' December monthly report on revolutionary agitators but no clipping was forwarded to NHQ. Starnes was disappointed. He ordered Jennings to improve OSINT work being conducted and to secure copies. Jennings sent an officer to the Toronto Star offices and had their personnel search their records, a copy was located and subsequently forwarded to Starnes. The Commissioner made several requests for additional copies and they were also secured. It was clear that something was planned. A week later Smith was

⁶³AGO CP, 7B 1886, letter, F.J. Planet, Department of Labour, Circulation Manager to "The Worker", 18 November 1927; ibid., 7B 1889, Circulation Manager, Department of Labour to "The Worker", 31 July 1928; ibid., 7B 1887, letter, Accountant, Department of Labour, to The Circulation Department, Toronto Worker, 22 December 1927; ibid., 7B 1895, Accountant, Department of Labour, to The Workers' Publishing Association, 18 February 1929; ibid., 7B 1894, letter, Accountant, Department of Labour, to The Canadian Labour Monthly, Toronto, 7 January 1929; ibid., 7B 1896, Chief of Labour Intelligence Branch, Department of Labour, to The Workers' Publishing Association, 25 March 1929; ibid., 7B 2011, Ethel Merifield, Librarian, Department of Labour to The Publishers, The Worker, 17 January 1928.

⁶⁴ATIP Request, 96-A-00149, NAC RG 146 CSIS Holdings, Stewart Osborne Smith, vol. 849, vol. 1 (Hereinafter cited as NAC RG 146 175P/ Stewart Smith file), memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to Superintendent Jennings, 23 January 1929.

arrested by the TCPD and his interview became the basis of the charges laid. It was clear that much could be accomplished by OSINT.⁶⁵ An interesting twist was that several years later it was further revealed that “[T]his article was duly published and was so red hot, that the balance of the edition in which it appeared, did not contain it.”⁶⁶ That was why Jennings had probably not forwarded it to NHQ. In retrospect his CIB had been burned by its publication.

The arrests and deportations of local political activists provided the CIB with a steady supply of available OSINT as demand for the CLDL’s services increased.⁶⁷ In January 1929 alone 74 political cases came before the police and county courts in Toronto, according to A.E. Smith, and 21 workers were imprisoned for 350 days for organizing street-corner meetings.⁶⁸ While Smith’s numbers may be inflated his larger point that pressures had increased and the numbers of arrests and deportations surely were rising was accurate. Petryshyn noted that Toronto became a “hot spot” for CLDL “activity” and from January 1929 until February 1930, he reported the League handled 88 court cases in Toronto. Barbara Roberts’ work too, also points to increased numbers of the “mutinous” being

⁶⁵NAC RG 146 175P/2494, Stewart Smith file, Transcription of Toronto Star article, “Says that Toronto Streets Will Soon be Running Blood,” 27 December 1928; ibid., cross reference sheet, 24 January 1929; ibid., report, Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner Starnes, 26 January 1929; ibid., memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to “O” Division CO, 29 January 1929; ibid., report, Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner Starnes, 7 February 1929; ibid., report, Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner Starnes, 8 February 1929; ibid., report, Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner Starnes, 14 February 1929; ibid., report, Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner Starnes, 23 February 1929.

⁶⁶NAC RG 146, 175/P2494, Stewart Smith file, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 23 and 24 October 1933.

⁶⁷J. Petryshyn, “Class Conflict and Civil Liberties: The Origins and Activities of the Canadian Labour Defense League, 1925-1940”, Labour/ Le Travail, 10 (1982).

⁶⁸Smith, All My Life, 104-105.

“shoveled out” in this period.⁶⁹ Publicity through the medium of the non working-class press fed the intelligence machine.⁷⁰ This intelligence was often shared between Divisions and in February 1930, Starnes had even compiled and forwarded Montreal OC a substantial list called “members of the Communist Party of Canada arrested by Toronto City Police.”⁷¹

Deciphering OSINT became a skill that had a pseudo-scientific quality: one that some CIB personnel improved upon. They developed an eye for information that provided them with a better understanding of their respective targeted organization. Intelligence that CIB personnel often scoured papers for included membership figures or any information which would enable CIB personnel to hazard a guess about a movement’s strength and whether it was growing. This focus differed little from earlier periods since this kind of intelligence was also one of the earliest repeated requests handlers tried to obtain through their secret agents and operatives such as Catt, Goudie, and Leopold.⁷² RHQ CIB personnel often pursued information dissecting the composition of crowds at events through press-clipping analysis. It was not uncommon for the press to comment that “most were foreigners,” or

⁶⁹Petryshyn, “Class Conflict and Civil Liberties,” 39-44; a fair number of cases are detailed in Betcherman, The Little Band; Roberts, Whence They Came, chap. 8; cited in Fudge and Tucker, Labour Before The Law, 155; The number of public charges alone deported increased from 444 in 1929 to over 2,000 in 1930 and 17,229 between 1930 and 1934.

⁷⁰CPC TO 1920s, “Six Arrests Are Made At Open-Air meetings Of Red Sympathizers,” The Globe, 23 February 1929; *ibid.*, report, Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 23 February 1929; *ibid.*, report, Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 7 March 1929; *ibid.*, report, Constable Foley-Bennett and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 15 and 16 March 1929.

⁷¹NAC RG 146, access request 96-A-00149, vol. 849., vol.1., Stewart Smith PHF, memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to Montreal CO, 11 February 1930.

⁷²See Betcherman, The Little Band, 23-25; “Police Order Defied; Speaker is Arrested,” The Globe, 25 January 1929, 2; CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 3 August 1929; *ibid.*, “Police Order Defied; Speaker is Arrested,” The Globe, 25 January 1929, 2; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner Starnes, 3 August 1929; “Communists Have Parade and Meeting,” Manitoba Free Press, 3 August 1929.

Ukrainians, or even their socio-economic status such as “unemployed” or “transient.”⁷³ Both Force personnel and party stalwarts believed that one measure of the strength of the movement was its ability to draw in more Anglo-Saxons. Tom Ewen, noted that Slavic, Finnish and Jewish immigrant workers had a “higher development of socialist consciousness” than British workers.⁷⁴ As well, the most marginalized and least likely to reap any economic and social benefits in Canada were Eastern Europeans and Asians according to the work of Donald Avery among others.⁷⁵

Through OSINT networks were expanded and penetrated deeper into the community. OSINT provided checks and balances for other intelligence.⁷⁶ A careful reading and analysis of clippings enabled intelligence personnel to identify potential contacts and allies in its fight against communism as well as enemies.⁷⁷ For instance, the relations the TCPD established with theatre managers and hall owners were sometimes monitored through this activity:

⁷³CPC TO 1920s, for instance see, “Dance and Concert Banned by Police,” Toronto Mail & Empire, 11 February 1929 and “Communists Speak to Heart’s Content,” The Globe, 18 February 1929, for identification of ‘Jews’; Finns are also identified, as are other groups throughout the 1920s and 1930s.

⁷⁴Ewen, The Forge Glows Red, 127.

⁷⁵Avery, Dangerous Foreigners; Avery, Reluctant Host.

⁷⁶CPC TO 1920s, “Toronto’s Efficient Police,” Toronto Globe, 3 August 1929; ibid., “Re Speaker Led to Jail on Chain,” Mail & Empire, 12 August 1929; ibid., “Batons and Feet Used Freely As City Police Rout Reds,” Mail and Empire, 14 August 1929.

⁷⁷ibid., There are many examples, see, Rev. Frank Vipond, “Reds In Toronto,” Toronto Globe, 2 February 1929; CPC TO 1920s, Oscar Swinson, “The Right of Free Speech,” Mail & Empire, 2 February 1929; Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] The Early Years, 435. Bland had already earned a PHF (#2481) much earlier in the 1920s shortly after his arrival to Toronto; For a discussion of this incident see, Michiel Horn, “Free Speech within the Law”: The Letter of the Sixty-Eight Toronto Professors, 1931,” Ontario History, 72 (1980), 27-48; CPC TO 1920s, report, Constable Foley-Bennett and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner Starnes, 8 and 11 March 1929; ibid., The Observer, “The Law and the Courts Sufficient Protection,” Toronto Star, 30 April 1929; ibid., “Free Speech”, Civilization Monthly, February 1929; ibid., The Observer “In Opposing Moscow Must We Copy Moscow?” Toronto Star, 26 January 1929.

‘When the Communists came here this afternoon I offered them their money back,’ said [Alhambra Hall] manager Exler, ‘They refused to take it, stating that they had made arrangements, and insisted I give them the hall. I saw the Chief Constable this afternoon and explained the circumstances. He was quite satisfied with my explanations.’⁷⁸

A cooperative manager was information worth recording and not surprisingly intelligence personnel highlighted this passage in the margin. Similar practices were eventually employed with rooming house and welfare department officials in the Depression.⁷⁹ Sympathetic public administrators in the educational system, church officials and leaders of “respectable” youth organizations such as the YMCA were all identified in this way.⁸⁰ Intelligence personnel followed up school trustees’ efforts to learn the sources of communist literature entering the grade school. They secured copies of flyers and party organs which, for instance, announced an upcoming YCL event, an “Invitation International Concert,” to be held at Alhambra Hall and deposited them on the Toronto core CP file.⁸¹ Here was the perfect tie in. As we have noted, the Alhambra Hall manager was cooperative. With a ticket in hand intelligence personnel could now expand their network further. Without an agent on the inside they could go to the concert in advance if they so desired. They could set up their scribes to take notes. They could even place a plainclothes officer in the crowd out front or close the facility to communist organizations which is what they did at the Alhambra Hall when “the caretaker” it was reported, “received instructions from the landlord to allow no

⁷⁸CPC TO 1920s, “Police Order Defied; Speaker is Arrested,” The Globe, 25 January 1929, 2.

⁷⁹See, McDonald Commission, Second Report, vol. 1; Similar techniques also mentioned in Sawatsky, Men In The Shadows.

⁸⁰CPC TO 1920s, “Communist Propaganda Flooding City schools Alarms Education Board,” The Globe, 7 December 1928; See the articles in, Kinsman, Buse, Steedman, [eds.] Whose National Security.

⁸¹CPC TO 1920s, Young Comrade, 2, 21 (January 1929); flyer, “Under The Banner of The Young Communist League: Fight the War Danger !!” nd; “Invitation International Concert,” 3 February 1929 (put on by YCL).

meetings in the rooms.”⁸² Once alliances were established, it was not enough to sit back and be passive so Force personnel took an aggressive stance against the Communist menace. University of Toronto professor Frank Underhill was hounded during the 1930s.⁸³ Jeanne Corbin, likely lost her job teaching when she was placed under surveillance; “investigators claimed” she “was trying to recruit other students to the YCL,” and “teaching revolutionary propaganda” to ULFTA children.⁸⁴

The explosion in the CIB’s use of OSINT which took place in Toronto in the late 1920s, and particularly after 1928, was not without its limitations. Although it broadened the scope of the network’s investigations, CIB reliance on newspaper clippings also shifted the location of their source of dependency. Simply put, when events were not covered, intelligence personnel were left in the lurch.⁸⁵ Quite often this was deliberate. Many cultural activities such as plays performed by progressive groups like the Toronto Workers’ Theatre were downplayed non working-class newspapers.⁸⁶ Furthermore, there was always the issue of accuracy of newspaper coverage although with the kind of rapport RHQ CIB personnel like Kelly had established with some staff at the non working-class presses, it sometimes could be resolved by a simple phone call. Still many other problems were encountered in

⁸²CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 29 March and 2 April 1929.

⁸³*ibid.*, report, source deleted and Jennings to Commissioner Starnes, 24 and 29 January 1929; “No Reds Rampant in University; ‘Varsity’s’ Story Exaggerated,” Toronto Globe, 31 January 1929, This was used to also take a jab at Woodsworth; See, Paul Axelrod, “Spying on the Young in Depression and War: Students, Youth Groups and the RCMP,” Labour/ Le Travail, 35 (1995), 43-66 R. Douglas Francis, Frank H. Underhill: Intellectual Provocateur (Toronto, 1986), 97.

⁸⁴Sangster, Dreams of Equality, 68.

⁸⁵The prison release dates of the CP’s second-tier and tertiary activists was a prime example of where this system broke down since they were almost never reported in the press. The CIB often lost sight of individuals at this point.

⁸⁶Ryan, Stage Left, 44-45.

this work. As in other operations language barriers were sometimes insurmountable. There were hardly any translators available in the Force. CIB personnel also had trouble establishing the identities of individuals who wrote under assumed aliases such as Salem Bland, who wrote as “The Observer” during the “Free Speech” debates. It took a few weeks and several office visits before Force personnel had learned the “Observer’s” true identity.⁸⁷ OSINT often required follow up investigations which were labour intensive, time consuming, and narrowed the window of opportunity to respond. Finally, OSINT rarely provided the kind of advanced notice that intelligence personnel wanted, especially in times of crisis.⁸⁸

Without a key penetration agent inside the CP “O” Division was occasionally unable to provide Starnes with the intelligence he requested. The most frequently recurring problem was “losing sight” of individuals and difficulties in tracking their activities. In February 1929 an RCMP operative in a Western Division reported that William Moriarty and Beckie Buhay were planning to travel to the Soviet Union. Starnes wanted Jennings to either confirm or reject this intelligence and also to provide their present addresses, activities, and occupations. Jennings was only partially successful.⁸⁹ It took the Division months to establish Moriarty’s whereabouts, they never did learn his “current occupation” and they were unable to reach any definitive conclusion with respect to his plans.⁹⁰ The same problem

⁸⁷CPC TO 1920s, The Observer, “In Opposing Moscow Must We Copy Moscow?” The Toronto Daily Star, 26 January 1929.

⁸⁸ibid., report, Constable Foley-Bennett and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 8 and 11 March 1931.

⁸⁹NAC RG 146, 175P/ 3621, William Moriarty file, report, Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 16 February 1929.

⁹⁰ibid., report, source deleted and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 27 July 1929; ibid., report, source deleted and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 1 October 1929.

occurred with Spector that year.⁹¹ Reliance on OSINT made it impossible to keep close and careful watch on Toronto revolutionaries in a manner to which intelligence personnel had grown accustomed. A case by case analysis of dossiers suggests that Toronto suffered in comparison with other Divisions in terms of its intelligence acquisition as a result of its primary reliance on OSINT.⁹²

Whenever RHQ CIB personnel wanted exceptionally good, accurate, and timely intelligence on specific events, most often they needed an inside source. They had relied on Leopold to secure key documents and to provide full and detailed reports of every CPC national Convention from 1922 up until he was uncovered.⁹³ By early 1929, with Leopold gone, OSINT's limitations quickly became self-evident. With a National Convention scheduled for March an agent, operative, or informant was needed. This presented a problem since it was clear that Toronto RHQ would be unable to provide Starnes with an agent in time even if one could be developed. Fortunately for the Force at the last minute the CI intervened and postponed the Convention until May.⁹⁴ Suddenly, even if there was time to develop an agent or operative to a level that would provide them with an opportunity to attend, would one agent be enough? After all, whenever possible, for important events such as National Conventions, senior intelligence personnel tried to arrange dual agent coverage. The examples are legion and can be traced back at least to the Calgary Western Labour

⁹¹NAC RG 146 175P/ 1712, Maurice Spector file, report, source deleted and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 15 October 1929; ibid., report, source deleted and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 8 November 1929; ibid., report, source deleted and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 3 December 1929; ibid., circular, The Militant.

⁹²NAC RG 146 175P/2035 Tim Buck file; NAC RG 146 175P/1741, Jack MacDonald file; NAC RG 146 175P/1712, Maurice Spector file.

⁹³Rex v. Buck et al., Testimony of John Leopold.

⁹⁴CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 2 April 1929; ibid., report, source deleted and Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 11 April 1929.

Conference in 1919 which both Zaneth and Gosden attended. The Farmers' Unity League (FUL) founding Convention had dual agent coverage in 1925 according to Tom Ewen.⁹⁵ Goudie and Leopold attended the same National Conventions in the mid-1920s and Leopold and another Montreal agent attended others. Dual agent coverage provided insurance and obviously additional intelligence even if it was sometimes contradictory.

In March 1929 the RHQ CIB temporarily secured the services of an operative who attended springtime TDLC meetings arranged in defense of "Free Speech".⁹⁶ A broad amalgam of individuals of various political stripes was present at these events making them an ideal opportunity to gain access to the revolutionary movement.⁹⁷ With an operative temporarily at work in the city and "O" Division RHQ CIB personnel forwarding clippings every couple of days, NHQ's appetite for intelligence was being satisfied. Hence with the possible exception of concern over the forthcoming Convention, Starnes did not feel that there was a significant problem in Toronto CIB operations. He was able to take steps to contain the CP's work through increased liaison with a number of government departments such as passport offices and Immigration. If he was allowing some opposition literature into the country to fuel dissension on the left, he worked with customs officials to prevent copies of other pamphlets such as "Red Action" that A.E. Smith and the CLDL had arranged for

⁹⁵Ewen, The Forge Glows Red, 119-123.

⁹⁶CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 25 and 26 March 1929; ibid., "Howling Reds Ejected When Police Reserves Are Called by Labor," Toronto Globe, 25 March 1929; ibid., "Near Riot in Labor Temple As Communists Try To Speak," Mail & Empire, 25 March 1929.

⁹⁷ibid., report, source deleted and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 25 and 26 March 1929; ibid., "Howling Reds Ejected When Police Reserves Are Called by Labor," Toronto Globe, 25 March 1929; ibid., "Near Riot in Labor Temple As Communists Try To Speak," Mail & Empire, 25 March 1929; ibid., report, Commissioner Starnes to CO "O" Division, 19 March 1929.

delivery in Canada from entering the country.⁹⁸

In April and May Superintendent Jennings and Darling instructed their intelligence personnel to attend several public meetings and demonstrations the CP arranged and to keep abreast of other arrests during these weeks. All evidence suggested that the local police forces were successful in keeping a tight lid on revolutionary activities.⁹⁹ When Jennings took sick, Inspector LaNauze supervised intelligence work and found it easy to follow the cases of arrested party stalwarts as they worked themselves through the courts. LaNauze also sent junior personnel out to conduct piecemeal investigations to add to dossiers. All these successes suggested Starnes had little grounds for criticizing RHQ CIB operations.¹⁰⁰

For weeks Starnes' interest grew in anticipation of the CP's forthcoming National Convention. He informed Jennings that recent developments taking place in the CP [five lines deleted by CSIS] also meant that "[T]here is reason to expect greater difference of opinion in the convention than have been customary, and some possibility, though slight, of a split."¹⁰¹ "O" Division intelligence personnel were to gather as much information as they could before the event. Their operative managed to compose a couple of reports which dealt with thorny issues likely to be discussed at the Convention such as the shop and area group

⁹⁸NAC RG 146, 175P/ 2017, Moriarty File, report, Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 5 February 1929; NAC RG 146, 175P/ 392, A.E. Smith File, memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to Commissioner of Customs, 20 February 1929; *ibid.*, reply, 23 February 1929.

⁹⁹CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 29 March and 2 April 1929.

¹⁰⁰*ibid.*, report, source deleted and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 29 March and 2 April 1929; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 15 April 1929.

¹⁰¹*ibid.*, report, Commissioner Starnes to CO "O" Division, 19 March 1929.

system and expulsions.¹⁰² In April, he confirmed earlier intelligence Starnes had obtained: he reported that “a terrific internal fight is going on within the ranks of the C.P. of C., which is disrupting the party especially in Toronto. Practically all the English speaking members have left the Party, in Toronto they could all be counted on one hand...” and he identified the factions presently at work in the city.¹⁰³ But following May Day demonstrations, for reasons that are not known, the operative was withdrawn.¹⁰⁴ He did not attend the CP’s Convention at the end of the month. Nor were any other RHQ CIB personnel able to provide NHQ much intelligence on the event.¹⁰⁵

Starnes must have obtained better intelligence elsewhere since he never requested that Toronto CIB personnel pursue additional information. In previous years “O” Division intelligence personnel in conjunction with personnel from other Divisions had secured as much as 159 pages on a single National Convention, some of which found its way into the core Toronto CP file, some of which was hived off and deposited in a separate file that was created. In this case it is clear that almost nothing was obtained by RHQ CIB personnel since almost nothing was being deposited on core Toronto files.

A “C” Division Montreal RHQ source likely provided Starnes with the intelligence he wanted since this was where some of the best information on the CP’s national activities

¹⁰²ibid., report, source deleted and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 2 April 1929. This concerned the way in which the CP branches were organized.

¹⁰³ibid., report, source deleted and Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 11 April 1929.

¹⁰⁴ibid., report, source deleted and Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 2 May 1929.

¹⁰⁵NAC RG 146, 175P/ 1639, Custance File, report, source deleted and Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 11 June 1929; ibid., report, Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 16 June 1929; NAC RG 146, 175P/ 1712, report, source deleted and Superintendent Jennings, 12 June 1929; They simply reported that some splits had taken place, that Custance was defeated for a position on the national executive because of her “right-wing tendencies” and that the issue of Trotskyism was not discussed as it was no longer an issue in Canada and the trouble has “blown over.”

was being generated at this juncture. Prior to the Convention a Montreal operative had spoken with Buck who predicted that there would be no major split at the Convention, an assessment which surely dampened Starnes' enthusiasm about the Convention's potential, but it is rather unlikely that he would have reduced coverage as a result. Buck was of the opinion that pretty much the same executive would be elected even though he was moderately sympathetic to the idea of some change. Buck also informed the operative that he was "behind Smith" but also "thinks he is too young to be made secretary..."¹⁰⁶ Ian Angus' interpretation of the pre-convention period and the convention itself gives Buck far more credit than he deserved. While there were three factions within Toronto Buck was nowhere near being entirely in the Smith camp in these weeks.¹⁰⁷ There was no solid Buck-Smith alliance before the convention, nor immediately afterwards, even if he was willing to co-author and publish a draft resolution with Smith urging the CPC to break with the CLP.¹⁰⁸

Montreal sources reported that during the spring Buck had become increasingly disillusioned with the CPC. In March he was so fed up with the CPC he had written Moscow offering to make "communist propaganda in China or any other country." Moscow informed

¹⁰⁶NAC RG 146, 175P/ 2035, Buck File, report, source deleted and Superintendent Phillips to Commissioner, 15 and 16 May 1929.

¹⁰⁷Angus, Canadian Bolsheviks, 230-232; The factions were: 1) those like Moriarty who rejected the CP's new line outright and its criticism of the CPC in its leadership, organization and activities; 2) those such as MacDonald who accepted CI criticisms but were not willing to abandon Moriarty, nor were they willing to give up their independent stance as to some of the exceptional circumstances in the North American economy; and 3), a group led by Smith who completely endorsed the CI's viewpoint and its criticisms of the Canadian party.

¹⁰⁸The Worker, 9 March 1929.

him, however, that he was “needed” in Canada but that they would keep this offer in mind.¹⁰⁹ By May Buck had become so “disgusted” with the CP’s ineffectiveness that he was considering quitting his job in the CP and going back to his trade, but he planned to wait until the Convention “before he decides on anything.”¹¹⁰ For these reasons, Buck was willing to support MacDonald for the time being and if an opportunity to go somewhere else, in fact, anywhere else in the world arose, then he was certainly going to take it. Although Stalinization of the CPC had begun with Buck’s, Popowich’s and Smith’s attendance at the CI’s Seventh Plenum, where they witnessed the great debate over the issue of “socialism in one country” between Trotsky, Stalin, Zinoviev, Bukharin, Kamenev and Ryko, it was by no means a fait accompli even by the time of the 1929 National Convention.¹¹¹

Viewing Buck’s role and position in this context suggests a more complex transition to the class-versus-class position in Canada and the subsequent full-blown Stalinization of the CPC. Andrew Thorpe and other scholars, who have suggested that in the British experience, past failures influenced the transition, the rate of change and form the new line took, have found something overlooked by earlier writers. These claims apply with equal validity to the Canadian experience. MacDonald was outmaneuvered largely because his leadership and the direction he pushed the party had been found lacking. This made it easier for the others such as Buck to benefit. The Buck-Smith alliance, however, was only forged once Buck’s future was decided. Even then, it was only temporary and half-hearted. Buck did his best to keep his eye on Smith whom he viewed as a potential threat to his own

¹⁰⁹NAC RG 146, 175P/ 2035, Buck File, cross-reference sheet, 4 March 1929.

¹¹⁰ibid., report, source deleted and Superintendent Phillips to Commissioner, 15 and 16 May 1929.

¹¹¹Rodney, Soldiers of the International, 129-135.

position.¹¹² As Manley's work convincingly argues the "cult of personality" surrounding Buck only began to be manufactured several years later with the publication of party pamphlets and eventually a book on Buck and his position was only further strengthened after his release from Kingston Penitentiary.¹¹³

During June, immediately after the Convention, monitoring of communist activities in the city slowed. When CIB personnel resumed their operation in late July and August they relied primarily again on OSINT as the staple of any information they acquired. Clashes with the city police over the issue of "Free Speech" increased. So did the coverage these events earned in Toronto's non working-class press. The CIB deposited 32 newspaper articles on its core Toronto CP file during five weeks of increased activity beginning 22 July. Detectives and other intelligence personnel mainly concentrated on attending open-air meetings right up until December. In reading newspaper accounts of street-corner demonstrations LaNauze simply highlighted the fact that the CP's tactics were being expanded as its work was being broadened so that several clashes were taking place simultaneously at meetings in different parts of the city.¹¹⁴

Without an agent inside the CP in Toronto in any meaningful capacity during the second half of 1929 intelligence was only trickling into RHQ. At the CEC's first post Convention meeting in mid-July both Buck and MacDonald applied for leave from the party on account of their health. Yet it took weeks before LaNauze became aware of this development. Furthermore, although it was suspected that MacDonald's request for leave on account of his health, was an "excuse" it could neither be confirmed nor denied by

¹¹²Andrew Thorpe, The British Communist Party and Moscow, 1920-43 (Manchester, 2000), 117-191.

¹¹³Manley, "Audacity"

¹¹⁴CPC TO 1920s, report, Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 29 July 1929.

strategy.¹²⁰ RHQ CIB personnel learned of them in advance through OSINT. LaNauze forwarded the Commissioner a list of places where demonstrations were planned and made arrangements to keep the protests well in hand. Detachments were notified, and NCOs and senior detachment personnel were instructed to attend meetings and submit reports. Hamilton's detachment was responsible for that centre and Guelph. Muncey was to cover London, Oshweken's personnel were to report on activities in Brantford, the Niagara Falls detachment was to cover St. Catharines, Windsor detachment was to monitor meetings at Lanspeary Park and Drouillard St. East, Toronto RHQ would take care of reporting on activities in that centre and send CIB staffer M.J. Walsh to Kitchener, while Oshawa would be handled by that city's municipal police chief. Eventually, anti-war demonstrations in these centres were monitored through a mixture of reports by plainclothes personnel and newspaper clippings forwarded to NHQ. If these events were preparing the communists for future struggles, they were serving in a similar capacity for Division personnel.¹²¹

In Toronto, 7,000 had turned out to the main anti-war demonstration (also held in defiance of "Free Speech") at "Queen's Park" on 1 August. LaNauze assured the Commissioner that the majority attended these demonstrations more out of "curiosity" than "interest in the Comintern". Furthermore, he added,

there is a possibility that the Communists never intended to speak but knowing that the general public would probably be eager to see any clash which might occur, were content to simply put in an appearance to give color to their intention to speak, in opposition of the police instructions.¹²²

Intelligence personnel at NHQ disagreed with LaNauze's assessment. It was clear

¹²⁰CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 2 and 6 August 1929; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Inspector LaNauze, 3 August 1929.

¹²¹NAC CP/DND file, report, Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 29 July 1929.

¹²²*ibid.*, report, source deleted and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 3 August 1929.

that he did not understand communist motives and someone at NHQ, likely the Commissioner or DCI, scrawled in the margin of his report “[T]ell OC of 3rd International Instructions.”¹²³ Starnes subsequently forwarded LaNauze a memorandum marked “SECRET” explaining that the CI had given the CP explicit instructions to hold demonstrations and therefore that he “doubted” his analysis of the event was correct. “[C]ommunists are especially ordered to assert their right and parade and hold meetings in the street” wrote Starnes. Furthermore, he added, “[T]he Third International laid stress for the holding of one-day strikes; no attempt was made in Canada to comply with this part of the instruction.”¹²⁴ But at the same time with paper headlines in the non working-class press such as “Police Determined to keep Red Element Under Submission,” “Tales of Brutality By Toronto Police Branded as False,” “Organized Labor Repudiates Reds,” “Would Give Free Speech To All But Communists,” Starnes’ concern was minimized as the municipal police through coercion had control of the situation.¹²⁵

William J. Brittain, a Toronto Star reporter, infiltrated the Toronto CP during this period for two weeks using an assumed alias and later reported his goal was to “become a communist ... to be able to show from the inside what power Communism is wielding in Canada.”¹²⁶ In September he published a series of articles in the Toronto Star, detailing his undercover experience. Jennings forwarded copies to NHQ and promised further

¹²³ibid.

¹²⁴CPC TO 1920s, memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to CO “O” Division, 7 August 1929.

¹²⁵ibid., “Police Determined To Keep Red Element Under Submission,” Globe and Mail, 14 August 1929; ibid., “Toronto and The Communists,” The Montreal Gazette, 15 August 1929; “Tales Of Brutality By Toronto Police Branded as False,” Globe and Mail, 15 August 1929; “Would Give Free Speech To All But Communists,” The Mail and Empire, 2 October 1929.

¹²⁶ibid., William J. Brittain, “Moscow Gives Orders But Canada Supplies ‘Red’ Campaign Fund,” Toronto Star, 4 September 1929.

investigation.¹²⁷ Brittain's action encouraged CIB personnel briefly to step up their work easing any reservations they may have had about developing another operative. So in late September they secured a contact who was in touch with party members. He reported on several public events and demonstrations and supplemented other intelligence being acquired by more passive investigations.¹²⁸ Yet he was unable to get very far into the CP. He was excluded from attending a trade union banquet in October at a local restaurant because he was without credentials.¹²⁹ Although CIB personnel often deferred to a balanced operational approach to monitoring events ultimately they relied heavily upon OSINT and in October alone, 37 clippings from Toronto's non working-class presses were deposited on the CIB's core Toronto CP file.¹³⁰

Local clashes between the CP, its umbrella organizations, and the TCPD continued into the fall. Toronto arrests at demonstrations CIB personnel reported through its balanced operational approach included those of stalwarts such as Becky Buhay, Minnie Shelly, Lily Himmelfarb, Charlie Sims, Fred Rose, R.E. Knowles, Jean Corbin, Doris Liebovich, William Kashtan, R.E. Knowles, Edith Chaikoff and Diana Bisgould.¹³¹ In each example above the

¹²⁷ibid., report, Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 5 September 1929; also forwarded were, ibid., William J. Brittain, "Masquerading As Communist Star Reporter Lands A Job," Toronto Star, 5 September 1929; ibid., William J. Brittain, "Hamilton Crowd Applauds Communist Urge to Action," Toronto Star, 7 September 1929; ibid., William J. Brittain, "Communists 'Doing Things' But Progress Is Indefinite," Toronto Star, 9 September 1929.

¹²⁸ibid., report, source deleted and Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 21 and 25 September 1929.

¹²⁹ibid., report, source deleted and Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 9 October 1929.

¹³⁰ibid., report, source deleted and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 15 October 1929; ibid., "Eight Arrested, Result of Queen's Park Flurry," Mail & Empire, 14 October 1929.

¹³¹ibid., "Police Disperse Young Reds Holding Rally on Soho Street," Toronto Star, 7 September 1929; ibid., "Becky Buhay Arrested Communists Dispersed," Toronto Star, 7 September 1929; ibid., extracts file, report, Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 13 September 1929; ibid., report, source deleted and Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 12 September 1929; ibid., report, source deleted and

names and addresses of those arrested were reported in the press. In one instance so were the names of the arresting officers which allowed for even easier follow up and additions to dossiers.¹³²

In the fall the “Free Speech” debate slowly left the streets as summertime CP arrests came before the courts. Nevertheless, OSINT still remained the primary source of information and RHQ CIB intelligence personnel simply adapted as circumstances required. Meyer Klig’s and Stewart Smith’s arrests on August 13 came before the courts on September 5 when charges against them of being members of an unlawful assembly were dismissed.¹³³ Next was Emily Weir who was arrested with five others while distributing CP literature and again the case was thrown out. Similar decisions were reached in cases against Rebecca Buhay and Harvey Murphy and others.¹³⁴ What changed, however, was that as the weeks progressed the monitoring intensified in the cases that went before the courts. As time wore on they netted more lengthy individual reports which were filled out on each subject.

Although the “Free Speech” fight remained the primary focus of both the CP’s and RHQ intelligence personnel’s core Toronto operations, both groups pursued other activities. LaNauze instructed CIB personnel to remain alert for any pamphlets and other literature being distributed near Massey-Harris company’s premises since intelligence obtained

Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 20 September 1929.

¹³²ibid., “Eight Arrested, Result Of Queen’s Park Flurry,” The Mail And Empire, 14 October 1929; ibid., report, source deleted, and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 26 October 1929; ibid., report, source deleted, 22 October 1929; “Defiance Rewarded As Reds ‘Meeting’ Brings Six Arrests,” Globe and Mail, 21 October 1929.

¹³³Horn, “Keeping Canada ‘Canadian’”, 39.

¹³⁴CPC TO 1920s, “Communists May Talk and Seek Revolution Judge Denton Finds,” Toronto Star, 14 November 1929; ibid., report, Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 22 November 1929; Betcherman, The Little Band, 42-52.

reported that both the CP and YCL were attempting to organize workers in its plants.¹³⁵ Sometimes both city police and CIB personnel were present at shop gate organizing meetings, but since party stalwarts did not appear to be making much headway, the city police refrained from stepping in.¹³⁶ No wonder company officials there were pushing forward the implementation of corporate welfare strategies and industrial councils.¹³⁷ Fall organizing meetings in Hamilton and London and communist involvement in a Hamilton steel worker's strike were reported in core Toronto files through a mix of passive investigations and OSINT.¹³⁸

Whenever possible LaNauze had detailed someone from the RHQ CIB to attend demonstrations being held. At one fall event Maurice Spector was spotted. It was reported that although present and “a very interested spectator but [he] made no effort to assist the demonstration in any way.” This passage was double highlighted in the margin by intelligence personnel.¹³⁹ Why? Well probably for several reasons. There was always an overriding belief among some intelligence personnel that Spector's expulsion was a ploy, a trap to try and get a sense of what others in the party thought about the leadership. There was a belief that he was essentially a spy for Moscow and that once he uncovered the opposition that he would be returned to his position of authority. More sensible was simply the fact that since his expulsion from the CP intelligence personnel had largely lost sight of

¹³⁵CPC TO 1920s, report, Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 2 August 1929; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 25 November 1929.

¹³⁶*ibid.*, report, source deleted and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 2 December 1929.

¹³⁷Palmer, *Working-Class Experience*, 189.

¹³⁸CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 20 September 1929.

¹³⁹*ibid.*, report, source deleted and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 15 October 1929.

Spector and his activities. They knew he had gone to New York to work with J.P. Cannon and the US opposition group the previous fall. They were also aware that he had been expelled from the Executive Committee of the Communist International (ECCI) at a Plenum meeting in Moscow at the end of July 1929. In mid-October intelligence personnel learned that Spector had returned to Canada. They had no idea what his plans were and this was his first public sighting in the better part of a year. So his appearance certainly was something of a surprise.¹⁴⁰

The “Free Speech” campaign receded temporarily at the end of October as Toronto stalwarts concentrated on other regional activities and Provincial elections. Often life was “quiet around Toronto headquarters” as a result of the former effort and energy was channeled into elections for several weeks.¹⁴¹ The provincial election also interested intelligence personnel who sent reports and clippings to NHQ. In October, two CP candidates, Buck and Sims, were both arrested and “literally pulled off of their soap boxes” when they attempted to hold an outdoor meeting.¹⁴² Monitoring this issue as it played itself out in the public arena was continued through a balanced operational approach with a primary reliance on OSINT. When Buck and Sims issued a writ against Judges Coatesworth and Morrison, as well as Mayor McBride for damages for “alleged interference with [their] right as a candidate in the election...” and for a declaration that they have “a right to rent and hire public halls in the City of Toronto for the purpose of holding public meetings...” the

¹⁴⁰NAC RG 146, 175P/ 1712 Spector File, report, source deleted and Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 15 August 1929; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 29 August 1929; *ibid.*, report, Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 5 October 1929; *ibid.*, report, source deleted, and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 15 October 1929.

¹⁴¹*ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 20 September 1929.

¹⁴²CPC TO 1920s, “Two Red Candidates Placed Under Arrest At Corner Meeting,” The Globe and Mail, 22 October 1929.

same mixed strategy with a predominant reliance on OSINT served as the CIB's primary modus operandi.¹⁴³

Fall judicial outcomes encouraged police officials to respond with their own legalistic maneuvering by asking for a ruling on the CP's legal status, something that was not settled for another year and half.¹⁴⁴ The fact that the "Free Speech" issue became less newsworthy to the non working-class press further reduced its visibility in the fall and eventually hampered continued monitoring of CP activities through OSINT.

The costs were equally damaging to Draper and the TCPD. Morale among TCPD rank and file sunk so much that by mid-October reports leaked to the press noted that dissension was widespread. Overtime work, cancellation of leave, and a "general abrogation of leisure hours" were the condition many rank and file police personnel faced. Some TCPD personnel complained that Draper and other senior personnel "are making us look like a lot of fools, sending anywhere from 300 to 600 men to Queen's park to keep about 10 Communists from speaking and giving us orders to keep the grounds clear."¹⁴⁵

Still, Draper and the Red Squad soldiered on. He wanted to follow through with an even more heavy-handed approach to stamp out the CP and looked to OPP Police Chief Commissioner Williams for support. But Williams reportedly, "washed his hands" of the matter. Williams stated firmly that fighting communism in Toronto "is entirely up to

¹⁴³ibid., "Communist Candidates Not Allowed To Speak," The Toronto Daily Star, 21 October 1929; ibid., report, Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 31 October 1929.

¹⁴⁴ibid., "Two Meetings Held By Local Communists," Toronto Daily Star, 22 November 1929; ibid., "Police Take Record of Radical Speeches," Toronto Daily Star, 23 November 1929; ibid., "Police Officials Ask For Ruling On Legal Status," Toronto Daily Star, 26 November 1929; ibid., "Evidence Lacking Against Woman Garrow Finds," Toronto Daily Star, N.D., 1929; ibid., "Communist Meeting Broken Up By Police," Toronto Daily Star, 26 November 1929.

¹⁴⁵"Police Weary of Mobilizing For Red Gatherings in Park," The Globe, 12 October 1929.

municipal officers, and we have nothing to do with it.”¹⁴⁶ Many of Draper’s junior personnel were probably just as happy that the battle had temporarily died and shifted to the courts.

Commissioner Starnes had drawn the conclusion (somewhat prematurely) that the “Free Speech” debate seemed temporary settled. OSINT had dried up and Commissioner Starnes felt it appropriate to take stock of the “Free Speech” debate’s impact on the CP. At the end of the month he wrote “O” Division’s OC:

Now that the ‘free speech’ agitation in Toronto seems to have subsided, I should like an appreciation of it, with special attention to its effect upon the standing of the Communist Party. The assertion is made that the repressive measures have brought recruits to the Communist Party. Is that correct?¹⁴⁷

Starnes was not the only one asking these questions. At a CP street-corner meeting TCPD plainclothesmen and regulars attended someone shouted out to Charlie Sims was the CP gaining in membership? Not surprisingly, his response was “they certainly are,” they had “gained considerably during the last six months...” Although he also admitted, “they are badly in need of financial help.”¹⁴⁸

C.D. LaNauze felt otherwise. He was developing his skills in intelligence matters and had improved tremendously since the summer. “After due consideration...” he informed the Commissioner, “...I have to reply in the negative to the assertion that recent repressive measures have brought recruits to the Communist Party.” It would be fair to say the CP had earned broad support from “many who sympathized with their efforts to conduct meetings in Queens Park unmolested by the Police Authorities.” That the communists had attempted to capitalize on this issue and gain support, LaNauze did not dispute, but rather he felt that

¹⁴⁶“Williams Washes Hands Of Aiding Draper’s Men Suppress Communists,” Toronto Daily Star, 12 October 1929.

¹⁴⁷CPC TO 1920s, memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to DOC “O” Division, 22 October 1929.

¹⁴⁸ibid., report, source deleted, and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 2 December 1929.

their actions were not well received. The “wider labour community,” he insisted, made it clear that they were in support “only insofar as the right of ‘Free Speech’ was involved.” He added: “The general public attended the meetings simply out of curiosity and perhaps a desire to ‘see a little fun.’”¹⁴⁹

Starnes agreed with his Acting CO’s assessment for two reasons. First, he had no better intelligence upon which to challenge “O” Division’s analysis of events. In fact, this position was supported by OSINT and was a view shared by TCPD personnel.¹⁵⁰ Second, LaNauze had begun to root his analysis more accurately in economic and material conditions of workers’ daily existence. LaNauze, for instance, had written of the changing economic conditions within the region in the period,

[h]ad this all happened in 1919 or 1920 when there was a great deal of unemployment, it is possible the ranks of the Communist Party would have benefitted as a result of the measures adopted in Toronto to prevent their holding open air meetings. But conditions have improved considerably since then thereby restricting the scope of the agitators who have to appeal now to a working class enjoying a period of prosperity and as a consequence not so susceptible to revolutionary arguments as the Communists might perhaps wish.¹⁵¹

By the fall of 1929 LaNauze’s best estimate was that the CP probably had some 1,500 members in Ontario. Of these, he concluded, most were from “foreign-born element of the lower class.” LaNauze also felt that “It is they who, led away by the ‘bold militant spirit’ that the party organizers flaunt, form the rank and file of the party. But even amongst them common sense sooner or later prevails and they drop out of the movement.” “The feeling of the general public towards them” he concluded, is “Let them talk, it pleases them and

¹⁴⁹*ibid.*, report, Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner Starnes, 6 November 1929.

¹⁵⁰Horn, “Keeping Canada ‘Canadian’”, 45.

¹⁵¹CPC TO 1920s, report, Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner Starnes, 6 November 1929.

doesn't bother us."¹⁵²

By December 1929 communists in the Finnish Organization were in open revolt and three months later those in ULFTA overwhelmingly rejected the politbureau's CPC directives.¹⁵³ These groups accounted for roughly 85-90 per cent of the CP's total strength and when the Jewish membership was added, the total of these groups climbed as high as 95 percent.¹⁵⁴ One of the ECCI's major criticisms of the CPC was that it was largely an "immigrant one," that it remained disassociated from a large segment of the labour movement and that its failures were not just leadership and tactical ones, but also organizational and particularly at the CCC and District level where the CP was unable to centralize itself and do away with local language fractions. This problem stemmed largely from the uniqueness of the CPC in terms of western capitalist countries and in a small way was also attributable to the failures of A.E. Smith in the mid 1920s fully to affect the transformation in District #3 and elsewhere. Incidentally, as noted earlier in this study, Goudie had fought against the reorganization.

As the CP's membership numbers dropped in Canada, as the party lost many stalwarts over issues that were an extension of the left/right splits, internationally communism seemed to be in retreat. The US party was divided and embroiled in an even more vitriolic battle than the Canadian one. The destruction of Lovestone did not immediately signal Foster's rise to power, for almost a year he was ambivalent at best over the CI's new tactics as one historian has argued, or as another more recently has suggested he may have resisted the new

¹⁵²ibid.

¹⁵³Avakumovic, The Communist Party in Canada, 62; Kolasky, The Shattered Illusion, 18-19.

¹⁵⁴John Porter, "The Struggle against the Right Danger in the C.P. of Canada: The Dominion Problem," The Communist International, 6, 23(1929), 947; Kolasky, The Shattered Illusion, 6, 16-18.

line from Moscow and dual unionism altogether.¹⁵⁵ Each shift in direction in the US party disrupted the work of districts, by October a Comintern Agent “G. Williams” arrived in the US to straighten out the mess, and by the end of 1929 there were just 7,000 communists left in the US party.¹⁵⁶ Months earlier, in the 1929 British general election, the only sitting communist Saklatvala lost his seat. The next communist to be elected there was Gallacher, but not until 1935.¹⁵⁷ The CPGB’s membership dropped in 1929 to 3,200, its lowest since 1923, and then in November the following year it fell further to 2,525.¹⁵⁸ With communism in retreat and wrecked by internal dissension and massive abandonment of the CPC, the situation at the end of 1929 looked promising for “O” Division RHQ intelligence personnel, even if the “Free Speech” debate had dried up. All in all then, in 1929 through a primary reliance on OSINT and other passive investigations for the most part RHQ CIB personnel had weathered the first trial in reorientation of existing operations.

4.3

Crisis, Counter-Strike and Courts, 1930-1931

During much of 1930 and 1931 “O” Division RHQ personnel gathered minimal intelligence on core Toronto communist activities. What little work was conducted in 1930 primarily was undertaken during the first six months of the year. Thereafter, with a couple of OSINT

¹⁵⁵James R. Barrett, William Z. Foster and the Tragedy of American Radicalism (Urbana and Chicago, 1999), 148-162; Edward P. Johanningsmeier, Forging American Communism: The Life Of William Z. Foster (Princeton, 1994), 242-248.

¹⁵⁶Barrett, William Z. Foster, 148-162; Johanningsmeier, Forging American Communism, 247-248.

¹⁵⁷Pelling, The British Communist Party, 87-88.

¹⁵⁸Thorpe, The British Communist Party and Moscow, 156; Pelling, The British Communist Party, 192.

exceptions, nothing further was deposited on the core Toronto CP file until 1931. So what specific intelligence was acquired and what was accomplished during this period? Why did intelligence deposits dry up and why initially was pressure not being applied on Jennings to improve the situation? How did "O" Division fit into the larger intelligence landscape in Toronto during 1931?

The Depression had dire consequences for the Force even if it grew and was a direct beneficiary of acute unemployment and other problems that plagued the working class. Although the Force's strength increased (it nearly doubled in 1932 alone from 1,351 to 2,384 all ranks) it was impossible to keep up with the growing expectations of the federal government. In 1931 a Globe editorial noted that "[T]he tendency in recent years has been to increase the responsibilities of the R.C.M.P..."¹⁵⁹

"O" Division entered 1930 with a staff of 43, of which 23 personnel were stationed at Toronto.¹⁶⁰ Its personnel gains were minimal when compared to the tremendous population increase throughout the region as a whole. Toronto's population had increased by 105,689 over the past decade, Hamilton's population had grown by 40,763, New Toronto's population soared by 131 per cent, Mimico's had risen by 81 per cent and Weston's by nearly 50 per cent. Bridgeburg, St. Catharines, and Niagara Falls had all seen increases too. Communist activities in these centres had become increasingly "problematic" for authorities, while the Force's strength had risen marginally.¹⁶¹

Many new duties occupied the attention of Force personnel and diverted them away

¹⁵⁹"The R.C.M.P. Chief," The Globe, 15 July 1931; RCMP, Annual Report, 1932, 5; Rivett-Carnac, Pursuit in the Wilderness, 293; The massive 1932 increase was the result of the assumption of provincial police contract duties in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Manitoba and Alberta.

¹⁶⁰"O" Division, Nominal Rolls, January 1930.

¹⁶¹"Toronto Population Up More Than Fifth," Toronto Star, 14 August 1931, 4; In fact, 21 cities and 83 towns had increased during the past decade in Canada, many of them in Southern Ontario.

from intelligence investigations. Increased paperwork requirements, more detachments to inspect, more distances to travel, more matters of stores and supplies, chauffeuring, clerking, in "O" Division's case a half dozen other city personnel attached on a semi-permanent loan to other government departments and usually one or two others on course leave at the Regina Depot, or absent on leave, either off sick or assisting another Division, all meant that only a handful of the RHQ's total staff were available for CIB investigations.¹⁶² Outside the city the same situation was occurring. Investigating smuggling operations, alcohol licensing, counterfeiting rings, enforcing the Opium and Narcotic Drug Act and the Indian Act had become a major focus of Division resources.¹⁶³ Labour unrest and communist activities went unmentioned in Jennings' annual report that year.¹⁶⁴

The reassignment of duties and Division transfers also affected the work being conducted in 1930. In March, J.F. Sheridan was relieved of CIB clerking obligations. For months CIB filing responsibilities were shared by several personnel and it was not until September 1930 that a new CIB clerk, Constable R.A.K. Jones, was appointed. He had little CIB experience and had only transferred into the Division months earlier.¹⁶⁵ In 1930, Mathewson, Veitch, and Nelson, who had previously conducted many CIB political investigations, seldom concerned themselves with communist activities. Mid-way through 1930 Nelson was relieved of detective responsibilities and sent to provide guard service at

¹⁶²"O" Division, Nominal Rolls, January 1930; On similar work conditions elsewhere in this period see, Harvison, The Horsemen, esp., 58-64.

¹⁶³RCMP, Annual Report, 1930, 42-44; Dubro and Rowland, Undercover, 101-128.

¹⁶⁴RCMP, Annual Report, 1930, 42-44

¹⁶⁵RCMP G.O., 8204, notes Constable Jones transferred from Headquarters to "O" Division as of 1 January 1930; "O" Division, Nominal Rolls, April and September 1930 and March 1931; He remained on probation into the following year, but ultimately failed to be confirmed in rank and by March 1931 was working as an Income Tax Guard for the Division in Toronto.

the Assistant Receiver General's office while Veitch was off investigating fraud cases.¹⁶⁶ As well, in June 1930 Inspector LaNauze was transferred out and although LaNauze's replacement Inspector Albert Edward Reames, (a future "O" Division DOC) had vast intelligence experience, immediately following his arrival Reames was sent to Moose Factory for months.¹⁶⁷ Furthermore, when he eventually returned to Toronto and began sharing supervisory intelligence duties with Jennings both officers took sick for significant periods. As a result there was little continuity in the supervisory work being conducted and eventually Fish had to be recalled from Windsor.¹⁶⁸

By any account 1930 was an extremely bleak year for the CP in Toronto and elsewhere in the District. This compensated for the Division's own shortcomings. By 1930 the CP had lost many key organizers for various reasons: William Moriarty, Mike Buhay, Florence Custance, Maurice Spector and Jack MacDonald as well as a whole host of others during the mass exodus. By the time of its 1931 Plenum, Sam Carr informed Comrade Vasiliou of the Organizing Department of CI that the CPC was in extremely bad shape. Ongoing struggles with right Finnish and Ukrainian stalwarts and "MacDonaldism remnants" left the CP with only 1,300 paying dues (even if the centre officially reported over 4,000) and although the mass exodus had forced the reorganization of the CEC and led to the establishment of a "functioning" Central Organization Department, for many months

¹⁶⁶Dubro and Rowland, Undercover, 101-128.

¹⁶⁷On his transfer see, RG 18, file 0-203, Service Record of A.E.G.O. Reames, (hereafter cited as RCMP Personnel File – Albert Reames), memorandum, Assistant Commissioner Duffus to DOC Southern Alberta, 12 May 1930.

¹⁶⁸RCMP, Annual Report, 1930, 42-43.

little was accomplished.¹⁶⁹

The CP's leading organs were teetering on the brink of bankruptcy in 1930 which threatened to disrupt available sources of OSINT. Out west The Furrow (which was brought firmly under party control after the Fifth National Convention) was in difficult straights, while in Toronto the business manager of The Worker wrote that "money was tight" and that any claim of "Moscow Gold" "seems very abstract around Party Headquarters."¹⁷⁰ Successive sustaining drives for both it and the YCL's organ, The Young Worker, were reported failures as in many instances "no money was coming in."¹⁷¹ George Wanden's and Harvey Murphy's summertime organizing tour and subscription drive in Southwestern Ontario was at best a mixed success.¹⁷²

Work elsewhere was dismal. The Women's Labor Leagues (WLLs) had stopped functioning after the death of Custance the previous fall.¹⁷³ Toronto YCL and Young Pioneer work was at a standstill owing to "slackness and lack of attention..."¹⁷⁴ Industrial organizing

¹⁶⁹AGO CP, 4A 2728- 4A 2731, letter, National Org. Sect., CPC to Comrade Vasiliov, Org. Dept., CI, Moscow, n.d.; Avakomovic, The Communist Party in Canada, 66; Sam Carr, "For Real Determined Struggle on the Two Fronts!" The Worker, 10 January 1931, 3.

¹⁷⁰AGO CP, 1A 0196 - 1A 0198, letter, J.M. Clarke to T.A. Ewan, 3 August 1929; *ibid.*, 1A 0253, letter, Business Manager to C.H. Kohls, Pembroke Ont., 12 March 1930; On The Furrow see, Ewen, The Forge Glows Red, 112-116; Rodney, Soldiers of the International, 131.

¹⁷¹AGO CP, 1A 0297, letter, Bill Kashtan, District #3 YCL organizer to Group #3 Toronto, 2 April 1930.

¹⁷²Betcherman, The Little Band, 106-108; Manley, "Communism and the Canadian Working Class," AGO CP, 1A 0312, CPC District 3, "Instructions on "Worker" Tour of Comrade Wanden, to All, L.E.C.'s and Party Units," 31 May 1930; *ibid.*, 1A 0315, Business Manager to Comrade Wanden, 18 June 1930; *ibid.*, 1A 0316, Wanden to Toronto Comrades, 19 June 1930.

¹⁷³AGO CP, 1A 0695, Circular, Canadian Federation of Women's Labor Leagues, Alice Buck, Secretary, 27 January 1930

¹⁷⁴*ibid.*, 1A 0299, Bill Kashtan, District Organizer to Lily Adler, Director of the Children's Department, Toronto, 16 April 1930.

took a downturn, in part, since no District speakers were available for field work. OSINT repeatedly revealed the full extent to which radical union work in the RILU barely got off the ground. The CP was alienated and had “disappeared” entirely from the international trade union movement since the adoption of the more confrontational tactics of the ‘third period’.¹⁷⁵

For several weeks in January 1930 the RHQ CIB had an operative or an informant in close with party stalwarts. He provided a couple of reports on local CP activities which was the best intelligence “O” Division RHQ CIB personnel acquired that year and then he vanished from the core file. Who he was, where and how he entered the CP is not known.¹⁷⁶ He reported that during the past twelve months the Toronto CP had not grown, with the exception of the Jewish membership. He added, that the English membership had decreased and there was “no talk of any increase in membership amongst either the Finns, Ukrainians or Bulgarians.”¹⁷⁷ The CP’s industrial work was largely ineffective during the past year, he claimed, as only a few gains had been made in the auto industry and in textiles in Southern Ontario. Other intelligence he provided was less valuable though, since it only confirmed information easily available through open sources. His insight into factional infighting and the circumstances leading up to the expulsion of Maurice Spector and several others fell into

¹⁷⁵CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 8 January 1930; *ibid.*, “Reds Plan to Join In Demonstrations Throughout the World,” Globe and Mail, 24 February 1930; AGO CP 4A 2787, J. Plott, Agit Prop dept., CI, CPUSA rep., to S. Smith, Agitprop Dept., CPC, 22 January 1930; *ibid.*, 4A 2720, letter, source unidentified to CPC, 9 February 1930; *ibid.*, 4A 2792, J. Plott, Agitprop Dept CPUSA, NY to S. Smith, Toronto CPC, 7 March 1930; *ibid.*, 4A 2839, letter, Propaganda Department CPUSA to Buck, 27 February 1931.

¹⁷⁶Since he provided a general overview of CP activities and his duration was brief it is doubtful that we will ever be able to learn these answers.

¹⁷⁷CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 8 January 1920.

this category.¹⁷⁸

Stewart Smith had hoped that the Toronto CP might reinvigorate itself by running a new CP course program, a school to gain recruits and to develop speakers and organizers. With that in mind between January and March 1930 both he and Buck made enquiries with the CPUSA as to courses that were being taught in the US as well as any future plans CPUSA leaders had in this respect.¹⁷⁹ Other signs of life included a WLL organizing conference held to elect a secretary and pro-tem executive in January to improve its work.¹⁸⁰ Following May Day demonstrations Toronto YCL units were instructed to generate reports to account for their poor performance and to improve the work being conducted by this department.¹⁸¹ But in the WLL's case it was not until the end of year that anything substantial was accomplished when Annie Buller, the fearless rebel, began organizing Leagues in the region along with the help of others such as Minnie Shur.¹⁸² For the YCL too, there were no easy solutions and work did not improve for months. Nor was anything further on industrial and trade union activities deposited in the core Toronto file.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁸ibid.

¹⁷⁹CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Inspector LaNauze to the Commissioner, 2 January 1930.

¹⁸⁰AGO CP, 1A 0695, Circular, Canadian Federation of Women's Labor Leagues, Alice Buck, Secretary, 27 January 1930.

¹⁸¹ibid., 1A 0303, Bill Kashtan, District Organizer, to Group #2 Toronto, 2 May 1930.

¹⁸²On her life see, Louise Watson, She never was afraid: The biography of Annie Buller (Toronto, 1976); AGO CP, 1A 0349, letter, District Organizer, Women's Department to Comrades Z. Hrinkiew, Ukrainian Fraction Section, District #3, 23 October 1930; ibid., 1A 0350, letter, Acting Women's Director to D. McLellan, London, 23 October 1930; ibid., 1A 0351, letter, District Organizer, Women's Department to Finnish Fraction bureau, 23 October 1930; ibid., 1A 0352, letter, District Organizer, Women's Department to Group #10, G. Melynk, Toronto, 23 October 1930; ibid., 1A 0352, letter, Acting Women's Director to N. Hucaluk, Windsor, 23 October 1930.

¹⁸³AGO CP, 1A 0303, Bill Kashtan, District Organizer, to Group #2 Toronto, 2 May 1930.

The CIB missed many opportunities. District and city conferences were held in Toronto in January and February.¹⁸⁴ Intelligence personnel were in no position to gain access to them. They went unreported as a result. In March, CIB personnel identified a typist who worked for Tim Buck at the CP's National office but they failed to develop this individual as a potential source.¹⁸⁵ Eventually CIB personnel became aware of the courses being offered by Smith but development of an agent in this manner was not pursued.¹⁸⁶ Tom Ewen had arrived in Toronto the previous year to assume responsibility as national Industrial Director when Buck became Secretary.¹⁸⁷ The WUL was established in January and its activities and Ewen's appointment as its head escaped comment in the core Toronto CP file. Weeks later Ewen's arrest with Harvey Murphy was reported, but only because of OSINT. Nor did the core Toronto CP file make any mention of the WUL's first Southern Ontario Conference in May as there had been for other similar auxiliary conferences in previous years.¹⁸⁸

Without reliable sources inside the CP mis-analysis of existing conditions was commonplace during this year. The limited intelligence the RHQ CIB had acquired on the auto industry and deposited in core files suggested that although communists were making "some headway" they had failed to disrupt the industry. This analysis proved wrong as

¹⁸⁴ibid., 4A 2716, letter, Buck to Comrade Inkpin, 2 January 1930.

¹⁸⁵CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 7 January 1930.

¹⁸⁶ibid., report, source deleted and Inspector LaNauze to the Commissioner, 2 January 1930.

¹⁸⁷ Ewen, The Forge Glows Red, 137.

¹⁸⁸CPC TO 1920s, "Communist Strife Breaks Out Again," Mail and Empire, 22 February 1930; ibid., "Communist Agitator Arrested in Toronto," Manitoba Free Press, 14 March 1930; Ewen, The Forge Glows Red, 160-161.

weeks later a significant strike in one of the plants with CP involvement occurred.¹⁸⁹ Furthermore, work conducted was sloppy. Demonstrations went unreported and sometimes reports were generated weeks and months after events had taken place. When intelligence was secured, quite often the CIB relied on TCPD personnel.¹⁹⁰ In a good period of heavy acquisition this was a positive sign that networks were being expanded utilizing all available resources. In poor periods such as 1930 contact RHQ CIB personnel had with their municipal counterparts simply highlighted that fact that Division operations were floundering. The CIB was so far removed from local communist activities that it barely managed to report that the CP's Toronto Offices were being relocated two days before the move took place. Furthermore, intelligence personnel offered no explanation of the circumstances surrounding the decision.¹⁹¹

Perhaps the CP became more sophisticated in 1930 in the work it conducted which made it more difficult to keep tabs on them? The CP learned from successive campaigns the Force and other police agencies operated against them. Following the uncovering of a labour spy in the early 1920s party stalwarts adopted aliases (for instance, Buck became "Page" and Bell "Gregg").¹⁹² The CP also took to the offensive and mounted their own "awareness" campaigns in its press warning workers to be on the lookout for individuals once spies were

¹⁸⁹CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 8 January 1929; Manley, "Communists and Auto Workers," 123.

¹⁹⁰CPC TO 1930s, report, Constable Sheridan, 3 April 1930.

¹⁹¹*ibid.*, memorandum, Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 29 January 1930.

¹⁹²Rodney, Soldiers of the International, in Rodney's index at the back of his study many of the names members of the underground assumed are noted next to their names; Rex v. Buck et., al., 205-206.

uncovered.¹⁹³ They developed secret drop offs, and a system of cipher codes for corresponding.¹⁹⁴

That the CP introduced these kinds of precautionary measures was not the least bit surprising since they operated in the most difficult circumstances. Especially, in 1930, as Tim Buck informed the CI's comrade Inkpin, the CPC was "working here under conditions of sharp 'police terror.'"¹⁹⁵ In Toronto, building WUL unions, according to Tom Ewen, "was accompanied by the most extreme police interference, intimidation and terror experienced anywhere in Canada."¹⁹⁶ By the beginning of 1930 the CP had made arrangements so that any stalwarts arrested for deportation would be provided for by the Soviet Union and granted passports there.¹⁹⁷ In 1930 party organizers in the industrial field became more experienced and according to John Manley, they developed "social" and "personal" methods of work: shop-gate meetings were abandoned in favour of holding meetings at homes which made it impossible in an age of OSINT for police to keep tabs on events.¹⁹⁸ While this evidence hints at a more experienced party, it is impossible to say with any certainty just how much better the CP became in preventative measures.

The core Toronto CP file dries up almost entirely during the second half of the year.

¹⁹³CPC TO 1920s, translation from ULN, 28 May 1928, CEC message, "Uncovered a Police Agent"; ibid., report, source deleted, Superintendent Allard, OC "D" Division to Commissioner Starnes, 21 May 1928.

¹⁹⁴Rex V. Buck et. al., 1932, 224-225.

¹⁹⁵AGO CP, 4A 2716, letter, Buck to Comrade Inkpin, 2 January 1930.

¹⁹⁶Ewen, The Forge Glows Red, 157.

¹⁹⁷CPC TO 1920s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 3 September 1929; ibid., report, source deleted and Inspector LaNauze to Commissioner, 25 and 27 November 1929.

¹⁹⁸Manley, "Communists and Auto Workers," 122.

So do many other files. In Tim Buck's, A.E. Smith's and Stewart Smith's PHFs regional intelligence coverage on them stopped in the summer of 1930 shortly after several personnel changes previously mentioned took place and city coverage did not recommence until early 1931.¹⁹⁹ It seems clear that an intelligence crisis was taking place not only in core Toronto files, but in those files of leading revolutionaries and likely in all Toronto work being conducted.

The slowdown in RHQ CIB surveillance of Toronto communists, in part, was a product of the "Free Speech" debates' closure and the failure to place another agent inside the CP. Nevertheless, other factors were responsible too. The CP and its subsidiaries' ability to function was reduced for other reasons. Toronto and District #3 lagged behind the West Coast in organizing the unemployed and there was little to report in this area until 1931. A money shortage, worse than usual among the CCC, groups and branches because of increased police intimidation and high unemployment also contributed to the decline.²⁰⁰ Furthermore, the CP's analysis of existing conditions was misguided. It grossly exaggerated the "war danger" which was touted as one of two possible cures for capitalists to overcome the current economic crises. The other solution was "capturing" the huge markets of the Soviet Union. Both were unlikely scenarios.²⁰¹

The Conservative victory of Prime Minister R.B. Bennett in the June 1930 election marked a turning point in the state's response to communism. Conservatives throughout the world were hostile to communism and generally were also the staunchest supporters of

¹⁹⁹NAC RG 146, 175P/ 2035, Tim Buck File; *ibid.*, 175P/ 392, A.E. Smith File; *ibid.*, 175P/ 2494, Stewart Smith File.

²⁰⁰AGO CP, 1A 0298, Bill Kashtan, YCL District #3 to Groups District #3, 14 April 1930; Avakomovic, The Communist Party in Canada, 65.

²⁰¹"Draft Statement of the Political Bureau of Communist Party of Canada," The Worker, 10 January 1931, 1-3.

police forces and intelligence services. Both groups had similar interests, at least they did in Canada in the 1920s in wanting to preserve traditions, maintain order, and often strengthen existing legislation that progressives found distasteful or utterly abhorrent. Sometimes there was quite a difference between Liberals and Conservatives on policing matters in this period, stemming partially from the Conscription issue.²⁰² In four successive years after 1926 Left Liberals passed a motion in the House of Commons to Repeal Section 98 of the Criminal code only to have it quashed by the Conservative majority in the Senate.²⁰³

R.B. Bennett's anti-communism was no exception. He was a millionaire corporate lawyer from Calgary, who abhorred communist principles. He was a staunch defender of the Force which he viewed as a western institution. He had little sympathy for the downtrodden. He felt the failures of the existing system were largely the fault of the idle and weak who had failed to accept their own personal responsibility for their condition.²⁰⁴ King was not much better, of course. He had lost the election, in part, because of his insensitivity to citizens in provinces with Conservative governments and his unwillingness to recognize their plight by loosening federal purse strings. He had defended the Force's nationalization during the debates in the House of Commons when Woodsworth, other progressives and a small block of provincial rights MPs wanted its powers weakened and in some instances the organization disbanded or confined to the Northern Territories. Yet King had also been willing to let the

²⁰²Kemp, Without fear, favour or affection, 78-84; Longstreth, The Silent Force, 313-323.

²⁰³Fudge and Tucker, Labour Before The Law, 155; S.C. 1930, c. 11, s.2,3.

²⁰⁴The Globe, 16 April 1931, 1,3.

Force's strength erode during much of this period.²⁰⁵

Almost immediately after assuming office Bennett ordered Starnes to keep him fully apprised of Communist activities especially with an eye to foreign influence at work in Canada. At first Starnes reported that there was little concern at the present time.²⁰⁶ While other Divisions' investigations into communist activities need to be examined, "O" Division was certainly not paying particularly close attention to CP activities (or at least to the level achieved earlier in the 1920s). Jennings' comments in the Force's September 1930 Annual Report told only a half truth when he wrote of the state of affairs in the work the Division's CIB had conducted during the previous year:

All have laboured well and hard, both at detachments and at division headquarters, and several are deserving of special mention. Perhaps the bulk of the work has fallen on the Criminal Investigation Branch, which continues under the able direction of D/S/ Sergeant H. Darling. Of this staff, D/ Sergeant F. W. Zaneth has been very energetic and has been the principal means in bringing many important cases to a successful ending.²⁰⁷

Much of the work referred to in the above passage must have concerned activities that were not political.

As Bennett settled into office, his election promise of blasting Canadian exports into foreign markets quickly dissolved. One potential source for goods manufactured in Canada was the USSR. But Canadian-Soviet relations deteriorated. Accusations of Soviets dumping wheat on world markets, which reduced prices and potential buyers for Canadian product, sparked a minor economic war after September 1930. Dumping Russian anthracite in Canada, a contentious issue raised by Conservatives in 1929 and 1930 prior to their victory,

²⁰⁵Longstreth, The Silent Force, 313-321; Fetherstonhaugh, The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, 208.

²⁰⁶BP, 94426, report, Commissioner Starnes to Bennett, 27 August 1930.

²⁰⁷RCMP, Annual Report, 1930, 45.

resurfaced again and was discussed in September 1930 in a special session of Parliament convened by Bennett.²⁰⁸

In December 1930 the Canadian Furriers' Guild informed the government that the USSR had a deliberate plan to destroy the industry throughout the world. At the Canadian Forestry Association's annual meeting a month later a resolution was passed encouraging the government to take steps to protect against the importation of lumber cut and shipped by conscript labour. Premier Brownlee of Alberta and Winnipeg Mayor Ralph Webb wrote Bennett alarmed by the spread of communist activities. Brownlee demanded RCMP investigations with the view of prosecuting offenders, while Webb encouraged the adoption of more stringent measures to deport subversives "back to Russia, the country of their dreams."²⁰⁹

Delegations of provincial politicians, the Chief Constables Association of Canada (CCAC's) representatives, also arrived in Ottawa to press for the adoption of more drastic measures. Commissioner Starnes joined CCAC delegates in a two-hour meeting with Minister of Justice Hugh Guthrie in which discussion focused on amendments to the Immigration Act to make it easier to deport subversives. In addition, the Chiefs clamored for changes to Canada's Criminal Code allowing for stronger action to be taken against all other potential forms of radicalism and subversive activity. Much time was spent addressing the specific "problems" posed by the communists. Chief Draper, who attended the meeting,

²⁰⁸Balawyder, Canadian-Soviet Relations, 118-130; In October the government decided against an immediate embargo, but would encourage coal importers to "refrain" from buying any more anthracite during the fall and winter months. If coal importers refused to follow Bennett's demand, then he was prepared to invoke a dumping clause in an amended Customs Act which gave the government discretionary powers to prohibit the importation of goods from any country that was not a party to the Treaty of Versailles such as the USSR.

²⁰⁹Balawyder, Canadian-Soviet Relations, 137-138, 180-181.

was most outspoken. Guthrie and Bennett needed little encouragement.²¹⁰

Trade pressures culminated in a embargo passed on 27 February of Soviet products under the clause in the amended customs tariff act. They affected six products, mainly staples, and included: coal, woodpulp, pulpwood, lumber and timber of all kinds, asbestos and furs.²¹¹ The Soviet government responded two months later with a counter embargo on all Canadian goods and further restrictions forbidding the employment of Canadian ships.²¹² These trade restrictions were not lifted until September 1936.²¹³

Communists in Southern Ontario began seriously organizing the unemployed in early 1931. Direction came from the CI, and the CPC, like other affiliates, was instructed to arrange unemployed demonstrations for 25 February.²¹⁴ A signature campaign under Tom Ewen and the WUL was also organized.²¹⁵ In preparation of the 25 February demonstration 122,000 leaflets were distributed nationally. When the day arrived more than 75,000 took to the streets, including 13,000 in Toronto. It was a clear sign that the hard work of many WUL organizers and unemployed councils in their effort to mobilize the masses had begun to pay a healthy dividend.²¹⁶ That month the party's Central Organization Department also began generating weekly organization letters to be sent to all Districts, Sub District

²¹⁰Roberts, Whence They Came and; Avery, 'Dangerous Foreigners'; On inter-war CCAC developments generally see, Marquis, Policing Canada's Century, 127-228.

²¹¹Order-in-council, 27 February 1931, Sessional Paper 442 (a), cited in Balawyder, Canadian-Soviet Relations, 139-140.

²¹²Balawyder, Canadian-Soviet Relations, 148.

²¹³Order-in-council, 10 September 1936, Sessional Paper, no. 179 cited in, Balawyder, Canadian-Soviet Relations, 151.

²¹⁴AGO CP, 9 C 0841.

²¹⁵Smith, All My Life, 119.

²¹⁶Avakumovic, The Communist Party in Canada, 77.

Organizations and National Fraction Sections which would “take up with the districts current Party activities and problems of Party organization” a further sign that it was rebounding.²¹⁷

In February 1931 Bennett applied pressure to have the Force step up its campaign against the radicals.²¹⁸ In this climate, the more Ottawa was enticed to act, the more the RCMP were pulled into the program. But the situation at “O” Division RHQ’s CIB had improved little as Zaneth and Darling’s investigations in Toronto focused on Italian mobsters and prostitution rings. Ever since the late 1920s these kinds of investigations had become increasingly central to the work the Division conducted. Through January and February 1931 no reports were deposited on the core Toronto CP file and with the exception of a few reports filled out elsewhere in the Division seemingly little intelligence work was being conducted.²¹⁹ Making matters worse still, in early February Inspector Reames became ill and was off duty for weeks. Jennings believed that he likely had pneumonia and it was not until late March that Reames’ condition improved.²²⁰

Pressure by this point by Ottawa political bosses was being applied on Starnes. It was not the least bit surprising that under these circumstances with little intelligence from “O” Division, Starnes became much more critical of his DOC and of his RHQ CIB. Betcherman’s characterization of Starnes’ “dreamily” thinking about retirement during these

²¹⁷AGO CP, 9C 1218 - 9C 1220, Central Organization Department, “Weekly Organization Letter #1,” 24 February 1931.

²¹⁸The Globe, 24 February 1931; Betcherman, The Little Band, 159; Roberts, “Shovelling Out the ‘Mutinous,’” 90-91.

²¹⁹CPC TO 1930s, “Communist Union Rears Against Labor, Calls ‘Strike’, Is Claim,” Toronto Globe, 14 January 1931; “The ‘Free Speech’ Herring,” Toronto Globe, 16 January 1931.

²²⁰RCMP Personnel File – Albert Reames, memorandum, Jennings to Commissioner, 6 February 1931; ibid., 21 February 1931.

heady winter and spring months of 1931 and therefore little concerned with CP activities, is largely unsubstantiated.²²¹ Far from a little band, the CP and its subsidiaries were becoming “a dangerous reality to be grappled with.”²²²

Starnes became more and more outspoken in the need for continued vigilance in combating communist activity. He increasingly felt that there was an intelligence crisis taking place at “O” Division RHQ. Starnes felt responsibility for “O” Division’s poor quality of intelligence and its insignificant volume, lay with the RHQ CIB, and in the final instance with its DOC whose failure to oversee the secret service work was inexcusable. In late February, Starnes sent his “O” Division DOC a stern memorandum demanding he improve the situation. The current malaise in the Division’s CIB work was unacceptable, he wrote:

I also find that the information received from you regarding the revolutionary activities at Toronto during the past winter has been extremely meagre. This despite the fact that Toronto is the headquarters of the Communist Party, the Eastern headquarters of the U.L.F.T. Association and the Eastern centre for revolutionary Jews, Finns and other foreigners.²²³

For months Starnes had been forced to rely on sources outside “O” Division to gain insight into Toronto activities and those in the surrounding region. Through other DOCs and their networks he learned that the CP had been active in Toronto and throughout the Division’s jurisdiction more generally during these months. For instance, its National Plenum had been held and had failed to receive ‘adequate attention’ by the RHQ CIB. Starnes was now under considerable pressure from the federal government and he lashed out at Jennings:

Because of the wide spread unemployment and the consequent fertile ground for unrest, the Government is anxious to be kept fully informed of each development

²²¹Betcherman, The Little Band, 160.

²²²CPC TO 1930s, memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to DOC “O” Division, 25 February 1931.

²²³ibid.

in revolutionary activity. This makes it all the more regrettable that it was not possible to have the Plenum covered. In this connection, I might say, that information was received from a Western District that the Plenum Meetings were held at Hamilton instead of Toronto so as to escape police attention.²²⁴

Deteriorating economic conditions, a growing fear and paranoia generated by intelligence reports from other centres, and a surge of activity by groups such the WUL and Unemployed Councils which were mobilizing on a provincial level and would in a few months federate into the National Unemployed Workers Association (NUWA), led Starnes to conclude that there was considerable intelligence material that the Division could obtain without a secret agent in place. Sternly, he wrote,

I wish to emphasize the fact that there is a great deal of information which must be available to your plain clothes and uniform staff even though [1/2 line deleted]. The Toronto press has given considerable prominence to Communist activities recently, meetings, disturbances, arrests, Communist candidates in the municipal elections, etc., not one of which was covered by your staff. Such incidents as these can be checked and amplified through information obtained from the City police, and reported to Headquarters without delay.²²⁵

Starnes was losing faith in his DOC and he emphasized:

The present situation is not satisfactory. I find that letters written to you on revolutionary activities are not answered for a great length of time. In one recent instance some of your staff showed what I cannot describe except as negligence. I refer to the important information contained in [1/2 line deleted] your file 22-330, where reference is made to a list of contributors to the finances of the Communist Party. One of the names mentioned was that of [four words deleted] Toronto. In your forwarding minute you state that enquiries are being made in Toronto and in a further minute (to Sergeant Webster's report of January 21st) you say that no trace could be found of [name deleted].²²⁶

The name had turned up in one of the Division's subsequent intelligence materials—a list of subscribers to The Worker. With a simple check of a Toronto Directory Starnes had

²²⁴ibid.

²²⁵ibid.

²²⁶ibid.

also found the home address of the suspected agitator and he demanded that further enquiries be conducted. He also insisted that further intelligence be obtained by studying radical language publications such as Vapaus and Der Kampf. In this period of OSINT, he reminded Jennings that the Division had translators readily available for conducting this work. Dissatisfied with the way intelligence work was conducted at "O" Division, he concluded: "Until a suitable agent is developed, I must ask you to exercise a personal supervision over this important work, in order that information from Toronto will be as complete as possible and without delay."²²⁷

Following Starnes' stern reprimand, Jennings briefly improved RHQ CIB surveillance and intelligence gathering. Nevertheless, without a secret agent positioned within the CP there were limits to what could be achieved. The RHQ's response to the 25 February unemployed demonstration (the same day the Commissioner's stern memorandum arrived at the RHQ) consisted of a covering letter and a couple of press clippings.²²⁸ Yet neither a plainclothes constable, nor a detective, had been detailed to attend the event. Subsequently when CIB personnel established a contact, their informant spent a great deal of time discussing the expulsions of Michael Buhay and Jack MacDonald rather than the event: "It is my opinion that too much importance should not be attached to these expulsions, as I have noticed that these expelled members try to gain the confidence of minor members of the Party, trying to find out what their opinion is of the leaders, etc."²²⁹ The expulsions perhaps also explained the delay on the part of the DOC to try to get an agent

²²⁷ibid.

²²⁸CPC TO 1930s, report, Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner Starnes, 27 February 1931; clippings included "4 Injured, 8 Arrested In Jobless Demonstration," Toronto Daily Star, 25 February 1931; "Four Are Hurt In Queen City Police Clash," Ottawa Evening Journal, 25 February 1931.

²²⁹ibid., report, informant and Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner Starnes, 28 February and 4 March 1931.

inside the party's fold. Still, when reports arrived at RHQ there was considerable delay before Jennings reviewed the report and forwarded it to NHQ.²³⁰ Despite the brief flurry of intelligence gathering and monitoring of subversives that took place primarily to satisfy the Commissioner, intelligence gathering collapsed in Toronto the following month and until mid-May no reports on the main organization were forwarded to NHQ and deposited on the core Toronto CP file.

It was at this point that Commissioner Starnes ordered Staff Sergeant Herbert Darling to report to Ottawa "as soon as possible for about a week's special work" which placed added strain on the already poorly functioning RHQ CIB.²³¹ Darling remained in Ottawa for close to two weeks and was eventually transferred there as of 1 April to take up duties as assistant to the DCI.²³² Fish subsequently assumed command of Toronto CIB operations until a replacement was found. But his strength as noted earlier in the study lay elsewhere.

Pressure was being applied from elsewhere too. In March the Deputy Minister of Immigration requested that the RCMP Commissioner keep him more fully informed as to when 'budding revolutionaries' were applying for passports. In taking such drastic action he added: "We will probably find that some of them are Canadian born but we will undertake to make things very interesting for them in establishing their status under the

²³⁰ibid.

²³¹RCMP Personnel File -- Herbert Darling, Commissioner Cortlandt Starnes, "Memorandum for the Honourable The Minister In Control Of The Royal Canadian Mounted Police," 25 February 1931 and; ibid., "Memorandum To His Excellency The Administrator In Council," 25 February 1931; ibid., P.C. order 73/490, E.J. Lemaire, Clerk of the Privy Council, N.D; ibid., "Telegram," Commissioner Starnes to OC "O" Division, 25 February 1931.

²³²ibid., "Telegram," Commissioner Cortlandt Starnes to OC "O" Division, 13 March 1931 and; ibid., memorandum, Inspector Joy (for Adjutant) to OC "O" Division, 28 March 1931; ibid., memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to Minister in Control of the RCMP, 14 April 1931; ibid., memorandum, Darling to Commissioner, 14 April 1931; ibid., memorandum, Darling to OC Headquarters, 24 April 1931.

Immigration Act if they leave Canada and seek to return.”²³³ In March and April the Loyal Orange Association of British America and the Employers Association of Manitoba wanted the power of the courts expanded to deal with agitators and urged the government to declare the CPC illegal.²³⁴

Bennett had decided by this point that some drastic action was needed to curb communist activities. Action on the domestic front might satisfy some “important” people who demanded an even stronger trade embargo against the USSR on moral or religious and not purely economic grounds. Bennett had little trouble stomping out “foreign agitators” whose principles clashed with his own views. But rather than provoke J.S. Woodsworth and Mackenzie King he felt it better that the action be taken by provincial authorities. Ironically even if Bennett had wanted to use “O” Division at this juncture Starnes was in no position to provide him with inside intelligence he might have required on specific developments. Although it is also clear that probably few people other than Starnes and the DCI and perhaps readers and indexers at NHQ, outside the Division, knew that the RHQ CIB’s intelligence operation was floundering. On 18 March Justice Minister Hugh Guthrie forwarded Ontario Attorney General William Price a private and confidential memorandum encouraging him to take legal action against communists and promising the full cooperation of both the Federal Justice Department and the RCMP.²³⁵

Included with the letter was a voluminous report generated by RCMP Inspector Vernon LaChance, Director of Records, which tried to establish the CPC as an illegal

²³³Avery, Reluctant Host, 115.

²³⁴BP, letter C.B. McCready to Bennett, March 1931; BP, C.F. Rowland to R.B. Bennett, 21 April 1931, cited in Balawyder, Canadian-Soviet Relations, 180-181;

²³⁵AGO CP, 30 L 0638, letter, Minister of Justice Hugh Guthrie to Ontario Attorney General William Price, 18 March 1931; Adams, “The 1931 Arrest” 4; Betcherman, The Little Band, 161-162

organization within the confines of Section 98 from its earliest days and also its ties to Moscow. No doubt Darling was originally called to Ottawa to help to prepare this report. His knowledge of communism was probably as good as, if not better than anyone else's, save Leopold who was still in the Mackenzie District and not particularly popular at NHQ.²³⁶

By this point all available resources were being tapped by Ottawa to build a case against the CP. Scotland Yard was contacted and further evidence in the form of cable intercepts between Buck and officials of the CI organ Pravda obtained by Captain Liddell, Scotland Yard's leading expert on subversion, were sent to Starnes and forwarded by Minister of Justice Guthrie to Ontario Attorney General Price.²³⁷

The main focus of the CP's city activities during March and April were two further demonstrations scheduled for 15 April and 1 May. In March, the CP's organizing secretary informed George Andrews, an organizer in East Windsor, that there was not much else to report from Toronto.²³⁸ The 15 April wrap up to the signature campaign and the coincident demonstrations catapulted the CP into the forefront of national unemployed struggles. On 15 April, 24 progressives from the CP and affiliates interviewed the Prime Minister. They presented 94,000 signatures along with their demands and received little satisfaction.²³⁹

The CP was growing in these months throughout the region. In St. Catherines, party organizer A.H. Grewar wanted to start a CP unit and was instructed to take the matter up

²³⁶As quoted in Betcherman, The Little Band, 164.

²³⁷Ronald A. Adams, "The Anti-Communist Role of the RCMP in the Depression," unpublished paper presented to the Canadian Historical Association, Annual Meeting, 1978, 6, fn. 5; also cited in Betcherman, The Little Band, 165; On Liddell's career during this period see, Anthony Masters, The Man Who Was M. The Life of Maxwell Knight (Oxford, 1984), 17-18, 26-29; Andrew, Secret Service, 362-363,

²³⁸AGO CP, 2A 1131 Organizing Secretary to George Andrews, 26 March 1931.

²³⁹Avakumovic, The Communist Party in Canada, 78; Adams, "The 1931 Arrest," 5-6.

with M.J. Forkin in Toronto, the Organizer for the Southern Ontario District.²⁴⁰ In Hamilton, William Bateman, a WUL organizer, had arranged a number of successful unemployed meetings, conferences and demonstrations.²⁴¹ In Kitchener, in April, comrade Carey had formed an unemployment committee with the aim of organizing the unemployed in Kitchener and Waterloo.²⁴² Dozens of party membership cards and WUL cards were rushed to these centres during these weeks as were copies of literature and party organs to be distributed and sold.

By April Commissioner Starnes was under incredible pressure from the federal government to assist provincial authorities in executing some large-scale plan to repress the party. A round up and arrest of communists was imminent. But still OSINT remained “O” Division RHQ’s staple for intelligence. It was supplemented by passive investigations on a rather ad hoc basis.

Starnes was in regular consultation with Joe Sedgewick, the Inspector of Legal Offices at the Attorney General’s Department in Toronto, who was assigned to this case. Sedgewick wanted expert witnesses made available in the event of prosecution. So Starnes began assembling witnesses to corroborate evidence he had accumulated. Toward this end Leopold was recalled from the Yukon, while an attempt was pursued to reach another former unidentified operative who was active during the 1922-1924 period. This way, in the event of a trial they would have experts readily available who would not have to be subpoenaed. He even approached Scotland Yard with a request to have an ex-member sent to Canada as

²⁴⁰AGO CP, 2A 1141, National Executive Secretary, WUL, to A.H. Grewar, St. Catherines, 26 March 1931.

²⁴¹*ibid.*, 2A 1144, W. Bateman, Hamilton Organizer to National Executive Secretary, WUL, 26 March 1931; *ibid.*, National Executive Secretary to William Bateman, 27 March 1931.

²⁴²*ibid.*, 2A 1176, P. Hunchak, Waterloo to The WUL, Toronto, 25 April 1931; *ibid.*, 2A 1177, reply, 27 April 1931.

an expert but was turned down because their contact was still working among communists in that country.²⁴³

Vernon LaChance was also liaising directly with Joe Sedgewick urging action and keeping tabs on similar legal developments in the United States concerning subversive organizations. He forwarded Sedgewick memorandums on cases such as one in New York City's US Circuit Court of Appeals, in connection with the prosecution of the Revolutionary Age, a CPUSA periodical, barred from second class mail in July 1930 on the ground of "sedition." The action was based on a provision in the war-time Espionage Act and was upheld on an appeal made to the federal district court. The language in the Revolutionary Age was even milder than that found in the CPC's organs, LaChance informed Sedgewick. Furthermore, its applicability to Canada was doubly important since Section 98 had been based on the same 1917 US Act.²⁴⁴

During these months Attorney General Price received support for prosecution from elsewhere. The Mayor of Guelph forwarded him copies of The Worker recommending its suppression.²⁴⁵ Sudbury's Crown Attorney forwarded NHQ copies of Vapaus, obtained from Kirkland Lake, requesting action. Hamilton's Crown Attorney and the city's Postmaster General had obtained similar transcriptions from the Canadian Hungarian Mutual Benefit Federation's official organ Kanadai Magyar Munkas (the Canadian Hungarian Worker) and passed them along to Force NCO Sergeant R.E. Webster requesting action.²⁴⁶ In Hamilton

²⁴³Betcherman, The Little Band, 165-166; AGO CP, 30L 0637-30L 0639, letter, Commissioner Starnes to Joseph Sedgewick, Attorney General's Department, 1 May 1931.

²⁴⁴ibid., 30L 0642, letter, LaChance to Joseph Sedgewick, 2 May 1931.

²⁴⁵ibid., 30L 0655, letter, R. Beverley Robson, Mayor Guelph to Attorney General Price, 8 April 1931; ibid., 30L 0654 reply, 10 April 1931.

²⁴⁶ibid., 30L 0647, memorandum, Sergeant R.E. Webster, n.d. [likely April 1931].

steps were being considered to prosecute under Section 98 and the Postmaster General was moving against the Kanadai Magyar Munkas, under Sections 217 and 219 of the Postal Act, which declared it illegal to post for delivery any materials which would “tend to injuriously affect the commercial or social standing of the persons addressed.”²⁴⁷ This intelligence was being gathered and reviewed by the AGO’s office with an eye toward prosecution.²⁴⁸

Yet through these many twists and turns Jennings continuously failed to keep the Commissioner informed of district communist activities at the center of the Canadian movement. May Day demonstrations had taken place across the country once again. The day following Starnes wrote Jennings a stern memorandum:

As previously stated the Government is keenly interested in the development of the revolutionary movement, and while I was able to furnish an authentic account of the May Day demonstration at every other centre in Canada, I was compelled to assume, in the absence of any report from you, that nothing happened at Toronto.²⁴⁹

Starnes turned to the pages of the Toronto Star and informed his DOC that clearly his assumption was wrong. The Toronto Star, for instance, had covered the demonstrations at great length. He told his DOC that the event had led to arrests, the result of a “clash” between city police and party members. But where were his “O” Division RHQ CIB reports? He added,

It is regretted that this demonstration was apparently not covered by your command, although it was previously advertised in the Communist press, to take place at the very point mentioned in the Toronto Star account -- the corner of University and Queen. Vapaus for May 2nd states that 2000 people took part in this demonstration,

²⁴⁷ibid., 30L 0658, letter, Deputy Postmaster General, Canada to E. Bayly, Deputy Attorney General, Toronto, 14 March 1931; included is a copy of pages 53-54 of the Canada Official Postal Guide.

²⁴⁸ibid., 30L 0644 - 30L 0648, memorandum for E. Bayly, Esq., K.C., Deputy Attorney General, n.d. [somewhere between April 8 and April 10]; ibid., 30L 0660, letter, Sudbury Crown Attorney to E. Bayly, Deputy Attorney General, 9 March 1931.

²⁴⁹CPC TO 1930s, memorandum, Commissioner Starnes to DOC “O” Division, 12 May 1931.

and that twelve were arrested. You will notice the discrepancy between Vapaus and the Star... It is not necessary to have secret agents to cover this form of revolutionary activity; such demonstrations, meetings, etc., of a public nature are excellently covered, in other divisions, by plain clothes members of the Force. I must request that the necessary action be taken, in future, to cover and immediately report on all activities of this kind.²⁵⁰

Intelligence operational considerations drove a wedge between the Commissioner and Jennings. Not only did tensions continue to fester concerning intelligence strategies over what could and could not be achieved without an agent on the inside, but as far as Starnes was concerned, it was increasingly the competency of his DOC that was in question.

Jennings tried to defend the RHQ CIB's intelligence work (and implicitly his own conduct) in these months. He responded to the Commissioner's allegations of 'negligence' and his charge that the Division had 'failed' to report the May Day demonstration by informing him that both he and Inspector Reames had personally visited the original site the party had selected for the demonstration. But apparently after several hours, when it seemed evident that no demonstration was likely to be held, Jennings and Reames left. Unfortunate for the RHQ, and likely in a move to throw off the police, the time and location for the demonstration had been changed by party members. The event had 'materialized' an hour after Jennings and Reames had given up. Jennings also informed the Commissioner that he did not write a report and forward it along with local newspaper clippings to NHQ simply because he believed that NHQ would have copies perhaps days before his would arrive. Jennings added:

Referring to the last paragraph of your memorandum, please be advised that plainclothes men always cover demonstrations of this and similar kinds, in this Division. I believe you have been kept fully informed in the past of all details of

²⁵⁰ibid.

importance in regard to such demonstrations, and will also be in the future.²⁵¹

Regardless of the Commissioners' reaction, Jennings had displayed poor judgement by not reporting the event which was standard practice.²⁵² An RHQ constable was detailed to attend the trial of the six communists who had been arrested at the May Day demonstration.²⁵³ He subsequently forwarded a report to NHQ. However, it is unlikely that this action did much to allay the Commissioner's concerns.²⁵⁴

By mid-1931 then it was clear that the RHQ CIB was in a dismal state. It had still not recovered from Leopold's exposure. Its early successes in 1929 were more the result of the type of political investigation that became the focus of its energies. As the 'Free Speech' campaign receded, the allowances within the RHQ CIB network which made possible for a successful, more distant, and piecemeal approach to intelligence gathering seemed to be drying up. Darling too, in these circumstances was sorely missed. Increasingly, it became clear that while pressures from the federal government was forcing Starnes to demand more intelligence from his DOC, the major problem within the network was that they simply had not developed a secret agent. Without an agent on the inside, Jennings felt challenged. For Starnes, the major problem had become Jennings.

In June, the TCPD's Inspector Marshall informed Draper that he had obtained secret documents from plainclothesmen detailed to watch communist propaganda in Toronto. The

²⁵¹ibid., report, Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner Starnes, 19 May 1931.

²⁵²ibid.

²⁵³RCMP nominal rolls, February 1928, the constable was R.W. Irvine who was transferred to "O" Division from "N" as of 1 February 1928 under RCMP G.O. 6925.

²⁵⁴CPC TO 1930s, report, Constable Irvine and Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner Starnes, 10 June 1931. Charged with unlawful assembly, they appeared before Magistrate J. Browne. The outcome was one discharge (because the accused could not be identified), while the remaining five were committed for trial and later released on \$1000 bail.

intelligence he had secured included YCL plans to disrupt a YMCA World Congress, scheduled to open in Toronto on 27 July and copies of general orders being forwarded to different district headquarters of the CP. At least one had emanated from a communist agent in New York. Inspector Douglas Marshall reviewed the materials and forwarded Attorney General Price a memorandum which stated that "after much thought I am more than ever convinced that some drastic action must be taken right away to combat this evil which is eating its way into the vitals of the country, fed to a great extent by the unemployment situation."²⁵⁵ Marshall had concluded that there is "no way in which we can combat these people without force, as apparently the majority of Citizens do not realize how serious a matter it is, and what proportions things are getting to."²⁵⁶

But according to historian Ron Adams, the most important evidence which prodded Price to act was a report of a East York township council meeting where Reeve Harry Meighen warned that unemployed unrest had become so militant that a force of more than a 1,000 unemployed veterans was organized and armed with bombs and rifles was drilling in North York township.²⁵⁷ Price responded by alerting the army and dispatching the OPP to investigate the report.²⁵⁸ He assured Torontonians that there was little cause for concern, but privately he took action and days later instructed Joseph Sedgwick and OPP Commissioner V.A.S. Williams to prepare a plan to execute the arrest of the CP leadership for violation of Section 98 of the criminal code.

²⁵⁵Adams, "The 1931 Arrest," 10; AGO CP, 30L 0670, report, Inspector Marshall to D.C. Draper, 8 June 1931.

²⁵⁶AGO CP, 30L 0670, report, Inspector Marshall to D.C. Draper, 8 June 1931.

²⁵⁷Adams, "The 1931 Arrest," 10, AGO CP, 30 L 0709, Affidavit of Telegram reporter Charles Adderly; Toronto Star, 26 June 1931, 1,2; Globe, 27 June, 1931, 13-14; Betcherman, The Little Band, 169-170.

²⁵⁸Adams, "The 1931 Arrest," 11; AGO CP, 30 L 0717

These fears never disappeared and until August reports of “Well-fed and well-paid agents of Moscow” who were “meeting with a large measure of success in their efforts to convert disgruntled and embittered men over to the side of communism” were noted in the non working-class press. “Drifters” in large numbers were coming into the major Canadian cities daily. “The Don Valley, in Toronto, is becoming a recognized rendezvous, and the time is fast coming when it will not be safe for a policeman to pursue his investigations in that quarter.” “The situation was upon the government...” some like Col. F.F. Clarke, the man who organized the internment camp at Kapuskasing during the war felt. Clarke feared “pending revolution” and that unless the government “acts quickly” he believed the country faced “a situation which is menacing in the extreme.” Early on he floated the idea of bringing the unemployed under military control, reestablishing camps to segregate them from the rest of society.²⁵⁹

Through June and July the TCPD and the OPP worked closely with the Attorney General of Ontario’s office gathering evidence that could be used in court against the communist party and its umbrella organizations. By the summer Draper had a police informant placed inside the Toronto CP who was providing frequent reports on local communist activities which he shared with Williams, Sedgewick and Bayley.²⁶⁰ OPP Commissioner Williams also forwarded Sedgewick several reports on communist gatherings in Cochrane, Ontario, and elsewhere, where agitators were at work in the region. The “situation” in Cochrane was becoming ever more dangerous, its NCO reported, “since the

²⁵⁹ Address of Col. F.F. Clarke, at the Ontario Rifle Association Match in Toronto, quoted originally in The Globe, 4 August 1931 and in “Militarists See Great Chances to Regain Their Past ‘Glories’” The Worker, 8 August 1931, 1.

²⁶⁰ AGO CP, 30 L 0748, report, Draper to V.A.S. Williams, 11 July 1931; Betcherman, The Little Band.

prospect of men attaining work was not good.”²⁶¹

During much of this period “O” Division relied heavily upon both the TCPD and the OPP for intelligence it acquired. In June, evidence suggests that Inspector Reames was kept apprised of local developments over the phone and that any enquiries he had were followed up by TCPD and OPP personnel.²⁶² “O” Division only took steps to improve its intelligence program in mid-June when Reames arranged to have an operative attend a CP picnic in West York Township. The operative reported that 3,000 people had turned out to the event although the CP’s “heads” were not present, there were no speeches made, and very little literature was sold. The operative reported that money was “very scarce among the Comrades, and at least 70% are out of work.” He had obtained a sample of the material used during the proceeding week’s recruiting drive, but added there is “very little activity now.” Jennings informed the Commissioner that he was keeping the literature in Toronto for LaChance and that another picnic was being arranged by the CLDL and scheduled for Pelmo Park, just outside Toronto for 1 July.²⁶³

At the end of the month through his source Jennings forwarded the Commissioner a copy of the CP’s “Resolution of First Organization Conference District” and the “Outline of Political Minimum Course of Party Training. Instructions for the Use of the Course” both of which were sent to all CP units earlier in June. The former provided the CIB with a

²⁶¹AGO CP, 30L 0663 - 30L 0665 report, Sergeant F. Gardney, 30 May 1931, and letter, OPP Commissioner Williams to Joseph Sedgewick, 5 June 1931; *ibid.*, 30L 0668, report, “The National Unemployed Association Cochrane Branch Council,” 28 May 1931.

²⁶²CPC TO 1930s, report, Inspector Reames to Commissioner, 10 June 1931 AGO CP, 30 L 0696, memorandum, Draper to Williams, 3 July 1931; *ibid.*, 30 L 0695 report, Draper to Williams, 6 July 1931; *ibid.*, 30 L 0691, report, Chisholm, to Commissioner Williams, 11 July 1931; Betcherman, The Little Band, 167-168.

²⁶³CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 17 and 18 June 1931.

blueprint of immediate CP plans for building the revolutionary movement in the District. Since the February Plenum, organizers were appointed in Oshawa, Toronto and Barrie. District #3's membership had grown from 375 to 576 by June as a consequence and it was hoped that this number could be increased to 750 by the fall. The latter dealt with concrete proposals to improve the quota for a CP school. Every stalwart had to participate since the course was intended to give every member an understanding of the basic principles of Leninism. Every unit of the party had to set aside time to go through the "minimum" in each of its meetings. The course was to be kept in "permanent use," and every worker joining the CP was to be "acquainted" with about 14 subjects, issues such as the class struggle, exploitation of the working class, the capitalist state, imperialism, unemployment, social democracy, proletarian revolution, the dictatorship of the working class, the CP, its allies, the YCL, and so on and so forth.²⁶⁴ These reports were the first significant sign of life in the RHQ CIB's political operations in many months.

In early July "O" Division's operative also attended a meeting called by the CPC's District #3 Toronto Committee to report on the activity of the CP's District #3 units. Representatives from about 18 of Toronto's 23 units were present. They reported that every unit was financially handicapped. The city had about 400 members in total: "75 % are foreigners, mostly Ukrainians, Finns and Jews." Only 50 had paid their monthly dues in June, at least 70 per cent were out of work and just 5 of the 23 representatives present were employed. Meetings to improve the situation were to be held monthly. In forwarding his operative's report to NHQ Inspector Reames drew the Commissioner's attention to the "poor conditions of the Party...."²⁶⁵ Afterward the intelligence reports by the operative stopped.

²⁶⁴ibid., report, Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 26 June 1931.

²⁶⁵ibid., report, source deleted and Inspector Reames to Commissioner, 12 and 14 July 1931.

The retirement of Cortlandt Starnes and the appointment of Major General Sir James Howden MacBrien took effect as of 1 August.²⁶⁶ It commenced a new period in the Force's crusade against communism only in the sense that MacBrien needed even less prodding than Starnes to act since his politics was even more in keeping with Bennett's.²⁶⁷ Like Bennett, MacBrien, the modernizer, believed that leadership demanded action, good leadership quick and decisive action, and there was little room for policy and bureaucratic process.²⁶⁸

The House of Commons adjourned on 3 August and the following day OPP Commissioner Williams telephoned TCPD Chief Draper and Commissioner MacBrien requesting their cooperation in conducting a series of raids against the CP. For MacBrien participation in the raids could not have come at a better time. The raids became a way to deflect any internal criticism over his appointment from outside the Force which was only announced weeks earlier. It seems only reasonable to believe that at least silently certain senior personnel privately had reservations about his appointment and felt slighted even if the evidence is not there.²⁶⁹ He instantly became popular with at least some intelligence personnel whose work was often underappreciated. He came to be viewed in the Force as

²⁶⁶"Starnes Retiring, MacBrien Succeeds In Mounted Police," The Globe, 15 July 1931; Who's Who In Canada, 1936-7 (Toronto, 937), 1433;

James Howden MacBrien, was born in Myrtle, Ontario, in 1878. MacBrien had briefly served in the NWMP but left to serve overseas in the Boer War and subsequently for two years in the Australian Militia. During World War I he was a brigadier general in command of the 12th Infantry Brigade and upon returning home he served as Chief of Staff until he resigned in 1928.

²⁶⁷"MacBrien's Crowd Laugh," The Worker, 13 March 1926, 4; Sawatsky, Men in The Shadows, 65; Roberts, "Shovelling Out the 'Muntinous,'" 93, fn.39.

²⁶⁸NAC MG 30, E63, vol.4 Sir James Howden MacBrien file; "Gen. MacBrien, Dr. Doughty Are Knighted," The Journal, 2 June 1935; Kelly, The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, 172-182.

²⁶⁹"Starnes Retiring, MacBrien Succeeds In Mounted Police," The Globe, 15 July 1931.

a bold and imaginative leader, something missing during Starnes' years at the helm.²⁷⁰ Warrants were sworn out for six CP leaders: Tim Buck, Tom McEwen, John Boychuk, Tom Hill, Malcolm Bruce and Sam Carr. MacBrien subsequently ordered Western DOCs to keep the absent Malcolm Bruce and Sam Carr under surveillance and after several delays, arrests were scheduled for 11 August.

It was in this context, in an age of predominant reliance on OSINT and passive investigations, as far as "O" Division was concerned, that the events of 11 August unfolded. In Toronto six personnel from each Force were hand-picked to execute the raids and they met on 11 August in the utmost secrecy at 6 p.m., an hour before the raids were scheduled to take place at Commissioner Williams' office in the provincial parliament buildings. When most men arrived they had no idea of what was happening as precautions were taken to prevent a leak.²⁷¹

The RCMP contingent was headed by Superintendent Jennings and Inspector Vernon LaChance. The raids were to take place at precisely 7 p.m. Two police officers were to affect each raid. In Toronto, Buck, Ewen and Boychuk were to be arrested at their homes. In addition, raids were to be conducted at the CP's national headquarters on Adelaide Street, the Church Street offices of The Worker, and the Lombard Street headquarters of the WUL. Once arrested, the accused were to be taken to different police stations where they would appear before a Magistrate in the daily police court. Raiding officers were instructed to "make a very thorough search for all records, literature, correspondence, books and paper, and stay in possession until Mr. LaChance or some R.C.M.P. officer arrives to examine the

²⁷⁰Fetherstonhaugh, The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, 198-207, 241-250; Kemp, Without fear. Favour or affection, 78-84.

²⁷¹"Province Swoops Down On Communist Heads In Spectacular Raids," Toronto Star, 12 August 1931, 1-2.

material seized.”²⁷²

The specifics of the arrests, and the colour surrounding them, are well documented by Betcherman, Adams and others, and need not detain us here. From an intelligence perspective the arrests were a failure in the sense that by ten p.m. that night four of the “big six” as an article in the Toronto Star subsequently labeled them, for whom warrants were sworn out were not arrested and remained at large.²⁷³ The failure to keep individuals under surveillance the day of the arrests was inexcusable. The operation led by Williams, Cuddy and Jennings, three military veterans, was perhaps a classic case of old-school military leadership being engaged where basic common sense, if not some intelligence savvy was required. It was also symbolic of the larger general problem that had plagued the Force in its monitoring of CP activities for several years. OSINT as the primary form of intelligence gathering, passive investigations, and operatives infrequently and poorly positioned within the CP had severe limitations.²⁷⁴

In editorials, The Globe and other non working-class papers celebrated the arrests. They viewed the Attorney General’s actions as a “bit belated” in “coming to grips with the Communist menace” and only hoped that “the action is pushed to completion with the vigor the situation demands.”²⁷⁵ They got what they wanted. The trial and appeals that followed

²⁷²AGO CP, 30L 0956, “Confidential Instructions To Officers,” n.d.; “Communist Leaders Rounded Up in Toronto,” The Globe, 13 August 1931, 1-2; “Province Swoops Down On Communist Heads In Spectacular Raids,” The Toronto Star, 13 August 1931, 1-2.

²⁷³“Communist Leaders Rounded Up in Toronto,” The Globe, 13 August 1931, 1-2; “Province Swoops Down On Communist Heads In Spectacular Raids,” The Toronto Star, 13 August 1931, 1-2. “‘Big Six,’ Communist Chiefs Marked by Soviet Alliance,” Toronto Star, 12 August 1931.

²⁷⁴Ron Adams, “The 1931 Arrest and Trial of the Leaders of the Communist Party of Canada,” Canadian Historical Association, 1977; Betcherman, The Little Band, 159-206; Balawydar, Canadian-Soviet Relations, 181-184.

²⁷⁵“The Attorney General Acts,” The Globe, 13 August 1931.

were largely the “show trials” that communists then and later suggested. “The courts,” A.E. Smith who attended wrote, “were never more definitely employed as an agency of capitalist dictatorship.”²⁷⁶ By the end of the trial it was difficult not to reach that assessment.

The trial opened in Toronto on 2 November and was over in ten days. The case was heard before Justice W.H. Wright, well-known for anti-labour views, the prosecution led by Crown Counsel Norman Sommerville and Joseph Sedgewick, who were assisted by Vernon LaChance and an RCMP lawyer who handled Force records and other technicalities which concerned RCMP intelligence. Eight of nine defendants were represented by Hugh John MacDonald and Onie Brown. Tim Buck served as his own lawyer.²⁷⁷

In the indictment the accused were simply charged with being members of an unlawful association for a period of ten years. There were no specific individual acts cited, nor a bill of particulars dealing with each accused. They had no understanding of the specific charges they had to meet and yet the prosecution had more than two months to prepare these simple statements. Surely this was grounds for immediate dismissal.²⁷⁸

A lengthy motion to quash the indictment and to have the case against the nine accused thrown out by MacDonald on day one of the trial was dismissed. Instead the prosecution was granted recess and told to produce particulars setting forth why the CPC was an illegal organization. The prosecution also provided a second bill of particulars relating to the charge of seditious conspiracy which stated that the accused had conspired to carry out the CPC’s activities, which by nature were those of the revolutionary organization and therefore “seditious”. The nine accused entered their plea of not guilty. The

²⁷⁶Smith, All My Life, 132.

²⁷⁷Betcherman, The Little Band, 183-184.

²⁷⁸Smith, All My Life, 133; Betcherman, The Little Band, 183-186.

remainder of the first day was given over to other administrative and preliminary matters.²⁷⁹

On the second day of the trial, the clerk read the charges against the accused, the jury was selected, and Crown Counsel Norman Sommerville made his opening address to the jury. Smith later claimed that it was a “stand pat” jury, and that it was rigged by prior police screening.²⁸⁰ Betcherman argues that such was not the case because the majority were trades persons, members of the working class.²⁸¹ But this does not speak to Smith’s original claim they were biased.

MacDonald proposed to submit evidence and make his case in two areas, the first being establishing proof of membership in the organization: that the accused were members of the CPC.²⁸² The second part, which would take up the vast majority of the trial, was to be spent establishing the aims and objectives of the organization to prove that a “seditious conspiracy” had taken place with the ultimate goal of overthrowing through revolutionary means (by force and violence), the federal government and establishing a Soviet Dictatorship in Canada.²⁸³

Over the next week a dozen witnesses were questioned, primarily members of various police departments involved in the raids. In addition, examinations and cross-examinations of the accused were conducted. The testimony of a steady mix of witnesses and accused was augmented by the introduction of 103 exhibits as part of the Crown

²⁷⁹Betcherman, The Little Band, 184-185; AGO, reel 37, Supreme Court of Ontario, Rex v. (9) [hereinafter cited as AGO, reel 37, Rex v. Buck et al.,]

²⁸⁰Smith, All My Life, 133.

²⁸¹Betcherman, The Little Band, 185-186.

²⁸²AGO, reel 37, Rex. V. Buck et al., 40-114; Betcherman, The Little Band.

²⁸³ibid., begins page 115.

Counsel's case.²⁸⁴

The contribution that the RCMP and "O" Division made to the court proceedings, was enormous. LaChance and a Force lawyer provided expertise to the prosecution which was largely unfamiliar with communist motives and means. In addition, Frank Zaneth, John Leopold and George Fish appeared before the courts. Between them they had over 40 years experience in CIB investigations and considerable experience in an anti-labour capacity. Fish and Zaneth had both participated in the raids. Fish had led the botched raid on Tom Ewen's house, which resulted in the arrest of Mike Golinski.²⁸⁵ Zaneth had gone to Tim Buck's home during the arrests.²⁸⁶ Both took the stand a couple of times early in the trial.

Of the two Fish was the least competent. He was tripped up during cross-examination by defense council. He was accused of basically having arrested Golinski prior to taking him into the station which called into question the evidence he had secured from Golinski because the accused had not been read his rights. Justice Wright knew full well that this was the direction that MacDonald was leading the witness during the cross-examination and was forced to step in and stop this line of questioning. Otherwise, the case against Golinski was likely lost.²⁸⁷ Zaneth was called and re-called as a witness on several occasions to corroborate evidence and also to explain how documents secured during the raid on Buck's residence were marked and removed thereby protecting their "integrity." Even this was

²⁸⁴ibid.

²⁸⁵"Province Swoops Down On Communist Heads In Spectacular Raids," Toronto Star, 12 August 1931, 1-2.

²⁸⁶ibid.

²⁸⁷AGO, reel 37, Rex V. Buck et al., testimony of George Fish, 85-87.

botched. Not all materials were marked in the same manner.²⁸⁸

Clearly the most important of the three was John Leopold. He spent hours on the stand and was called to testify on numerous occasions. He was the centrepiece of the prosecution's bid to prove that the accused were members of an unlawful association and that most of them had been for years. He was also the glue that stuck together the history of CPC, dealt with its activities and essentially made sense of many of the materials that would be submitted as exhibits for evidence. He did not just "help" convict the accused as some authors have suggested. No, without Leopold, or someone like him, a former secret agent on the inside, it is extremely doubtful that the prosecution's case would have held.²⁸⁹

Both the lead prosecutor and Justice Wright in several instances stepped in to defend Leopold during courtroom proceedings. His credibility as a "witness" was constantly under attack. In providing evidence against the accused, Leopold relied on copies of letters he had reproduced by memory, the originals he had destroyed years earlier, he claimed. The defense council questioned the "weight of them." Justice Wright even at first was skeptical. The Force probably only told him once it recessed that many of them were secret intelligence reports and hence their desire not to produce them. But the jury was never informed. Even if they were, what justice is derived by information used in a prosecutorial manner where originals are not presented? Ultimately Wright allowed this material in as evidence and in time seemingly it was as acceptable as other materials entered.²⁹⁰

Throughout the trial Leopold downplayed his role in the CP. In so doing, he misled the jury during his entire testimony. He stated that he had never been very active in the

²⁸⁸Rex V. Buck et. al, testimony of Frank Zaneth, 124.

²⁸⁹Rivett-Carnac, Pursuit in the Wilderness, 293-294; Rex v. Buck et. al., 90-256.

²⁹⁰Rex v. Buck et. al, 121-122.

organization.²⁹¹ Cross-examination by defense counsel subsequently proved otherwise. Leopold confessed that he had established the Regina branch, that he had encouraged others including Bruce among the accused to join the CP, that he had provided funds regularly for the CP's upkeep and was active in many ways.²⁹² Only once in his career was he "called down" for "slaking" by central office.²⁹³ According to Buck's testimony, Leopold was "the man with the vehicle," the individual who would put a party member up and provide all sorts of assistance when needed. Even his participation in the Toronto Sacco and Vanzetti arrests was brought to light during the cross-examination, and rather suggested, that he was a "prime mover."²⁹⁴

All Sommerville could do during reexamination was to try to reestablish Leopold's credibility and to make clear that he was "acting under orders" as a "policemen." Leopold's arrest at the Sacco-Vanzetti demonstration was seemingly some of the best evidence presented which suggested otherwise. It was probably convincing to a jury that had little exposure to "radical" politics and therefore was not of the same ilk as the accused despite Betcherman's claim. Not surprisingly, to raise doubts Sommerville cleverly addressed this specific question making it clear to the jury that Leopold had not organized the Sacco-Vanzetti demonstration. When Buck took the stand and lambasted Leopold during questioning Justice Wright interjected and cut him off. Only because most members of the jury knew nothing about the labour movement was Sommerville's argument successful.²⁹⁵

²⁹¹ibid.,

²⁹²ibid., 191, 242-243, 255.

²⁹³ibid., 244.

²⁹⁴ibid., 241-243, 247-248, 255.

²⁹⁵ibid., 256, 402.

During their defense, Buck and the others emphasized the “normal” activities they had legitimately participated in, such as elections through the 1920s, as clear proof that they were working to transform the system in a manner that was in keeping with the democratic process. Furthermore, they informed the jury that once Leopold was exposed, he was still treated with a degree of “courtesy” that as events then made clear he never deserved. His character was far more despicable than that of Honest Bob McSnore, the fictitious archetype of the so-called labour movement’s ‘friend’ who could never quite fully come around to accepting its principles, who meant well but was an impediment to working-class consciousness, a roadblock along the road to socialism.²⁹⁶

Whenever this kind of logic was employed Justice Wright insisted that the accused were not being tried for what they did, what legal and constitutional means they employed for reform or revolutionary change but rather what they did or suggested through writing or deed that was illegal. Whenever Buck or others turned to provide a definition or understanding of key words such as “revolution” they were told that they were not entitled to because “interpretation” was the task of the jury. Nevertheless, when Wright wanted a definition or an explanation, he interjected and demanded it from Buck only to cut him off if the definition failed to support the prosecution’s case.²⁹⁷

As in Winnipeg, the Toronto trial from start to finish, from the very theatre and conditions under which it was established (swarms of mounted police and motorcycles blocked the entrance to the courthouse), to the indictment, to the reading of charges, to the calling of witnesses and the accused, to the way in which evidence was entered and the scope of questioning narrowed, meant that its outcome was largely predetermined. The

²⁹⁶ibid., 247-248; Ewen, The Forge Glows Red, 93-123.

²⁹⁷ibid., 446.

accused were convicted on all counts. Seven were sentenced to serve five years and the other two. With the guilty verdict read, as Smith later wrote, “communism became a ‘crime in Canada.’”²⁹⁸ The CP was placed under a ban. Subsequent appeals overturned the convictions for seditious conspiracy, but upheld the Section 98 convictions which meant sentences were not reduced.²⁹⁹ The major lesson of the trial that Smith took away was that the Canadian working class must have a “strong party of their own” and as well that “the historic period has arrived when a great step forward must be made by human society.”³⁰⁰

Conclusion

With the trials behind them life slowly returned back to “normal” for the Division’s intelligence personnel. But what was “normal” anyhow? In the 1920s it had often meant developing a primary penetration agent and sending him into core Toronto branches of the CP for extended periods of time, sitting on committees at the branch, city, district and even briefly national level. It also meant participating in street-corning demonstrations, chairing meetings, distributing flyers, organizing events. In the aftermath of Leopold’s exposure “normal” meant something substantially different. By early 1929 it meant relying primarily on OSINT as the RHQ CIB’s primary modus operandi. Some personnel achieved a subtle refinement in their reading and scanning of newspapers for critical information (although since they did not initialize in the margins their underlining of passages it is impossible to tell exactly who, when and where at times). The new period also meant relying more on plainclothes constables and other regulars instructed to attend open-air meetings and other

²⁹⁸Smith, All My Life, 139.

²⁹⁹Betcherman, The Little Band, 29-41, 171-215; F.R. Scott, “The Trial of the Toronto Communists,” Queen’s Quarterly, 39 (1932), 512-527; Fudge and Tucker, Labour Before The Law, 157; *Rex v. Buck et. al.*

³⁰⁰Smith, All My Life, 139.

public demonstrations and occasionally developing other operatives to secure additional intelligence. Senior intelligence personnel (or those individuals who concerned themselves with these matters) developed stronger informal ties, a working relationship, with other government departments at the federal, provincial and municipal level.

But what assessments and lessons can we draw by way of conclusion about the 1928-1931 period in the RHQ CIB's core Toronto CP counter-subversion operations? The reorientation of "O" Division RHQ CIB's core intelligence network began a new period in its operational history although it is important not to exaggerate the transformation taking place. For several years following there was a significant shift in the CIB's primary modus operandi, from the development of penetration agents in succession over to OSINT and more passive investigations. One lesson to note is that this transformation occurred largely as the result of a mistake rather than any planned consideration on the part of Division personnel. What is impossible to draw any conclusions about (however much one might like to) was the full impact that the adverse publicity surrounding Leopold's exposure, and a more careful and sophisticated CP had, in applying pressure discouraging the development of another penetration agent. We can say with a greater level of certainty that for several years "O" Division's core Toronto CP operations functioned without a penetration agent.

Another lesson was that although OSINT's development as a tool helped to prepare the Force for its struggle to confront mass mobilization with the unemployed and popular front movements of a later day its effectiveness was limited. By early 1931, a change in governmental policy, deteriorating economic conditions, and a better organized and more confrontational CP and its subsidiaries, placed the Force under enormous pressure to participate in more coercive forms of social control. As a result tension increased between Starnes and Jennings over the Division's intelligence capabilities without an agent inside the Toronto CP. The arrests followed and the full limits of OSINT became known.

For “O” Division’s CIB the August 1931 arrests accomplished at least two things. Internally they highlighted a need on the part of Division personnel to rethink existing strategies in its counter-subversive program and to take steps to strengthen them. These changes followed and will be discussed in the next chapter. The second impact the raids had was that in their aftermath, they opened up a wealth of intelligence on the CP, its subsidiaries and for “O” Division specifically the CP’s activities in District’s #3 to #5.

The raids provided tens of thousands of pages of additional intelligence much of which was already known to the Force but a great deal of which was not. This intelligence shed considerable light on the purges of the past three years and the struggles between various party factions. Furthermore, it exposed a great deal of the WUL’s, the WLL’s, the YCL’s, language and other umbrella organization’s work: both successes and failures. Specifically, it identified pitfalls in the Toronto CP’s industrial and trade union work, and among youth and women. It also helped the CIB fill in some of its PHFs identifying who had left the city, the region and the country, for what purposes, and often under what circumstances. Intelligence from CP Districts 1-9 right across the country was gathered in the arrests. This provided the RHQ CIB with the kind of insight into the CP it had certainly been without in Toronto for years.

But like most other matters in life, the wealth of intelligence gathered had its positive and negative sides. Ultimately the intelligence gathered from the raids not only filled in gaps and created possibilities for fueling dissension but it also confirmed many of the Force’s worst fears. While the intelligence allayed fears that much in the way of financial support was being funneled from Moscow through the Anglo-American Secretariat to Toronto (no more than about \$13,000, most of which arrived early in the CPC’s history), it did little to

off-set general concerns about the degree to which the CPC was under foreign control.³⁰¹ Furthermore, intelligence personnel could only now marvel at the amount of thought and consideration gone into mapping out strategies, slogans and policies for work being conducted. For intelligence personnel, the “Age of OSINT” was one of both success and failure. Early failure in 1928 helped prepare the Division for later periods. The success of the 1931 arrests and the trove of seized intelligence put intelligence personnel on sounder footing. Only now the larger and more immediate problem became the fact that movement was “headless” and soon functioning underground.

³⁰¹Financial support from Moscow ebbed and flowed during the CPC’s history. In 1999, according to Christopher Andrew, Canadian intelligence services had embarked on a study which was to be completed in 15-18 months. A preliminary investigation on my part has turned up little, Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, The Sword And The Shield (New York, 1999), 286-287.

The Communist Party of Canada has, during the past year, and since the conviction of the eight leaders in November, 1931, been somewhat disorganized although, owing to the unemployment situation and general unrest prevalent, had great opportunity to sow the seeds of discontent.¹

Superintendent C.H. King, 1932
(“O” Division OC)

Chapter V
“Reconfiguration, Reorientation, and Redeployment”:
“O” Division’s Core Toronto CP Intelligence Operation, 1932-1939

Even though Superintendent King had misjudged the strength of the communist movement his RHQ CIB emerged in 1932 better positioned to keep tabs on the CP. With the party illegal and operating underground, before long “O” Division reduced its reliance on OSINT in favour of a mixed operational strategy. To monitor the mobilization of the unemployed the Division relied upon detectives and eventually operatives. For periods they turned increasingly to other police forces whose own intelligence operations were expanded.

In the mid-1930s the CP entered a period of resurgence of activity. RCMP Commissioner James Howden MacBrien reported that “[t]he Communist Party and its subsidiaries have again been energetic in their efforts during this period of acute unemployment...”² The CP changed its strategies and tactics and established a popular front through organizations such as the Canadian League Against War and Fascism (CLAWF) and its successor, the Canadian League For Peace and Democracy (CLPD). The Spanish Civil

¹RCMP, Annual Report, 1932, 68.

²RCMP, Annual Report, 1935, 13.

War broke out in July 1936.³ The Canadian left mobilized more than 1,600 men for overseas service and they established a Canadian Battalion and a domestic support body, the Friends of the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion (FMPB). Communists became extremely effective in providing material and moral assistance to antifascist activists and in aiding victims of international aggression. By October 1937, in just two years, the CP had nearly tripled its membership to 15,000.⁴

“O” Division RHQ CIB intelligence personnel responded to all these changes revolutionaries made by making adjustments to their operations in light of the tremendous economic upheaval and political instability before them. But just how effective were CIB personnel? Were their 1930s networks able to provide the same level of coverage as earlier ones? To what extent did the Liberal Party in power differ from its predecessor in its willingness to engage the Force in an anti-communist program? The 1930s experience raises many important questions. With the economy in a state of disrepair in 1932 clearly there was some need to make adjustments to the government’s key political policing apparatus.

5.1

Superintendent King, the establishment of a new *modus operandi* and the unemployment crisis in the early 1930s

³An important addition to the security and intelligence field in the popular front period is Martin Henry Peter Lobigs, “Canadian Responses To The Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion, 1936 To 1939,” M.A. Thesis, The University of New Brunswick, May 1992; standards include, William C. Beeching, Canadian Volunteers, Spain 1936 - 1939 (Regina, 1989); Victor Hoar, The Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion - The Canadian Contingent in the Spanish Civil War (Ottawa, 1986).

⁴Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins: The Depression Years, Part II, 1935, SB #781, 13 November 1935, 577; ibid., #780, 6 November 1935, 569; John Manley, “Introduction,” in Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins: The Depression Years, Part IV, 1937, 2; ibid., SB# 874, 27 October 1937, 422; Avakumovic, The Communist Party in Canada, 115; Gordon Skilling, “The Popular Front,” Canadian Forum 16, 193 (February 1937), 11-12.

In 1932 the federal government negotiated an agreement with the provinces whereby it would foot half their provincial policing bills if provinces agreed to disband their separate provincial forces and instead contracted the work out to the RCMP.⁵ In April, the Force absorbed provincial police forces in Nova Scotia, Manitoba, New Brunswick, and on 1 May and 1 June, Prince Edward Island and Alberta.⁶ A massive budgetary increase was granted and across Canada the RCMP grew by leaps and bounds.⁷ Detachment numbers more than doubled from 197 to 443 and personnel numbers increased by 73 per cent from 1,351 to 2,384 all ranks.⁸

Even in those provinces such as Ontario where the Force never assumed provincial policing duties in 1932 the Force expanded because it undertook Customs and Excise Preventive Service (PS) work for the Department of National Revenue (DNR).⁹ This work was taxing. It required considerable manpower, long hours and a steady hand. Illegal distilling and the smuggling of contraband were two of the more important duties Southern Ontario personnel faced in their efforts to clean up the corruption that had formerly

⁵RCMP, Annual Report, 1932, 5; Fetherstonhaugh, The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, 243-245.

⁶Kelly and Kelly, The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, 172; Fetherstonhaugh, The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, 243-245; RCMP, Annual Report 1932, 5.

⁷Auditor General's, Annual Report, 1931 - 1932, RCMP, X; Rivett-Carnac, Pursuit in the Wilderness, 322; For instance, Depot Division was radically expanded and divided into two Divisions "one to look after the policing end of affairs and another to train recruits, each operating separately with a different officer in charge."

⁸RCMP, Annual Report, 1932, 5; Rivett-Carnac, Pursuit in the Wilderness, 292-293; In 1931 the strength of the Force was 59 officers, 1 154 non-commissioned officers and constables, and 138 special constables, or 1 351 in all. On 30 September 1932, the Force numbered 91 officers, 1 911 non-commissioned officers and constables, and 346 special constables, or 2 348 all ranks.

⁹RCMP, Annual Report, 1932, 6; Kelly and Kelly, Policing In Wartime, 48; Saskatchewan and Alberta had an RCMP provincial Force since 1928.

“permeated” DNR.¹⁰ In 1932 “O” Division’s strength increased from 46 to 78 as a consequence and its detachment numbers doubled to 20.¹¹

Progressives roundly condemned the Force’s expansion. Many viewed it as a further sign of “political reaction,” a response to the latest series of crises such as wage cuts and reductions in living standards which, they asserted, had forced the capitalist class to become “panicky” about the “growing tide of resistance”. Expansion, for all practical purposes, was also seen as a step away from meaningful democracy since control over much of the country’s provincial policing apparatus was removed to Ottawa.¹²

Similar to the pattern that had emerged in the 1920s many “O” Division RHQ personnel who concerned themselves with intelligence matters in the early 1930s were first generation immigrants from the British Isles.¹³ The CIB was led by Scotsman Inspector Albert Reames, the Division’s second-in-command, and beneath Reames CIB responsibilities were divided between Corporal Hugh Patrick Mathewson, who was in charge of CIB operations across the Western Ontario District, and Staff Sergeant George Fish,

¹⁰Nora and William Kelly, The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, 172-173.

¹¹RCMP, Annual Report, 1932, 69; Auditor General’s, Annual Report, 1931 - 1932, RCMP, X-11; Auditor General’s, Annual Report, 1932 - 1933, RCMP, X-19; Even its sundry expenses for RHQ and detachment upkeep increased by more than 400 per cent and went from \$40,086.80 to \$162,330.45.

¹²RCMP, Annual Report, 1932, 5-6; “The R.C.M.P. Take Over Police Work of Alberta,” The Worker, 30 January 1932, 4; “R.C.M.P. Gradually Taking Over Policing of the Country,” The Worker, 20 February 1932, 4; “R.C.M.P. to Police Nova Scotia Also,” The Worker, 20 February 1932, 4.

¹³“O” Division, Nominal Rolls, January - December 1932; In early 1932 “O” Division RHQ had 25 Force personnel stationed in the city. By the end of the year the RHQ had 31 on its roster although a few more were about to be transferred out and were off duty. The few gains did not appear to be in the CIB branch, more PS work.

senior officer in charge of Toronto detectives.¹⁴ While Fish's career was sketched earlier in this study, Mathewson had joined the Division in 1922. Subsequently he worked in Toronto and on command throughout Western Ontario. He earned probationary detective status in late 1925, was confirmed in rank in 1927 and promoted corporal in 1930.¹⁵

Lower in rank at RHQ and concerned with intelligence work on a part-time basis were ten to twelve staff. The support staff consisted of CIB clerk Constable R.A.K. Jones, who had maintained these important files ever since his transfer over from the Assistant Receiver General's Toronto Office (ARGO) in September 1930.¹⁶ The position of CIB chauffeur was filled by Constable H.J. Burrough, an appointment made the previous fall, and he joined the investigative staff on a part-time basis.¹⁷ Others attached to the CIB eventually included three single female civilians stenographers: Miss E.M. Cullen, Miss W. Bottoms, and Miss M.G. Dickson, all of whom remained in the Division beyond the scope of this

¹⁴NAC RG 18, holdings of the RCMP, vol. 3455, file O-203, service record of Albert Edward George Oakleigh Reames

George Oakleigh Reames, was born in Scotland in June 1886. Prior to joining the Force Reames was a tramway inspector and motorman. He had lived in Middlessex, England, was C. of E. He had served in the 18th Hussars from November 1897 to December 1900. He joined the Force on 1 September 1909, was promoted Inspector 1 January 1920, Acting Superintendent 1 March 1935, Superintendent 1 July 1935 and retired to pension in January 1938. He died in Vancouver in June 1941.

¹⁵RCMP G.O. 3593, 1-9-22; RCMP G.O.'s 6416 and 6417, 1-4-27; RCMP G.O. 8625, 1-8-1930; "O" Division, Nominal Rolls, August 1930; "O" Division, Nominal Rolls, January 1932; RCMP, Quarterly, 21,4 (April 1956), 360, "Obituary of Superintendent Hugh Patrick Mathewson," see chapter four for his biographical sketch.

¹⁶"O" Division, Nominal Rolls, September 1930; *ibid.*, January and February 1932; See chapter four for R.A.K. Jones' biographical sketch.

¹⁷"O" Division, Nominal Rolls, January - May 1932; RCMP G.O. 9645, 1-7-32.

study.¹⁸ Later on in the decade they would be joined by translators.¹⁹

With the pressure gone from the arrests and the preliminary trials at the beginning of 1932 Frank Zaneth was transferred to Montreal CIB to concentrate on mobsters, moonshine, money laundering and prostitution rings. For several months Corporal Max Veitch, Constables Michael Walsh and Reginald Warner served as the RHQ CIB's staple under Fish's command.²⁰ Of the three Veitch was senior in rank and Warner junior. Veitch had worked in Toronto with Zaneth on a part-time basis for a couple of years and had further honed his detective skills travelling to centres leading investigations throughout Southwestern Ontario.²¹ Walsh was the Irish expatriate who had joined "O" Division in 1920 and had failed miserably at Sault Ste. Marie. He had conducted piecemeal political investigations in the Division ever since, and after a pair of trial runs, in 1928 Walsh was

¹⁸The stenographers were granted a grade 2 wage of between \$1,026 to \$1,242 per annum, but unfortunately I have uncovered almost nothing further concerning their backgrounds and careers.

¹⁹S.W. Horrall, "R.C.M.P. Translation Services," RCMP Quarterly, 54,1 (Winter 1987), 16-21; Although translators were used in the Force since its earliest days the written history of translation largely began during World War I with the hiring of Francis H. Colam, as a special agent on 8 October 1914. He quit in 1916 but by the mid-1920s a substantial volume of material was being translated. At NHQ George Harold Deighton was engaged in 1925 (seemingly the first permanent translator since Deighton). He was succeeded by M. Babuka in October 1927 (both their specialities had included Russian and Ukranian). She was joined by Special Agent M.H. Aroni in 1931 and the field blossomed in the 1930s and during World War II. Translators at Divisions was largely a 1930s phenomenon.

²⁰"O" Division, Nominal Rolls, January 1932; RCMP G.O. 9600, 1-1-32; Dubro and Rowland, Undercover.

²¹Dubro and Rowland, Undercover; "O" Division, Nominal Rolls, January - June 1932; RCMP G.O. 6501, 1-6-27; RCMP G.O. 8512, 19-6-30; RCMP G.O. 9243, 6-7-31; RCMP G.O. 4758, 1-5-37; Kelly and Kelly, Policing in Wartime, 13; Walsh earned his promotion to detective two months after Mathewson back in 1927 and by the end of the following decade had risen to the rank of Detective Sergeant filling Fish's post (after Mathewson and several others) as NCO in charge of Toronto detectives and sometime duty officer.

promoted detective.²² Warner, being the novice, had only joined the Force in early 1931 and following a brief stint at Regina Depot, "O" Division RHQ was his first posting.²³

Although the experiences of RHQ CIB personnel varied, in general, few reports on CP activities were generated in Toronto in the winter of 1932. Toronto municipal elections were poorly monitored (entirely by newspaper clippings) and in January the only other intelligence deposited on the core Toronto CP file was a report that identified a dozen stalwarts active in local communist circles. Constable Jones and Superintendent Jennings checked it against existing records but most individuals mentioned were previously unknown to intelligence personnel.²⁴

The CP at this juncture was acutely aware of continued RCMP designs. Party stalwarts remained at a heightened state of alert. They claimed they had learned a lot since Leopold "trapped" Buck and the others and in taking the movement underground they were no longer prepared to "come out in the open" to "expose" themselves. They had developed "a secret system of communication" and "no longer all lived in the same city."²⁵ Whenever necessary subsequently arrangements were made whereby "contact between the groups was

²²RCMP G.O. RCMP, Quarterly, 32,3 (October 1966), obituary of Michael John Walsh, 78; *Michael John Walsh* was born in 1883 in Ireland. He served in the CEF and joined the Force in 1919. His career was spent at Regina, Sault Ste. Marie, Bridgeburg, Niagara Falls, Toronto, London, Hamilton, Kitchener, Rockcliffe, Ottawa and Montreal. He retired to pension originally in 1938, but re-engaged in 1939 in Ottawa for World War II and served until 1946. He died in Guelph in 1965.

²³RCMP, Quarterly, 23,1 (July 1957), obituary of Reginald Robert Warner, 96; *Reginald Robert Warner* was born in 1911 or 1912 (place not known). He joined the Force in 1931 and was invalided to pension in 1946 at the same rank never rising above constable. Warner served overseas during World War II as a member of No. 1 Provost Company (RCMP). He had been stationed at Regina, Toronto, Hamilton, Cobourg, Timmins, Sudbury and Kirkland Lake. He died in May 1957 at South Porcupine.

²⁴CPC TO 1930s, "Results of Vote for Board of Control," Toronto Globe, 2 January 1932; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 20 and 26 January 1932.

²⁵CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 16 May 1933.

minimized....” As communists they “learned to live with constant intimidation and to joke about the omnipresent undercover policeman from the Red Squad assigned to their surveillance.” They also developed a “reflex sense of survival: never talk party business on the phone or talk elliptically or, if Jewish, in Yiddish; notice if you’re being followed; identify members of the Red Squad.”²⁶

As a consequence Toronto intelligence personnel had considerable difficulty regaining its command over the movement and its activities. It was not until late 1933 that intelligence personnel learned that the CP had re-established a “District Bureau Committee” in Toronto as a “secret body” which doubled as the national executive. Furthermore, it was not until much later on in the decade that RHQ CIB personnel gained knowledge of internal branch and CCC activities in a manner even remotely consistent with earlier times.²⁷

In the winter of 1932 with the CP leadership eclipsed, operating in semi-underground status, more overt work was being conducted by the NUWA and WUL which had both established city offices the previous fall. In these months the Red Squad paid these organizations daily office “visits” to disrupt their activities. The TCPD had become more effective in its coordination of anti-communist operations, in general, drawing upon the support of a variety of public and private institutions and pulling them into its intelligence ambit.²⁸ Toronto Catholic Archbishop Neil McNeil (and then James McGuigan after 1934) had deployed lay deities as “snitches” in parishes and eventually hired Catherine de Hueck,

²⁶Weisbord, The Strangest Dream, 29-30.

²⁷Kealey and Whitaker [eds.], R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins: The Depression Years, Part I, SB #677, 20 October 1933, 44.

²⁸Maurutto, “Private Policing,” 38-54; “Officialdom of Furriers Union Put Through Wage Cut,” Workers’ Unity, 1,5 (30 October 1931), 4; “12 % pay cut to Youth In Chocolate Factory,” Workers’ Unity, 1,5 (30 October 1931), 4; “Red Squad Is On Rampage,” The Worker, 30 January 1932, 2. “A Toronto Attention,” Workers’ Unity, 1,6 (2 December 1931), 4.

a Russian emigre who fled the revolution, to penetrate the Toronto CP. De Hueck produced a 95 page report on communist activities for McNeil and others in 1932 and kept tabs on the CP through a variety of means until she left for the US in 1938.²⁹

In February 1932 the Supreme Court of Ontario on appeal upheld two of three counts upon which Tim Buck and the other CP leaders were convicted during their 1931 trials.³⁰ Together they faced a total of 37 years in prison. Buck and six others were taken immediately to Kingston Penitentiary and began serving sentences of five years; while Tom Cacic received a two-year sentence followed by deportation.³¹

The day following the sentencing Superintendent Jennings was relieved of duties as "O" Division OC and a week later he was promoted to Assistant Commissioner and transferred to NHQ to assume the position of DCI. His promotion signaled further consolidation of Commissioner MacBrien's views on intelligence matters as increasingly bold initiatives were rewarded. As DCI Jennings succeeded Superintendent Newson. He served in this capacity until October 1936. As such he oversaw the implementation of the Force's wiretapping program which although in its infancy had commenced operations a year earlier. Although Montreal-based J.E. White, an engineer, was eventually hired by the Force and would improve vastly upon this program several years later, in his capacity as DCI Jennings can lay claim to paternal rights. In April 1937 Jennings was promoted Deputy Commissioner, a position he held until retirement a year later.³²

²⁹Maurutto, "Private Policing," 38-54; Valverde, The Age of Light, Soap, and Water; A.S. Whitely, "The Church And Social Control," The Canadian Forum, 12, 139 (April 1932), 251-253.

³⁰Smith All My Life, 140-141; Avakumovic, The Communist Party in Canada, 87-88.

³¹On Cacic's life in particular see, Access Request, 96-A-00146, NAC RG 146, vol. 4670, file 1-2, PHF of Tom Cacic.

³²NAC RG 18, vol. 3447, file 0-147, Service Record of George Leslie Jennings (hereafter cited as RCMP Personnel File - G.L. Jennings) "Deputy Commissioner G.J. Jennings, O.B.E." N.D.; *ibid.*, "Former RCMP Officer Lt.-Col. Jennings Dies," Ottawa Citizen, 27 December 1958; RCMP G.O. 9744, 1932; RCMP G.O. 9787, order-in-council PC 174/617, 1 March 1932; RCMP, Annual Report, 1932, 67-68.

“O” Division’s fifth OC Inspector Charles Herbert King was transferred to the Division in mid-February and his appointment was quickly followed by a promotion to Superintendent as of 1 March.³³ King developed a strong interest in political policing and brought both administrative and practical CIB experience to “O” Division. Following in the footsteps of Newson and Jennings, King eventually served as DCI in 1938 and was responsible for “internal security” a year and a half later with the outbreak of hostilities before retiring to a pension in May 1941 at the rank of Deputy Commissioner.³⁴

In 1932 King faced several early challenges as “O” Division OC. Some were internal matters which properly should have been taken care of by the adjutants department, while others concerned coordinating the Division’s resources to meet its perceived immediate security obligations. In early 1932 RHQ CIB personnel were exhausted from months of long hours and weekend work. With the CP leadership’s appeal concluded King granted George Fish two-months furlough. Yet not everyone owed time could be temporarily relieved; others who requested furlough were forced to remain on duty, and only weeks later Constable Jones and Sam Wrigglesworth, a constable being trained as a possible replacement for Jones, became ill.³⁵ Similar difficulties were experienced elsewhere in the Division, and

³³RCMP G.O. 9789, Privy Council, Order-in-Council, 172/617; NAC RG 18, file 3452, 0-177, Service Record of C.H.King, memorandum, S. K. Rathwell, Provincial Conservative Section, Saskatchewan to Prime Minister Borden, 19 July 1913.

³⁴NAC RG 18, vol. 3452, file 0-177, Service Record of Charles Herbert King (hereafter cited as RCMP Personnel File - C.H. King) “Ex-Deputy Commissioner Charles Herbert King”; *ibid.*, “Memorandum For Fyle No: - Officer 177,”

Charles Herbert King was a British emigrant from Kent, England. A staunch Conservative who joined the Force in 1905, King served overseas in the CEF during the War, conducted detective investigations in both Canada and the US early in his career and held senior (but not top) appointments in the 1920s in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Ottawa. He died in February 1955.

³⁵RCMP, Nominal Rolls, December 1932 - March 1933; RCMP, *Quarterly*, 37,1 (January 1972), obituary of Samuel Wrigglesworth, 80;

Samuel Wrigglesworth was born in 1905, a British emigrant from Bradford, Yorkshire. Wrigglesworth had joined the Force October 1931 in Lethbridge. He rose to the rank of Sergeant, retired to pension in January 1952 and died in September 1971 at Victoria, BC. Most of his career was spent in



Calgary Commanding Officer King prepares to leave
for Toronto to succeed "O" Division OC George Jennings in the winter of 1932.

Source: NAC RG 18, Service Record of C.H. King.
(Originally taken from the Calgary Herald, 1 February 1932)

replacements brought in as a stop-gap measure were either novices or had not conducted investigations in the city for years, and intelligence work suffered as a consequence.³⁶

A series of well-planned demonstrations were scheduled for centres across Ontario. The earliest events were set simultaneously for Toronto and Ottawa just days after King had assumed command. King acted quickly.³⁷ He drew upon past experiences in Calgary, in his previous post, where he had utilized the municipal police. In Toronto he quickly established a working relationship with the OPP and the TCPD who provided him with immediate intelligence on communist activities which he considered useful.³⁸ He turned to other Divisions and other government departments for information, and he expanded Reames' role in coordinating "O" Division's response.³⁹ King and Reames had worked together earlier on similar kinds of operations in Western Canada when Reames was officer in charge of Winnipeg and Vancouver Division CIBs and also as OC Lethbridge SDHQ.⁴⁰

Regina, Ontario, and in the Maritimes.

³⁶"O" Division, Nominal Rolls, December 1931- March 1932; RCMP G.O. 117 transfers from Depot to "N" Division, 1 March 1920; For instance, Constable Warner was sent to Hamilton to fill a gap in that detachment's operations which hurt Toronto. Constable Donald Robinson replaced Warner and his intelligence experience was limited, while Ted Weeks, another member of the RHQ detailed to conduct political investigations had not done so for years.

³⁷E. Cecil-Smith, "Unemployment," *Masses*, 1,1 (April 1932), 2; L.C. Marsh, "Public Works and Relief," *The Canadian Forum*, 13, 149 (February 1933), 188-190; "Toronto Conference Sets Tasks in Preparing the Provincial Marchers," *The Worker*, 6 February 1932, 1; "Ontario Hunger Marchers In Toronto February 15th," *The Worker*, 13 February 1932, 3.

³⁸*Journals Of The Legislative Assembly Of The Province Of Ontario*, 18 March 1935, 84; At 387 the OPP's personnel numbers were almost five times "O" Division's in 1932.

³⁹CPC TO 1930s, memorandum, Inspector King to OC "D" Division, 1 March 1932; *ibid.*, reply, 16 March 1932; *ibid.*, report, Superintendent R. Field to Commissioner, 16 March 1932; *ibid.*, report, Superintendent King to OC "D" Division and to the Commissioner, 1 March 1932; *ibid.*, report, Assistant Commissioner Belcher to A.L. Jolliffe, Commissioner of Immigration and Colonization, 18 March 1932; *ibid.*, reply, 30 March 1932; *ibid.*, Assistant Commissioner Belcher to OC "O" Division, 1 April 1932; *ibid.*, report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 16 March 1932; *ibid.*, memorandum, Assistant Commissioner Belcher to OC "O" Division, 11 April 1932; *ibid.*, reply, 12 April 1932; *ibid.*, report, Assistant Commissioner Belcher to OC's "C", "F" and "O" Division, 29 March 1932; *ibid.*, reply, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 5 April 1932; *ibid.*, report, Inspector Reames to Commissioner, 3 March 1932; *ibid.*, report, Superintendent King to MacBrien, 1 March 1932; *ibid.*, memorandum, C.F. Hamilton to Inspector Charron "A" Division, 2 March 1932; *ibid.*, telegram, Superintendent King to MacBrien, 1 March 1932;

⁴⁰NAC RG 18, vol. 3455, file, 0459, Service Record of Albert Edward George Oakleight Reames..

Through the preliminary measures King adopted Commissioner MacBrien was forewarned of communist plans in Toronto for the “movement” of stalwarts to Ottawa on 3 March. “A” Division’s OC was given ample time to respond as licence plate numbers were obtained and coded telegrams were wired to NHQ. Other events were also effectively reported.⁴¹ In Toronto city police Chief Inspector of Detectives Murray identified local NUWA leaders for King since a quick check of “O” Division’s own records revealed that many files were not up to date.⁴² King also instructed Reames to “tour the grounds” at Queen’s Park with TCPD Deputy Chief Guthrie on days scheduled for demonstrations in a bid to reestablish control over local revolutionary activities.⁴³

The Division’s intelligence operations saw improvement by April. That month Fish had returned to work, by then Jones’ health had improved, and before long Ted Weeks, who was detailed to conduct political investigations in the absence of several other personnel, was demonstrating competency as a detective.⁴⁴ As well, by this juncture King had jettisoned a few additional personnel changes – RHQ constables whom King felt were “unsuitable” were discharged – while several others were transferred out of the Division.⁴⁵

In April, Inspector Robert Eldridge Mercer was transferred into the Division to

⁴¹CPC TO 1930s, memorandum, Commissioner MacBrien to OC “A” Division, 1 March 1932; *ibid.*, telegram, Inspector King to Commissioner, 1 March 1932; *ibid.*, report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 1 March 1932. “Stop Press,” *The Worker*, 5 March 1932, 1; “When Marchers Left for Ottawa,” *The Worker*, 5 March 1932, 2.

⁴²CPC TO 1930s, report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 1 March 1932.

⁴³*ibid.*, report, report, Inspector Reames and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 3 March 1932.

⁴⁴RCMP, *Quarterly*, 40, 4 (September 1975), obituary of Edward George Weeks, 78;

Edward George Weeks was born 24 April 1900 in Southampton, England. He joined the Force in 1919. He graduated from Regina Depot the following year with many key “O” Division intelligence personnel such as Mathewson, Nelson and Allen, (and also Clifford Harvison). Weeks was promoted Sergeant in the 1920s and served extensively throughout “O” Division during much of his career (Hamilton, Niagara Falls, Walkerville and Windsor). He made many contributions to dossiers and organizational files. He rose as high as Staff Sergeant, a position he was promoted to in 1944 two years before he retired to pension. He died in Winnipeg on 15 April 1975.

⁴⁵“O” Division, Nominal Rolls, March - April 1932.

establish a new Sub-Division Headquarters (SDHQ) at Walkerville and only weeks later he had completed this assignment.⁴⁶ Mercer's arrival strengthened existing Division operations since he had vast intelligence experience which included stints as officer in charge of Regina CIB in the 1920s and several years as Leopold's handler.⁴⁷ From Walkerville, Mercer supervised the work of seven detachments in an area that included southern Ontario west of a line drawn from, and including, Owen Sound, south to Lake Ontario.⁴⁸ He reported directly to King, performed effectively, and in a matter of months was granted a pay increase.⁴⁹

In April, MacBrien arrived in the city for a quick Division inspection tour and a speaking engagement at a Vimy Anniversary banquet where he let some "gems" fall on the subject of radicalism, reaffirming his continued support for increased deportations and the use of vigilante groups of veterans against communists.⁵⁰ NHQ also informed Superintendent King that they were in receipt of information that for May Day communists in "O" Division's jurisdiction planned to organize demonstrations in Hamilton and in Oshawa, and at the same time "to set on foot in Toronto a demonstration sufficiently impressive to prevent the Toronto police from reinforcing either place." They asked King, "Have you heard anything of this?" and ordered him to investigate the "situation" and report "fully" and

⁴⁶RCMP, *Quarterly*, 39,2 (April 1974), obituary of Superintendent Robert Elderidge Mercer, 83; *Robert Elderidge Mercer*, was born 31 July 1885 in Sialkot, Punjab, India. His parents were both from Great Britain. Mercer first joined the Force in 1905, he purchased his discharge in 1909 to take the appointment of clerk of the District Court at Macleod, Alberta. He rejoined the Force on 26 July 1913 was promoted to Corporal 1 September 1914, and Sergeant 23 October 1916. He served in the Siberian Cavalry Draft during World War I, was demobilized on 15 July 1919, promoted Staff Sergeant 1 October 1922 and was Commissioned Inspector 1 October 1929. He gained extensive experience in the 1920s across Western Canada. Mercer eventually made "O" Division OC, was promoted Superintendent in August 1939 and retired to pension 30 September 1945. He died at Victoria, British Columbia, on 31 October 1973.

⁴⁷Betke and Horrall, *Canada's Security Service*, 450.

⁴⁸RCMP, *Quarterly*, 39,2 (April 1974), obituary of Superintendent Robert Elderidge Mercer, 83; Mercer had served earlier as OC Regina CIB and then OC Yorkton Sub-Division, difficult centres that senior Force personnel felt had required extensive policing of political activities.

⁴⁹RCMP, G.O. 9807, 1 April 1932; RCMP, G.O. 10316, 1 October 1932;

⁵⁰"Fascism A La Canadienne," *The Canadian Forum*, 12, 140 (May 1932), 284.

“as quickly as possible.”⁵¹

Superintendent King believed that his Division's May Day preparations were well in hand. Along with the changes already made and mentioned above, effective liaison with TCPD Chief Draper and Colonel Hertzberg of Military District #2 in Toronto, King felt, had produced results. Together Draper and RHQ CIB personnel pursued Toronto May Day's leadership. They arrested James Bryson, a resourceful WUL unemployed organizer and CP stalwart, whom King had squared off against earlier in the decade in Calgary putting earlier experiences to use once again.⁵² Both police forces also met with the Trustees of Massey Hall to prevent the CLDL from holding a “huge” May Day demonstration there.⁵³ Elsewhere in the Division additional preventive measures were adopted. For two weeks prior to the event unemployed in Hamilton were arrested and authorities there also arranged for 104 Firemen to be sworn in as special constables.⁵⁴ For Oshawa, Reames and Colonel Hertzberg met to discuss strategies and subsequently arranged a military exercise for 200 non-

⁵¹CPC TO 1930s, memorandum, Assistant Commissioner Belcher to OC “O” Division, 22 April 1932.

⁵²Bryson first came to authorities attention in Calgary in December 1930 during demonstrations ther. Consequently, CIB personnel generated a PHF. Bryson died in 1934 but in just four years and largely under King's supervision at both centres hundreds of pages of reports and other items had been deposited on his PHF. In fact, more than 35 Force personnel played an active role in work being conducted against Bryson in this relatively short period.

⁵³CPC TO 1930s, report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 23 April 1932; *ibid.*, report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 29 April 1932; “Toronto Police Try to Stop Preparations for May Day,” The Worker, 23 April 1932, 2; “Arrest Toronto's Jobless Leaders,” The Worker, 30 April 1932, 2; J.W. White, “Deportations,” The Canadian Forum, 12,142 (July 1932), 367-368; Manley, “Audacity,” 11; Petryshyn, “Class Conflicts and Civil Liberties”; Weisbord, The Strangest Dream, 39; Harassment of the CLDL only intensified as it became the recognized public voice of the CP and its membership more than doubled from 10,000 to 25,000 in the year and a half after September 1931 and by 1934 had risen to 43,000.

⁵⁴CPC TO 1930s, report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 27 April 1932; *ibid.*, report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 26 April 1932; *ibid.*, report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 29 April 1932; “100,000 Workers Out on the Streets Throughout Canada for Demonstrations Against [sic] R.B. Bennett's Government,” The Worker, 7 May 1932, 1.

permanent militia to be followed by a Church parade.⁵⁵ King's final intelligence report before May Day predicted "little trouble" throughout the region.⁵⁶

Thus May Day 1932 was a prime example of both the successes and failures of Division intelligence operations in Superintendent King's early administration. Despite many precautions taken by authorities pamphlets, flyers, and other propaganda materials from the US, flooded Canadian cities entering the country via Windsor. On May Day 100,000 workers emptied their homes and took to the streets across Canada to protest the Bennett administration's policies.⁵⁷ However, with municipal and provincial police prepared, many arrests took place and crowds were quickly dispersed. In fact, one Ontario paper truthfully noted that advanced intelligence across the Division had played an important role in preparing all police forces concerned.⁵⁸

Sudbury was one centre in "O" Division's jurisdiction where no "problems" were anticipated. However, results there were unacceptable to King as the town's mayor and several others had been injured in demonstrations.⁵⁹ The Force's direct experience in that centre was limited since Sudbury after all was one of "O" Division's detachments established months earlier. While undoubtedly intelligence personnel were familiar with

⁵⁵CPC TO 1930s, telegram, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 1 May 1932; *ibid.*, telegram, E.R.S. Pink to OC "O" Division, 1 May 32; *ibid.*, report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 2 May 1932; "Brutal Police Onslaught As Thousands Pour Into The Streets on May Day," *The Worker*, 7 May 1932, 1; Dubro and Rowland, *Undercover*, 40; Glen Makahonuk, "The Saskatoon Relief Camp Workers' Riot of May 8, 1933: An expression of Class Conflict," *Saskatchewan History*, 37,2 (September 1984), 62; James D. Leach, "The Workers' Unity League And The Stratford Furniture Workers: The Anatomy Of A Strike," *Ontario History*, 60,2 (June 1968), 43.

⁵⁶CPC TO 1930s, report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 29 April 1932.

⁵⁷"100,000 Workers Out on the Streets Throughout Canada for Demonstrations Against [sic] R.B. Bennett's Government," *The Worker*, 7 May 1932, 1.

⁵⁸CPC TO 1930s, "Co-operation of Press Helps to Forestall Disturbance by Reds," *Mail and Empire*, 2 May 1932.

⁵⁹The town's Mayor and a Sergeant were injured, eighteen arrests followed and a series of raids were conducted which resulted in three revolvers, a bunch of literature, an RCMP scarlet jacket and Canadian Militia Army uniforms being secured.

many Sudbury radicals the militancy achieved there on May Day was largely spontaneous which made it virtually impossible to anticipate.⁶⁰

Superintendent King responded by sending Inspector Reames to Sudbury to evaluate the situation. Reames met with Sudbury Constable Earl Pink, the Division regular in charge of that detachment, and carried instructions to impress upon Pink the need to keep his use of telegrams to a minimum.⁶¹ Reames then met with municipal authorities to discuss an 'appropriate' response.⁶² It was in this context that days later police in Sudbury raided the offices of the Finnish radical newspaper Vapaus and arrested Arvo Vaara, the paper's editor, and Martin Parker an associate editor and young local activist, and "seized" many "documents."⁶³ Vaara, Parker and several others (such as Dymitr Chomicki/ Dan Holmes Winnipeg Secretary of the United Front Election campaign) were "spirited away" and sent to Halifax to face deportation hearings.⁶⁴ J.S. Woodsworth raised the issue in the House of Commons. The matter was debated but labour M.P.s received little satisfaction.⁶⁵ Constable

⁶⁰Kealey and Whitaker [eds.], R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins: The Early Years, 383-451, provides a list with some Sudbury subjects; CPC TO 1930s, telegram, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 1 May 1932; *ibid.*, report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 2 May 1932; "Workers' Leaders Spirited Away," Being Held For Immediate Deportation by Ottawa Order," The Worker, 7 May 1932, 1; Dubro and Rowland, Undercover, 40; Laurel Sefton MacDowell, 'Remember Kirkland Lake': The Gold Miners' Strike of 1941-1942 (Toronto, 1983), 61; Its establishment was probably linked to the communist led MWUC which established a local there under the WUL early in the Depression. However, it was dissolved in 1934.

⁶¹*ibid.*, report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 2 May 1932.

⁶²CPC TO 1930s, telegrams, E.R.S. Pink to OC "O" Division, 1 May 32; Earl Pink had considerable intelligence experience and had conducted investigations on a piecemeal basis ever since his transfer into the Division from Ottawa back in November 1926. In 1929 he had even joined the RHQ CIB staff and had conducted a variety of special plain clothes assignments in Toronto the following year. During the Sudbury demonstrations Pink had sent a several telegrams to his OC explaining the situation which he considered alarming.

⁶³*ibid.*, report, Constable Pink, 7 June 1932; *ibid.*, report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 20 June 1932.

⁶⁴"Workers' Leaders Spirited Away, Being Held For Immediate Deportation by Ottawa Order," The Worker, 7 May 1932, 1; Balawyder, Canadian-Soviet Relations, 184-185; Smith, All My Life, 147.

⁶⁵Canada, *House of Commons, Debates*, 6 May 1932, 3249.

Pink reported on the cases as they worked their way through the courts.⁶⁶ Superintendent King later reported that he did his best to make sure that those arrested and charged in Sudbury during May Day demonstrations were “dealt severe sentences.”⁶⁷

In the aftermath of the May Day arrests protest meetings were held. At one event near Owen Sound with delegates present from Winnipeg to Montreal and Detroit, a contact reported that a motion was debated to hold Minister of Immigration and Colonization W.A. Gordon’s family in “retaliation” for those individuals “kidnapped” in Sudbury and sent to Halifax.⁶⁸ Superintendent King had Reames further investigate this matter and MacBrien personally reported the results to Gordon. He informed the minister that, although certain precautions were being taken, his lead Toronto investigator felt that the information was likely a lot of “hot air” and that the source was probably trying to create a job for himself with one of the various police organizations.⁶⁹ MacBrien also recommended that the precautionary measures (not specified) being taken to protect the Minister and his family be dropped and the case dismissed.⁷⁰ However, months later following the Supreme Court of Canada’s dismissal of Habeas Corpus proceedings introduced by Vaara and the others, Gordon refused their appeal from the decision handed by the Board of Inquiry which ordered deportation.⁷¹ One progressive was sent to Poland where he was arrested by authorities, while another leftist deported was brought to the “attention” of the Gestapo and

⁶⁶CPC TO 1930s, report, Constable Pink, 7 June 1932; *ibid.*, report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 20 June 1932; Auditor General’s, Annual Report, 1932-1933, RCMP, X-19.

⁶⁷RCMP, Annual Report, 1932, 69.

⁶⁸CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted, 8 May 1932.

⁶⁹*ibid.*, memorandum, Commissioner MacBrien to W.A. Gordon, Minister of Immigration and Colonization, 12 May 1932.

⁷⁰*ibid.*, memorandum, Commissioner MacBrien to Minister of Immigration, W.A. Gordon, 16 May 1932.

⁷¹“Deportations,” The Canadian Forum, 13, 148 (January 1933), 124.

surely a death sentence awaited both.⁷²

Before intelligence work temporarily eased in "O" Division a few important changes were made to the Division CIB following May Day. Most importantly, Constable Robert W. Irvine rejoined Toronto RHQ CIB's staff after several months absence in Regina on 'special duty'.⁷³ Irvine had originally transferred into the Division in early 1928. He joined the RHQ CIB in August 1931 and monitored local CP activities that fall such as a series of CP street-corner meetings against the arrest of Tim Buck and the others.⁷⁴ Confirmed in rank as a Detective in January 1932, when he returned to Toronto in May he was promoted Corporal and re-confirmed in rank as a Detective and his addition strengthened CIB operations.⁷⁵ As well, Irishman Sergeant Ron Smyly, a 25-year force veteran, was transferred into the Division and sent to Niagara Falls to strengthen border-area operations.⁷⁶ Smyly's staff at the Niagara Falls detachment were instructed to increase their coverage of local revolutionary activities in the border cities region to prevent revolutionary literature from entering Canada through the US. Smyly also increased liaison with the town's municipal Chief Constable and before long a noticeable improvement

⁷²Penner "How the RCMP Got Where It Is," in Mann and Lee, The RCMP vs The People, 116-117.

⁷³"O" Division Nominal Rolls, February 1932, as of 3 February 1932.

⁷⁴RCMP G.O. 6925, 1-2-28; "O" Division, Nominal Rolls, 1929-1932; CPC TO 1930s, report, Constable R.W. Irvine and Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 2 October 1931; ibid., Constable R.W. Irvine and Superintendent Jennings to Commissioner, 8 October 1931; Irvine spent most of 1928-1930 at ARGO and in Toronto on general duty. His activities also included brief stints as a taxation guard and working on command in Muskoka for the Secretary of State.

⁷⁵"O" Division, Nominal Rolls, January 1932; RCMP G.O. 9645, 7-1-32; ibid., May, 1932, RCMP G.O. 9972, 1-5-32; RCMP G.O. 9946, 1-5-32.

⁷⁶RCMP, Quarterly, 37,1 (January 1972), obituary of Ronald Smyly," 79; Born in June 1887 in Ireland, he joined the Force in 1907, was promoted to corporal in 1928 and to sergeant in 1929 and retired to pension in 1934. He died in Vancouver in 1971.

resulted in investigative work being conducted.⁷⁷

For several reasons RHQ surveillance activity slowed following May Day. First of all, what little intelligence work was being conducted suggested that party branches were either inactive or “right up against it for funds” and that Draper and his Red Squad were performing “effectively”, harassing progressives, paying them frequent “office visits,” refusing many groups permits to hold parades, marches and demonstrations. Draper was even in the midst of negotiating with provincial authorities to extend the TCPD’s Red Squad activities into the suburbs.⁷⁸

Another reason intelligence work slowed was that for months there were simply fewer personnel available to conduct these investigations. Many personnel were being over-worked by added seasonal duties such as providing guards for Income Tax offices at Toronto, Hamilton and London, and extra guards at the Assistant Receiver General’s Office (ARGO). Workloads also rose since in these months new Division detachments were established at Amherstburg, Cobourg, Cochrane, Fort Erie, Leamington, Lindsay, Owen Sound, Port Lambton, St. Thomas and Simcoe which required attention.⁷⁹ The Division also lost several of its more experienced investigators. Michael Walsh was transferred to “N” Division and George Fish was sent on command special duty to “E” Division following

⁷⁷CPC TO 1930s, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 25 May 1932; Auditor General’s, Annual Report, 1932-1933, RCMP, X-18; notes that it was the third most expensive detachment to operate after Walkerville and Hamilton; CPC TO 1930s, report, Sergeant Smyly and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 16 and 17 May 1932; ibid., report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 25 May 1932.

⁷⁸CPC TO 1930s, report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 6 July 1932; ibid., report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 25 June 1932; ibid., report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 27 May 1932; “Starvation Rampant In Toronto Suburbs,” The Worker, 7 May 1932, 3; “Red Squads Will Extend Activity,” The Worker, 2 June 1932, 2.

⁷⁹RCMP, Annual Report, 1932, 145; For instance, “O” Division personnel investigated 7,500 applications for naturalization in 1932 (a good portion of which was conducted during the summer) which kept 4-5 Toronto constables busy full-time while registering and filing these applications occupied the “complete attention” of another member.

May Day and was transferred there in June ending his illustrious inter-war "O" Division career.⁸⁰ Finally, a new graduated pay-scale for detectives was also introduced. It was the first major change of its kind since 1924 and was a disincentive which cut by half extra remuneration for detective work and Detective Irvine was immediately affected by this development while others were in time.⁸¹

By the summer, only months into his job as "O" Division OC, Superintendent King found himself in the same predicament as his predecessor. Short-staffed and ill equipped he refused to grant any personnel long leave.⁸² No officer in the Division took even a day's leave for months after the Division took over Preventive Service (PS) duties and by September, as a direct consequence of expansion, more than half of "O" Division's personnel were new to the Division.⁸³ Given the personnel crisis and other obligations it was not surprising that even Commissioner MacBrien's occasional summertime request for intelligence on prominent subjects active in the city turned up little new information.⁸⁴

It was in this context that in July a somewhat less experienced and more fragile RHQ CIB's gaze was directed toward the Workers' Economic Conference (WEC) which

⁸⁰"O" Division, Nominal Rolls, May and June 1932; RCMP G.O. 10063; RCMP G.O. 10087, 1 July 1932. They included: D.H. Mason, M.E. Bell, R.A. Waugh and W.H. Hamilton; RCMP G.O. 10043, 1-6-32; Walsh eventually was transferred to "A" Division in 1932 where he conducted numerous plainclothes and undercover operations throughout much of the 1930s.

⁸¹RCMP G.O. 2893, 23 July 1924; RCMP G.O. 9645 n.d.; RCMP G.O., 10125, order-in-council P.C. 1358 of 25 June 1932; Formerly most detective personnel were granted a per diem of \$1.00 for this work. Under the new regulation NCOs and Constables during probationary period received an allowance of 25 cents per diem. Upon completion of probationary period a Detective Constable or Acting Corporal earned 50 cents, Detective Corporals and Acting Sergeants earned 75 cents, and Detective Staff Sergeants and Sergeants a maximum of \$1.00 per diem.

⁸²RCMP, Annual Report, 1932, 69-71.

⁸³ibid., 68.

⁸⁴NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, 175P/ 1741, John MacDonald file, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 10 and 19 July 1932; ibid., memorandum, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 25 July 1932; ibid., memorandum, Commissioner MacBrien to OC "O" Division, 27 July 1932; ibid., report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 28 July and 3 August 1932; ibid., report, memorandum, Commissioner MacBrien to OC "O" Division, 21 July 1932

was held in Ottawa in August 1932. Toronto operations were led by King and Reames but the detective work was run by Senior Detective Hugh Patrick Mathewson who was being tested as a possible permanent successor to Fish.⁸⁵

The WEC's story and place in Canadian history has been well documented elsewhere.⁸⁶ Workers planned to mobilize an alternative forum in opposition to the business and trade focus of the elite Imperial Economic Conference R.B. Bennett had planned.⁸⁷ From the very outset the RHQ CIB acquired and compiled OSINT on steps progressives were taking to promote the success of their alternative forum. They also conducted passive investigations. The WEC was important to Superintendent King and other Division personnel because before long, they felt, it further highlighted the need to strengthen existing intelligence operations and improve work being conducted.

Expansion of Division operations first occurred when the DCI instructed Superintendent King to arrange a meeting with the heads of the Investigation Departments of both railways, the TCPD's Chief Constable, and the Commissioner of the OPP, since WEC delegates were planning to "ride the rails".⁸⁸ At the meeting containment strategies such as "wholesale arrests," the preparation for "extra gaol accommodation," were gone into in great length as were plans to establish check points along rail lines in a joint public/private police initiative. Subsequently, eighteen "O" Division personnel (many of them with

⁸⁵"O" Division, Nominal Rolls, July 1932; Mathewson's former job had likely gone to Mercer and several other personnel such as Detective Sergeant C.C. Brown stationed at Windsor, who were in a better position to provide daily supervision of CIB work being conducted at the detachment and SDHQ level.

⁸⁶Smith, All My Life, 148-151; Thompson and Seager, Canada, 1922 - 1939, 222-223; Hilliker, Canada's Department of External Affairs, vol.1, 143-45; Avakumovic, The Communist Party in Canada, 76

⁸⁷"A COUNTER-MEET TO EXPOSE IMP. CONFERENCE!" The Worker, 28 May 1932, 1; "Economic Conference of Workers Will Convene In Ottawa On August 1", The Worker, 28 May 1932, 1, 4; editorial, "The Workers' Economic Conference," The Worker, 28 May 1932, 2; "Worker Economic Conference To Be a Powerful Weapon of Struggle Against Imperialism," The Worker, 4 June 1932, 1, 4.

⁸⁸CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 13 July 1932; Higley, O.P.P., 204.

previous intelligence and anti-labour experience) such as Pink, Spanton, Robinson, Trollove and Smyly, were all given CP and CN passes.⁸⁹

Unlike King's previous test, during the WEC intelligence was also secured by an operative placed among the ranks of the Toronto unemployed. The operative established ties to the CLDL and used them to attend WEC meetings in late July where Ottawa-bound protesters' final travel arrangement plans were made and resolutions drafted. He eventually joined the marchers when they left the city at the end of the month.⁹⁰ The attempt to develop an operative was an obvious move. Whether it was going to succeed was another matter.

Both DCI Jennings and Superintendent King believed WEC protesters were more experienced and better prepared than in previous demonstrations. The signs everywhere confirmed this analysis. WEC organizers positioned scouts along the route to warn fellow demonstrators of police locations.⁹¹ Communists had also published checkpoint locations in The Worker suggesting workers planning to attend take alternative routes.⁹² Even a stool-pigeon, Julius Buji, a Hungarian who assumed the alias "Harry Black" employed by the Port Colbourne police department to infiltrate the CLDL during these events, was eventually exposed on route to Ottawa when questioned by class-conscious workers.⁹³

For two weeks leading up to the event intelligence personnel operated their check

⁸⁹CPC TO, 1930s, report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 12 July 1932; *ibid.*, report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 13 July 1932; *ibid.*, report, Inspector King to Commissioner, 14 July 1932; *ibid.*, report, Inspector King to Commissioner, 15 July 1932; *ibid.*, report, Inspector A.E. Reames to Commissioner, 23 July 1932.

⁹⁰*ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner 23 and 26 July 1932; *ibid.*, report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 25 July 1932.

⁹¹CPC TO, 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 29 July 1932.

⁹²"R.C.M.P. Stop East-Bound Box Cars," The Worker, 23 July 1932, 3; "Bennett Tries to Stop Workers Reaching Ottawa," The Worker, 23 July 1932, 1,3.

⁹³"Stool-Pigeon Exposed," The Worker, 17 September 1932, 4.

points, conducted searches, made arrests and turned back potential protestors. Many protestors initially escaped detection so the RCMP established a number of additional check points to try to prevent their arrival to Ottawa. There was a flurry of correspondence over further containment strategies, points to be covered across Ontario and provision for “extra gaol accommodation.” True to form private detective agencies panicked.⁹⁴

The result of all the steps taken by security forces was that the WEC fell well short of its original goals. A Mail & Empire editorial piece explained the WEC’s “virtual collapse” attributing the poor turnout of agitators to the city to the “successful” work undertaken by the RCMP and its “secret service” who for weeks had kept tabs on “[e]very move made by the agents of Moscow” and whose “spies” walked among the “contingents marching toward the capital on foot” and other “secret service” personnel who had been most “efficient”.⁹⁵ Superintendent King agreed with this analysis.⁹⁶ What troubled King simply was the Mail & Empire author’s lack of discretion in reporting the event and he drew the Commissioner’s attention to the particular passage that mentioned spies.⁹⁷ Even progressives who viewed the WEC in a much more positive light were forced to concede that the coercive role of the Force and other political police had limited popular dissent.⁹⁸

In the WEC’s wake federal policies were toughened to prevent further national protest of a similar kind when months later authorities decided to “discourage” any further

⁹⁴CPC TO 1930s, report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 27 July 1932.

⁹⁵ibid., “A Communist Demonstration At Ottawa Well in Hand,” The Mail & Empire, 1 August 1932.

⁹⁶RCMP, Annual Report, 1932, 69.

⁹⁷CPC TO 1930s, report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 2 August 1932; C.F.H. stamped his initials in the margin of this report. Likely because it had mentioned spies it was brought to his attention.

⁹⁸“Results of The Conference,” The Canadian Forum, 13, 145 (October 1932), 3; Ben Borsook, “The Workers Hold a Conference,” The Canadian Forum, 12, 144 (September 1932), 449-451. While what workers accomplished can be debated certainly they exposed “the Empire’s” efforts to forge a bloc against the rest of the world and particularly the Soviet Union. It also demonstrated that collective action was possible on a national basis and that there was no lack of leadership among the Canadian working class.

“free” transportation on the “nation’s railways”. Toward this end CNR Police and the RCMP began the enforcement of a new edict prohibiting “riding the rails.” In Northern Ontario to halt the eastward flow from western Canada they chose Sioux Lookout, a community as yet inaccessible by road, to stop every train and remove transients.⁹⁹

These developments also coincided with the establishment of Department of National Defense (DND) “relief” camps (provinces had created their own camps as early as 1931), which in the three and a half years they operated, saw more than two hundred camps opened across the country and more than 170,000 men entering them.¹⁰⁰ With 37 camps in Ontario, the province had the second largest number in Canada (British Columbia had 57). By June 1933 more than 8,000 men in Ontario had entered them through the National Employment Service (NES) offices, which opened the previous November.¹⁰¹

Relief camps across Canada served many purposes. Much has been written about them. In addition to the minimal food, clothing, shelter and pay they provided, camps functioned as a so-called “safety valve” to reduce the potential threat of mass protest elsewhere since most were deliberately isolated from the rest of society. There was a strong element of ‘compulsion’ on the part of municipal authorities to force men to go into the camps. Once inside, they lost basic civil liberties, freedom of speech and the right to organize, and although there were no leave restrictions formally placed on the men who entered the camps, unless they left for medical reasons, found employment elsewhere or

⁹⁹Higley, *O.P.P.*, 201; Kelly and Kelly, *The Royal Canadian Mounted Police*, 180.

¹⁰⁰Laurel Sefton MacDowell, “Relief Camp Workers in Ontario during the Great Depression of the 1930s,” *Canadian Historical Review*, 76,2 (1995), 214; Plans for relief camps were floated around Ottawa in the summer and fall. Then in October, on 19 hours notice, Major-General A.G. McNaughton, chief of the General Staff was instructed to draw up a plan which was presented to Bennett and cabinet and the scheme was implemented under PC 2248, the first of 23 OC’s concerning relief camps.

¹⁰¹Lorne Brown, *When Freedom Was Lost* (Toronto, 1987); MacDowell, “Relief Camp Workers,” 205-228.

the project was finished, their way out was not paid.¹⁰²

For intelligence purposes for DND, the RCMP, and other authorities, the camps served several important functions. In addition to those already mentioned camps became a potential intelligence source since communists and other progressives were interned in them. Men in relief camps built the country's aerodromes which strengthened the Force's operations since MacBrien used airplanes to enhance all aspects of work the Force conducted since, as he put it, "speedy flights cut to pieces old patrol times."¹⁰³ Camps also freed up valuable Force resources so time outside could be spent conducting other investigations.

In September 1932, as plans to establish camps were being debated, Superintendent King reflected on the level of subversive activity in his jurisdiction. By this point his CIB's political operations had somewhat improved. Although its strength lay in their ability to broaden the basis of their mixed operational strategy, another key was simply that an operative was successfully developed.

Taking stock of revolutionary activity in his jurisdiction at this juncture King concluded that since the conviction of the eight CP leaders the CP has "been somewhat disorganized" and "not so bold." As further proof of the CP's weak state, he added, "[d]ifferent branches, "such as the CLDL, the WESL and others "have been careful to state that they are not part and parcel of the Communist Party." The CP was "badly in need of

¹⁰²Makahonuk, "The Saskatoon Relief Camp," 55-72; MacDowell, "Relief Camp Workers"; Sometimes they failed miserably and had deadly consequences as the Saskatoon "riot" demonstrated. There were far fewer incidences of 'reported' militancy in Ontario camps than those found in western Canada. One reason was that the Ontario camps as a general rule tended to be much smaller in size.

¹⁰³MacDowell, "Relief Camp Workers," 214; NAC MG 30 E63 vol. 4., MacBrien scrapbook, James Montagnes, "He Modernized Canada's Famed Mounted Police," N.D. (likely March 1937); *ibid.*, "Aircraft In Police Work Has Proved Usefulness, States General MacBrien," Calgary Albertan, 8 June 1933; Without these camp projects Transport Minister C.D. Howe who toured these facilities in 1936 noted, these projects would have been years before this work was completed otherwise.

funds and their chief cry at the present time (through the Canadian Labour Defence League) is money and more money for the defense of Communists who are ordered deported.”¹⁰⁴

Superintendent King also felt that “...owing to the unemployment situation and general unrest prevalent [the CP] had great opportunity to sow the seeds of discontent.”¹⁰⁵ In something of a repeat fall performance RHQ CIB personnel placed an operative in the unemployed movement in Toronto. It was likely the same individual from the WEC simply being rolled over.¹⁰⁶ The operative had dropped out of sight during much of August and most of September when he resumed activity and began attending National Committee of Unemployed Council (NCUC) meetings.¹⁰⁷ RHQ CIB success during the WEC ultimately was responsible for slowly encouraging a more permanent return to penetration strengthening day-to-day operations.

In mid-October the operative attended local demonstrations held in support of the single unemployed at places such as Seaton House, Wellington House, the House of Industry and similar institutions across the city: These “flop houses” referred to as “dens of horror” were places where living conditions were simply awful.¹⁰⁸ These institutions were part of the “tangled regime” of services established to assist the poor, a strange mix of private and quasi-public agencies responsible for shelter, clothing and in the case of the House of Industry for all food relief for the city in the early Depression, at least until the Department of Public Welfare (DPW) (established in June 1931) consolidated its control

¹⁰⁴RCMP, Annual Report, 1932, 68-69.

¹⁰⁵ibid., 68-69.

¹⁰⁶CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 3 and 6 October 1932.

¹⁰⁷CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted 28 September 1932; ibid., report, source deleted, 3, 5, and 6 October 1932.

¹⁰⁸“Successful United Front Conference In Toronto,” The Worker, 8 October 1932, 4; CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 15 October 1932; “Wellington House Toronto Flop House, Den of Horror,” The Worker, 14 January 1933, 5.

in 1934 over all aspects of unemployment relief for both families and single unemployed males. These flop houses also became among the best points to mobilize the urban transient unemployed.¹⁰⁹

On 17 October 1932 only a few weeks after the operative reemerged, a riot commenced at Kingston penitentiary and three days later Tim Buck was repeatedly shot at in his cell. While the true circumstances surrounding the episode are not known, whether guards were acting on orders, or as progressives declared, it was a botched assassination attempt, the following week likely through his NCUC contacts the operative joined the CP after a demonstration at the House of Industry.¹¹⁰ He attended branch meetings.¹¹¹ In November, he eventually secured a position on the Toronto CCC and he attended its weekly meetings until late December.¹¹² With an RHQ operative performing effectively in Toronto Superintendent King rewarded Hugh Mathewson and Constable Jones with promotions. The former was appointed Acting Sergeant whilst employed as senior detective at Toronto and the latter Acting Corporal as Division CIB Clerk.¹¹³

More often in the fall Toronto CIB personnel remained content to let Chief Draper and the TCPD pursue more overtly coercive policies.¹¹⁴ Instead, they concentrated on December municipal elections being held for the first time in the Depression under a CP

¹⁰⁹Marcus Aurelius Klee, "Between the Scylla and Charybdis of Anarchy and Despotism: The State, Capital and the Working Class in the Great Depression, Toronto, 1929-1940," Ph.D. Dissertation, Queen's University, 1998, 35, 37-39; Klee argued that centralization under the DPW's control was unplanned and occurred in an "ad-hoc" manner as part of the state's larger goal to reduce costs and that often businesses stood as much to gain as the unemployed by its creation. So did the RCMP.

¹¹⁰Canadian Labor Defence League, Is Tim Buck a Political Prisoner, Or a Criminal? (Toronto, 1933); "Political Prisoners," The Canadian Forum, 13, 147 (December 1932), 84.

¹¹¹NAC RG 146 CSIS, 175P/392, A.E. Smith file, cross ref. sheet, 18 October 1932.

¹¹²CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 20 and 25 October 1932.

¹¹³RCMP G.O., 10519, 1 November 1932.

¹¹⁴CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 8 and 16 November 1932; In November, the TCPD raided the offices of The Worker, which the operative reported, but there is no evidence that CIB personnel participated in the event.

United Front platform.¹¹⁵ Detective Irvine and the operative attended many election meetings across the city and they uncovered the tensions between the various factions, the progressives and ‘labour fakirs’ for whom communists had little patience.¹¹⁶

From where CIB personnel stood the CP’s electoral prospects looked anything but promising. The intelligence they secured revealed the poor state of CP finances, the disinterest on the part of language organizations to participate, and the premature hope some stalwarts had that they just might be able to reinvigorate the CP and give it a “new working basis” through election propaganda.¹¹⁷

For these reasons Detective Irvine and Superintendent King downplayed the CP’s chance of success at the polls. With Buck and the others in prison, and a semi-underground CP leadership proving itself even more “in thrall” with Moscow, election results subsequently proved them right.¹¹⁸ Superintendent King forwarded the election results to NHQ highlighting the fact that none of the United Front candidates were elected, each lost by large majorities.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵“Toronto Conference Nominates Four Workers’ Candidates for Elections,” The Worker, 3 December 1932, 1.

¹¹⁶CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 8 and 16 November 1932; ibid., report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 31 December 1932; “Toronto Election Campaign Under Way; Seven Candidates are Chosen,” The Worker, 10 December 1932, 1.

¹¹⁷CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 12 and 15 November 1932; ibid., report, source deleted and A.E. Reames for Supt. to Commissioner, 26 and 28 November 1932; ibid., report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 30 November and 6 December 1932; ibid., report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 2 and 6 December 1932; ibid., report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 13 and 14 December 1932; ibid., report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 20 December 1932; ibid., report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 21 and 22 December 1932; ibid., report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 3 January 1933.

¹¹⁸John Manley, “Canadian Communist, Revolutionary Unionism, and the ‘Third Period’: The Workers’ Unity League, 1929-1935,” Journal of the CHA 1994, 177.

¹¹⁹CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 12 and 15 November 1932; ibid., “Results of Vote for Board of Control,” “Aldermanic Returns” and “Board of Education,” The Toronto Globe, 3 January 1933; and ibid., report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 4 January 1933.

During December increased OSINT was gathered on unemployed mobilization in the city and nearby townships. With the NES offices established the previous month municipal authorities began 'steering' militants toward relief camps as social conditions across Canada deteriorated.¹²⁰ Before long, RHQ intelligence personnel learned that the jobless were preparing a National Hunger March Day for 17 January.¹²¹

In early January the operative was instructed to attend a meeting of single unemployed from the Coliseum, Seaton and Wellington Houses, held to discuss the role of organizers at the proposed Toronto events which included a march on Queen's Park. He predicted these events would be "more dangerous" than previous ones since the CP had "learned a lot" from "past demonstrations."¹²² Superintendent King agreed. King knew that there were about 3,000 unemployed single men housed at similar institutions across the city and felt that "if properly organized" that they "could no doubt cause plenty of trouble."¹²³

Superintendent King met with OPP Commissioner Williams and TCPD Chief Draper to "discuss" the unemployed "situation." Inspector Reames shared information with the Toronto City Welfare Relief Office which was now being used as a coercive instrument as it tightened its grip on the dispensation of aid. Detective Irvine met with several police chiefs in nearby towns, while the operative kept the intelligence flowing by attending

¹²⁰"Jobless To March On Ont. Government For Relief," The Worker, 17 December 1932, 2; "Free Unemployed Insurance To Be Demanded by Canada's Jobless on January 17th," The Worker, 24 December 1932, 1; Glen Makahonuk, "The Saskatoon Relief Camp Workers' Riot of May 8, 1933: An Expression of Class Conflict," *Saskatchewan History*, 37,2 (Spring 1984), 56-57.

¹²¹"Toronto Jobless Learning Strength of United Action," The Worker, 24 December 1932, 3; "Plan Ontario Hunger March," The Worker, 24 December 1932, 5; "Jobless Mobilizing Behind Preparations for Jan. 17th National Hunger March Day," 31 December 1932, 1.

¹²²CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 6 and 10 January 1933.

¹²³ibid.

several additional meetings where further plans were arranged.¹²⁴

Superintendent King's discussions resulted in a TCPD-led raid on the Bathurst Street Ukrainian Labor Temple and the arrest of 45 single unemployed who intended to participate as the 'shock troops' at the planned demonstration. Most were charged with vagrancy while their two leaders were singled out and charged with disturbing the peace, a more "serious" crime to induce a "chilling effect" and to prevent them from being able to secure their release in time to participate.¹²⁵ When the event materialized anyway, Irvine attended and filled out lengthy reports, as in these weeks, in general, he rose to the fore of RHQ CIB counter-subversion investigations.¹²⁶

Detective Corporal Irvine later reported that once again the police had made a difference. The Hunger March and demonstration was a "complete fizzle," he noted, largely because of the early actions taken by his OC and the TCPD.¹²⁷ Long after the demonstration passed Irvine monitored the outcome of the Bathurst Street arrests as they worked their way through the courts.¹²⁸ The bondholders were identified, their names and addresses were forwarded to Ottawa for "review" by Colonel Hamilton, and all intelligence concerning the

¹²⁴*ibid.*, report, Inspector Reames to Commissioner, 13 January 1933; *ibid.*, "Police Forces Plan For Hunger Marchers," *Mail And Empire*, 11 January 1933; *ibid.*, report, Inspector Reames and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 13 and 14 January 1933; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 9 January 1933; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 16 and 17 January 1933; *ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 5 and 6 January 1933.

¹²⁵*ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal R.W. Irvine and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 14 January 1933.

¹²⁶*ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal R.W. Irvine and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 18 January 1933; A cordon of city foot and mounted police was posted around the Queen's Park buildings to "maintain order" and OPP reserves were kept hidden in the basement "in case of an emergency". The deputation which entered the building to place its demands before government was identified and additions to dossiers subsequently made.

¹²⁷*ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal R.W. Irvine and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 19 January 1933.

¹²⁸*ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal R.W. Irvine and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 8 and 9 February 1933.

court cases was also shared with Vancouver's OC, Superintendent Wood, who had learned of the arrests through the "Weekly Intelligence Summaries." At this time Vancouver's unemployed were becoming more militant. Perhaps Wood was considering pursuing a similar response?¹²⁹

For several months afterwards a slowdown in RHQ intelligence investigations followed. The number of operative's reports diminished. Detective Irvine also became ill and as of March was off-duty convalescing from influenza.¹³⁰ But other issues also indirectly influenced work being conducted. Morale likely sunk among Force regulars and to a certain extent even more senior personnel felt more constrained by new rules being introduced. RCMP general orders adopted in these months discouraged plainclothes allowances as OC's lost some control over their discretionary power to grant extra pay and had to follow "guidelines" when submitting their recommendation to NHQ.¹³¹ Further pay-scale "adjustments" were also announced "as a measure of economy" and their adoption in April clawed back extra pay for part-time detective and undercover work which was of a duration of less than seven consecutive days. Without penetration agents in key Toronto CP branches during much of this period most intelligence work being conducted fell into this category.¹³² Consequently, when adopted the new pay schedule affected 186 personnel including over one third of "O" Division RHQ (eight personnel such as Mathewson, Veitch,

¹²⁹ibid., report, Detective Corporal R.W. Irvine and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 6 February 1933; ibid., memorandum, Colonel Hamilton to OC "O" Division, 6 February 1933; ibid., memorandum, Superintendent Wood to Commissioner, 30 January 1933; ibid., memorandum, Colonel Hamilton to OC "E" Division, 6 February 1933.

¹³⁰"O" Division, Nominal Rolls, March 1933.

¹³¹RCMP G.O. 310, for week ending 29 April 1933.

¹³²RCMP G.O. 43, orders for week ending 7 January 1933; CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 25 and 30 January 1933; ibid., report, source deleted and Inspector Reames to Commissioner, 19 and 23 February 1933.

and Irvine, and four PS Staff).¹³³ A few concessions and adjustments to the new wage scales were made, but they amounted to little.¹³⁴ While these actions took place at the same time a number of senior personnel, some former "O" Division staff and some future, were granted extra pay (Fish, Darling, King, Newson, Jennings, C.A. James and C.D. LaNauze). These orders were posted and available for all in Divisions to see. Economizing came at the expense of the junior personnel.¹³⁵

In the spring of 1933 a few RHQ personnel such as Burrough, Hicks and Spanton were granted plainclothes allowances (at substantially reduced rates) and they joined others conducting piecemeal political investigations up until May Day which was monitored with less enthusiasm than in previous years.¹³⁶ Then in the summer over one fifth of the Division was transferred out while others formerly involved with intelligence work were returned to general duty as again countless days were lost to PS work, taxation, naturalization and supervising race track duty.¹³⁷ Work was so heavy that CIB clerk Constable Jones was posted to ARGO for a month in July and Detective Irvine spent much of August attached to railway duty.¹³⁸

Before long, intelligence personnel wanted an assessment of existing conditions in the Toronto CP, something they were without for months, and they also wanted intelligence on the WUL's upcoming Toronto National Convention and local delegates' plans

¹³³ RCMP G.O. 43, orders for week ending 7 January 1933; and *ibid.*, G.O. 207, week ending 25 March 1933.

¹³⁴ RCMP G.O. 272, week ending 22 April 1933.

¹³⁵ RCMP G.O. 157, week ending 4 March 1933; *ibid.*, G.O. 204.n.d.

¹³⁶ May Day passed off "quietly" anyhow without any serious "disturbances." RCMP G.O. 322, for week ending, 29 April 1933; RCMP G.O. 323, for week ending, 29 April 1933; CPC TO 1930s, report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 28 April 1933; *ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal R.W. Irvine and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 3 May 1933.

¹³⁷ RCMP G.O. 391, 1933; RCMP G.O. 400, 1933; RCMP G.O. 451, 1933; RCMP G.O. 698, 1933; RCMP G.O. 699, 1933.

¹³⁸ "O" Division, Nominal Rolls, July - August 1933.

concerning a National Congress on Unemployment scheduled for Ottawa in September.¹³⁹ It was not surprising that the RHQ CIB's gaze fixed upon CP affiliates such as the WUL and the CLDL since they had entered 1933 stronger. The WUL had made organizing gains in the city's light industries and the CLDL was nearing the height of its popularity.¹⁴⁰

In August an operative rekindled his association with stalwarts at a Toronto CP meeting and Superintendent King got the intelligence he requested.¹⁴¹ Reports suggested that revolutionary organizations were "losing their hold upon the unemployed masses" and CP activities throughout the district were "practically at a standstill." This analysis was confirmed by stalwarts such as George Harris and Charlie Sims who spoke openly about poor conditions within the CP and of the need to entirely reorganize the party to "avert" its "complete collapse."¹⁴²

Industrial work was a remarkable exception. In August, after just five weeks, the Chesterfield and Furniture Workers' Industrial Union of Toronto (WUL) had organized local furniture workers and at eleven Toronto furniture plants men struck.¹⁴³ WUL organizer Fred Collins was arrested by the TCPD and charged in Toronto for "obstructing a Peace Officer" while leading a demonstration.¹⁴⁴ The Stratford furniture strike followed in

¹³⁹Kealey and Whitaker [eds.], The Depression Years, Part I, SB #674, 29 September 1933, 29-30; "Unemployment Councils," The Canadian Forum, 13,155 (August 1933), 405.

¹⁴⁰Kealey and Whitaker [eds.], The Depression Years, Part I, SB# 675, 6 October 1933, 41-42; While WUL organizer George Drayton's claim that the League had led 130 of 180 key strikes in Canada during the past couple of years (and most of those it did not were spontaneous) was probably exaggerated, his larger point about its importance was not.

¹⁴¹CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 3 and 8 August 1933.

¹⁴²Kealey and Whitaker [eds.], The Depression Years, Part I, SB# 673, 22 September 1933, 21; ibid., SB# 677, 20 October 1933, 50-51.

¹⁴³CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 19 and 21 March 1933; "Arrest of Joe Derry Is Threat Against Young Communist League," The Worker, 29 April 1933, 1; Manley, "Canadian Communists, Revolutionary Unionism," 178-179; Leach, "The Workers' Unity League," 40-41.

¹⁴⁴NAC RG 146, 175/ 4462, Fred Collins PHF, report, Detective Corporal Irvine, September 1933.

September. Its events are well known to historians and need not detain us here. However, it taught authorities more than simply that the days of calling out the troops were gone (or had serious consequences) but also that better intelligence was required because in the process it exposed the poor level of intelligence work being conducted by Division personnel.¹⁴⁵ Only when prompted several weeks later by OPP General Williams who along with Joe Sedgwick of the Attorney General's Department was "contemplating" prosecution of some of the Stratford "agitators" did King check his file on Fred Collins and other agitators noticing they were "very incomplete".¹⁴⁶

Consequently, Superintendent King believed that repositioning his operative was critical. So in the fall the operative joined a Toronto CP branch and the Earls Court Neighbourhood Council, part of the CP's united front program to stop evictions, shutting off water, gas, light, and other grievances. The operative attended their fall meetings and also an Eastern Canada Repeal Congress held in Toronto in November.¹⁴⁷ He secured copies of the Congress minutes and he obtained a three-page list identifying delegates to the event.¹⁴⁸ He signed his reports as Agent 877 and his work eventually exposed further WUL plans to join forces with other organizations such as the YCL, the CLDL, to target

¹⁴⁵Desmond Morton, "Aid to the Civil Power: The Stratford Strikes of 1933," in Irving Abella (ed.) *On Strike*, 79-91; Fudge and Tucker, *Labour Before The Law*, 183-184; Leach, "The Workers' Unity League"; John Taylor, "Relief from Relief: The Cities' Answer to Depression Dependency," *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 14,1 (Spring 1979), 16-23; "Stratford Strikers Maintain their Ranks Firm and Unbroken," *The Worker*, 14 October 1933, 1; "The 'Red' Bogey Will Not Undermine The Stratford Strikers' Solidarity," *The Worker*, 7 October 1933, 5; CPC TO 1930s, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 11 August 1933; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Inspector Reames to Commissioner, 15 and 16 August 1933; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 29 September and 2 October 1933; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 3 and 5 October 1933.

¹⁴⁶CPC TO 1930s, memorandum, Superintendent King to the Commissioner, 3 October 1933.

¹⁴⁷Kealey and Whitaker [eds.], *The Depression Years, Part I*, SB# 677, 20 October 1933, 51.

¹⁴⁸CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 5 October 1933; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 7 October 1933; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Inspector Reames to Commissioner, 16 and 17 October 1933. *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 10 and 13 November 1933.

certain establishments such as the General Steelware Company, the railway shops at Spadina and in Mimico, and the Hamilton Mercury Mills, Ford Plants in Windsor and steel companies at Hamilton, Welland, Niagara, Kitchener and elsewhere.¹⁴⁹

In November 1933, with at least one operative better positioned, and Irvine involved in a number of CIB political investigations, Hugh Mathewson was promoted to Sergeant and Ted Weeks was granted plainclothes allowance for an unspecified period.¹⁵⁰ A special telephone allowance was also introduced which gave the Commissioner the power to grant detectives and other key personnel a per diem in cases where telephone contact was "absolutely necessary" for duty off-setting some of their earlier losses.¹⁵¹ Six "O" Division personnel were granted a telephone allowance and they included: Corporals A.M. Veitch, R.W. Irvine, Ted Weeks and Constable L.C. Turner, who were all involved in intelligence work.¹⁵²

Before long, intelligence work against local CP branches fell off. It did not improve

¹⁴⁹Kealey and Whitaker [eds.], The Depression Years, Part I, SB 677, 20 October 1933, 51; CPC TO 1930s, report, Agent 877 and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 13 and 14 November 1933.

¹⁵⁰"O" Division, Nominal Rolls, October and November 1932; RCMP G.O. 844, 1-11-32; RCMP G.O. 846, 1-11-33.

¹⁵¹NAC RG 146, 175/P2494, Stewart Smith PHF, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 23 and 24 October 1933; RCMP G.O. 805, P.C. 2516, 19 October 1933; RCMP G.O. 806, 1933; In five Divisions (A, C, D, E, F) during this period 29 personnel in total were granted this special telephone allowance. A good number of them (including Frank Zaneth at Montreal and Staff Sergeant A.G. Champion at "A" Division, Constable N.E. Macfarlane at "E" Division and Acting Sergeant A.J. Stretton at "F" Division) had a direct hand in monitoring and reporting on the activities of agitators such as Buck, both Smiths and James Bryson during this period and appear frequently in PHF's and core Division files.

¹⁵²RCMP G.O. 837, 1933; RCMP G.O. 1007, 1934; RCMP G.O. 844, 1933; RCMP G.O. 846, 1933; RCMP G.O. 972, 1933; RCMP G.O. 1003, 1933; Two others conducting investigations were Constables G.J. Haywood and H.J. Burrough; RCMP, Quarterly, 33,1 (July 1967), "obituary of ex-Cpl. Lawrence Cecil Turner," 78.

Lawrence Cecil Turner, born at Desborough, Northamptonshire, England, in 1898. He served the CEF in 1916-1919 and the Corps of Military Staff Clerks from 1919-1920. He joined the Force in February 1921 and took his discharge to work with PS in 1927 and became a member of the Force again in Windsor on 1 March 1932. He retired to pension on 30 June 1938, having been station at Ottawa, Toronto, Leamington, Walkerville, Windsor and Sudbury. He died in Merriam, Kansas in 1966.

until much later the following year. For at least six weeks beginning in December an operative stopped reporting. But this was just the first of several developments that hurt RHQ CIB operations. Corporal Jones, who for three years had maintained CIB files, was returned to general duty, demoted to the rank and pay of constable, and eventually discharged from the Force as “unsuitable.”¹⁵³ His position went to Constable Hubert Mansfield Childerstone, another British immigrant, but he lacked Jones’ experience in CIB records.¹⁵⁴ Then in January three other developments further eroded the CIB’s strength: Constable H.J. Burrough, former CIB chauffeur/ detective (a casualty of earlier pay cuts) quit the Force as soon as his contract expired, Inspector Reames became ill and was listed off duty for two months and, to make matters worse still, the Division began running month-long instructional classes in Toronto which removed significant numbers of personnel from regular duties.¹⁵⁵

Toronto CIB personnel were fortunate that most of Irvine’s wintertime reports concluded that communist activity throughout the region was at a standstill.¹⁵⁶ By February, Superintendent King and an operative who resumed infrequent coverage during the winter

¹⁵³RCMP, Nominal Rolls, July 1933- January 1934; RCMP G.O. 1013, 15 January 1934.

¹⁵⁴RCMP, *Quarterly*, 48,3 (Summer 1983), “obituary of Hubert Mansfield Childerstone,” 78;

Hubert Mansfield Childerstone, was born at Acton, England, in 1904. He joined the RCMP in April 1927 and served briefly at “E” Division before leaving the Force temporarily and then rejoining in Ottawa at “A” Division in December 1931. On 7 October 1933 he was posted to “O” Division RHQ and 1 November 1939 transferred to Rockliffe to join the No. 1 Provost Company. He served overseas until 1946 and was discharged to pension in 1947. He died in 1982 in Burnaby.

¹⁵⁵RCMP, Nominal Rolls, January - February 1934; RCMP G.O. 1055, 26-1-1934; NAC RG 18 Service File of Albert Reames, memorandum, A/ Supt. Kemp to “O” DOC, 9 December 1933; Mathewson filled in for Reames during this period. An operative attended the annual Lenin Anniversary meeting in Toronto, while a Premier’s Conference in Ottawa in mid-January saw progressives send a deputation from Toronto by car to press for unemployment relief, and Sergeant Mathewson identified the group leaving from Toronto and provided the DCI with the car’s license plate number.

¹⁵⁶CPC TO 1930s, memorandum, Staff Sergeant B.H. James to DCI, 16 January 1934; *ibid.*, report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 16 January 1934; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 25 January 1934; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 5 and 9 February 1934.

agreed. They reported that the reduction was true in the CLDL and “nearly every other organization which is an outlet for Communist propaganda.”¹⁵⁷ They blamed the general slowdown on the cold weather the city had experienced. As temperatures improved, they felt, “agitation” would increase and there would be a “more determined drive than there has been in the past” on the part of revolutionaries.¹⁵⁸

Superintendent King and the operative both had good reason to believe that “agitation” would increase. Winter relief loads in 1934 had risen dramatically and two studies released on city housing conditions that year reported acute shortages.¹⁵⁹ As conditions in general for Toronto’s working class continued to deteriorate, before long, a major national strike wave began. The 1934 strikes generally were more “offensive” in nature, in the sense that they were over changes in wages, conditions and recognition, and enjoyed higher rates of success.¹⁶⁰ Toronto strikes, in particular, were more numerous and violent in 1934 than in any year since the postwar upheaval.¹⁶¹ With few available resources Division personnel were hard pressed to provide effective monitoring of these activities. Seen in this light A.E. Smith’s March acquittal on charges of sedition dealt intelligence personnel a further blow because his release meant that scarce resources had to be

¹⁵⁷CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner MacBrien, 5 and 9 February 1934.

¹⁵⁸*ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner MacBrien, 5 and 9 February 1934.

¹⁵⁹Harry Cassidy, “Is Unemployment Relief Enough?” The Canadian Forum, 14, 160 (January 1934), 131-133; “Editorial,” The Canadian Forum, 14, 167 (August 1934), 415; “Toronto Slums,” The Canadian Forum, 15, 171 (December 1934), 88; Klee, “Between the Scylla,” 38; The city needed as many 14,000 dwellings and this crisis was exacerbated only by the poor conditions in those existing homes.

¹⁶⁰Cruikshank and Kealey, “Canadian Strike Statistics,” 96, 114-115

¹⁶¹Kealey and Whitaker, R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins. The Depression Years. Part I, SB #697, 9 March 1934, 70-71; Klee, “Between the Scylla,” 300; “Several Strikes Called In Toronto; WUL Lead,” The Worker, 10 March 1934, 1; “Ontario Knitting On Strike Again,” The Worker, 31 March 1934, 1; “Windsor Auto Factory Struck By WUL Union,” The Worker, 31 March 1934, 1; Some of the more significant Toronto strikes were the B. and M. Slipper Company, the Majestic Dress Company, Title Dress Shop, the Colonial Shoe Company and the Toronto Ontario Knitting Company and many of them were WUL-led.

channeled into paying more attention to his activities and would only assist the forces seeking to destabilize the position of authorities who already felt challenged.¹⁶²

These developments meant that May Day preparations went virtually unreported. Only the events themselves were monitored by Detective Irvine, Constable Spanton and an operative who joined the parade and the public meetings which were held in an “orderly manner” but there was nothing spectacular about the work being conducted.¹⁶³ Toronto intelligence operations temporarily improved afterward. The operative reported that the CP’s city branches were being consolidated in the city’s West end and while downtown “activity” is “a little quiet at present,” he felt, it would “open up” as soon as the date for the provincial election was announced.¹⁶⁴ He was right. Communists eventually contested 14 ridings and polled nearly 9000 votes, which did little to ease concerns CIB personnel had about the CP’s growth in the province.¹⁶⁵

During the summer the RHQ CIB turned its gaze to national unemployed councils which were busily arranging protests and demonstrations across Canada. By July all greater Toronto municipalities with the exception of Forest Hill and Swansea were either bankrupt or under trusteeship.¹⁶⁶ The city of Windsor was placed under supervision and hunger march committees from across the province were meeting with plans to march on Queen’s Park. With plans like these under way it was predictable that experienced personnel such

¹⁶²CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 28 and 29 March 1934; “Big Bad Red,” The Canadian Forum, 14, 163 (April 1934), 245.

¹⁶³CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 27 and 28 April 1934; *ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 1 and 3 May 1934; *ibid.*, report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 3 May 1934.

¹⁶⁴CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner MacBrien, 10 May 1934.

¹⁶⁵Kealey and Whitaker [eds.], The Depression Years, Part I, SB# 712, 23 June 1934, 93-94.

¹⁶⁶Thompson and Seager, Canada 1922-1939.

as senior NCO Sergeant Smyly would be refused summer furlough.¹⁶⁷

In July Queen's Park became a focal point for unemployed protest. The steps taken by the RCMP to monitor the events were so similar to previous demonstrations held there that the story is simply not worth recounting in full. An operative attended Toronto unemployed council meetings in anticipation of these events and he joined the Provincial Hunger March Committee. OSINT was forwarded to NHQ and liaison increased with the TCPD.¹⁶⁸ Provincial and municipal authorities split over the proposed Hunger March. Five of the Kingston eight were released on parole and thousands turned out to Union Station to greet several of them. When RHQ CIB intelligence personnel also learned that a YCL demonstration, the CLDL's Ontario District Convention and even a CP National Plenum, were scheduled for Toronto for the same week as the Hunger March, it was not surprising that Superintendent King's concerns increased.¹⁶⁹ Local authorities anticipated trouble.

¹⁶⁷Taylor, "Relief from Relief," 18; "O" Division, Nominal Rolls, August - October 1934; RCMP G.O. 1703, 20-10-1934; *ibid.*, SB #697, 9 March 1934, 68; #711, 20 June 1934, 85.

¹⁶⁸CPC TO, 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 27 June 1934; report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 21 and 22 May 1934. ; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 12 June 1934; *ibid.*, "Join the Hunger March!" handbill obtained by source unknown, forwarded along with a report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 28 July 1934; Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] *The Depression Years 1933-34*, SB #713, 4 July 1934, 105; *ibid.*, , SB# 715, 18 July 1934, 144; *ibid.*, SB# 716, 25 July 1934, 154-155.

¹⁶⁹Access Request, 93-A-00019, RG 146, vol. 2635, Hunger Marchers to Toronto- 1930s Up To 1934; CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 28 and 29 May 1934; *ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 31 May 1934; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 2 June 1934; *ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 7 June 1934; *ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 8 June 1934; report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 5 and 6 July 1934; *ibid.*, "Clash As Crowd Greets Release of Communists," *Ottawa Citizen*, 4 July 1934; *ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 5 and 6 July 1934; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 4 and 6 July 1934; *ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 10 and 11 July 1934; *ibid.*, memorandum, Assistant Commissioner Jennings, DCI, to OC "O" Division, 14 July 1934; *ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 18 July 1934; *ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Inspector Reames to Commissioner, 20 July 1934; Kealey and Whitaker [eds.], *The Depression Years, Part I*, SB #715, 18 July 1934, 144; *ibid.*, SB #717, 1 August 1934, 180-181. *ibid.*, SB #715, 18 July 1934, 132, 144-145; *ibid.*, SB 717, 1 August 1934, 180.

Dozens of articles were clipped and deposited on files in these weeks. Reports were filled out and dossiers also saw a tremendous increase. Acting on intelligence provided them municipal authorities resorted to arrests to induce a “chilling effect” beginning two weeks prior to the march. CIB personnel, propelled by similar fears, increased their monitoring of various umbrella organizations. But when disorder and chaos “failed to materialize” the CIB’s operative reported that radical activities in Toronto and Southern Ontario were on the decline. Quickly Superintendent King’s assessment of conditions changed. They mirrored his operative’s own views.¹⁷⁰

The most significant consequence of the RHQ CIB’s preoccupation with the unemployed, the WUL, the CLDL and to a limited extent local CP branch life, was that intelligence personnel during Superintendent King’s tenure in Toronto ignored the rise of anti-fascist organizations. NHQ intelligence personnel also downplayed the transformation taking place. In the summer of 1934 the IO reported that little anti-fascist work was being accomplished in Ontario and what little was was meeting with no success.¹⁷¹ Plans to hold an August Youth Congress Against War and Fascism’s (YCAWF) Convention in Toronto were reported briefly in June by the IO but little else followed. The event itself was completely overshadowed by the CIB’s concern with other activities.

In August, the IO mocked the YCAWF’s claims of an “alleged” aggregate membership of over 100,000 and its national representation.¹⁷² About the only Toronto anti-fascist event to receive any coverage in core city files or in the IO’s SBs was an account of a picket held outside of the North German Lloyd Steamship Company’s Toronto office

¹⁷⁰CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 5 and 6 June 1934; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent King to Commissioner, 28 July 1934.

¹⁷¹Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] *The Depression Years, Part I*, SB #718, 8 August 1934, 185; *ibid.*, SB #719, 15 August 1934, 198-199.

¹⁷²*ibid.*, 201.

(against the persecution of Ernest Thaelmann in Germany) because it had led to several arrests and was reported in the press.¹⁷³ Furthermore, the steamship company had a long history of putting its resources to use in the services of foreign agents.

The Force's failure was not entirely a problem of its own making since even many leading stalwarts were uncertain about the direction the movement was heading. Stewart Smith in early 1934 under the pseudonym George Pierce released a study Socialism and the C.C.F. and had kept up with the rhetoric of the Third Period. In it Smith had stated that there was no difference between Fascism in Germany and capitalist democracy in Canada "as they were both dictatorships of the same ruling class, the capitalist class."¹⁷⁴ This study gained a wide audience including some consideration by the DCI and other intelligence personnel.¹⁷⁵ But on balance, the failure to place more than a modicum of interest in anti-fascist activities became the clearest sign that the mixed operational strategy adopted during Superintendent King's administration after two years still left something to be desired.

5.2

Phase 2: Reorientation and battling Anti-Fascism in the Popular Front

The fall of 1934 brought significant change to both "O" Division and the progressive movement. In September, Commissioner MacBrien ordered Superintendent

¹⁷³CPC TO 1930s, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent King to Commissioner MacBrien, 28 July 1934; Kealey and Whitaker [eds.], The Depression Years, Part I, SB #718, 8 August 1934, 195; *ibid.*, "Toronto Communist Get Thirty Days' Term," N.D.; Those arrested were Joe Derry, Peter Kozak and William Brennan.

¹⁷⁴Penner, Canadian Communism, 129.

¹⁷⁵NAC RG 146, 175P/ 2494, Stewart Smith file, report, Superintendent King to Commissioner, 6 April 1934; *ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Inspector Reames to Commissioner, 24 July 1934; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Inspector Walter Munday and Acting Commissioner Wood to Commissioner, 21 and 24 July 1934.

King to report to Ottawa to assume command of "A" Division. It was a hurried transfer. However, his Toronto successor Superintendent C.D. LaNauze brought vast experience to the Division. LaNauze had worked at Toronto RHQ earlier supervising the occasional intelligence investigation in the late 1920s. He had also concerned himself with the Leopold Affair writing one of the more substantial reports for NHQ on the matter.¹⁷⁶

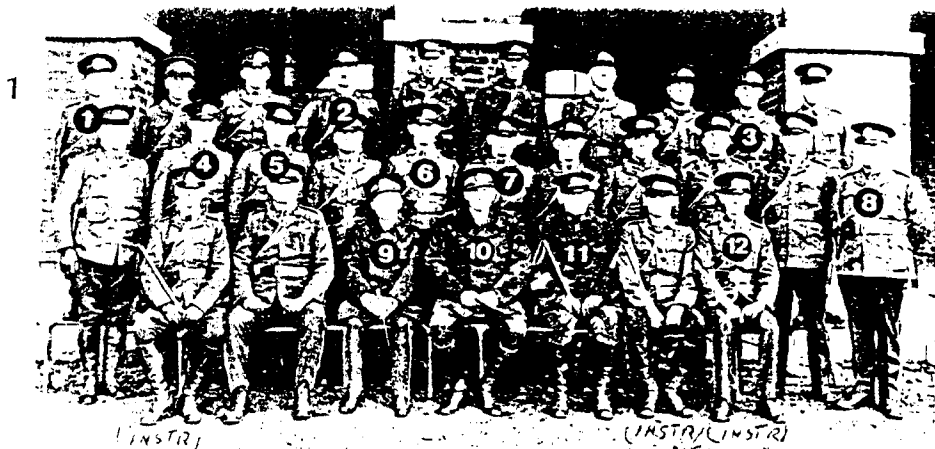
Superintendent LaNauze made few personnel changes to the RHQ CIB. Inspector Reames remained senior officer in charge of the Division's CIB and beneath him Sergeant Mathewson and Max Veitch split supervision of daily operations with Constable Childerstone still in charge of CIB records and Detective Irvine as the lead Toronto investigator.¹⁷⁷

In the fall change stemmed more from a shift in the RCMP's focus of investigations brought about largely as a consequence of international developments taking place. Hitler was not interested in renewing the Soviet-German Friendship treaty (signed originally at Rapallo in 1922) so the USSR began to look elsewhere for alliances. In September, as the Soviet Union was granted membership in the League of Nations, new popular front organizations were established.¹⁷⁸ A reappraisal by NHQ intelligence personnel of popular front initiatives occurred during the CLAWF's first National Congress in Toronto in October. The Congress claimed 300 official delegates and 200 observers representing 200 organizations and the interests of more than 330,000 Canadians. Senior NHQ intelligence

¹⁷⁶NAC RG 18, vol. 3452, file, 0-177, Service Record of C.H. King, telegram, Commissioner MacBrien to Superintendent King, 6 September 1934; RCMP, Quarterly, 18,2 (October 1952), 180; "obituary of Ex-Asst. Commissioner Charles Deering LaNauze", LaNauze joined the Force in September 1908, was promoted Inspector 1 October 1914, Superintendent 1 April 1932, Acting Assistant Commissioner 1 July 1935, confirmed in rank 1 July 1936 and retired to pension of 1 April 1944. During his career he served extensively in the North, the Maritimes, Prairies, the West Coast, Toronto and Ottawa. He was a member of the 1911 Coronation Contingent and served overseas during WWI. He died in 1952.

¹⁷⁷"O" Division, Nominal Rolls, September - December 1934.

¹⁷⁸Balawyder, Canadian-Soviet Relations, 212.



RCMP Maritime Training Depot, Halifax, N.S., class # 1, January 1933 (members in RCMP uniform identified here were from the Nova Scotia Police). 1. Cpl. N.W. Churchill, 2. Cst. P.L. Bentley, 3. Cst. W.O. Grimm, 4. Cpl. L.N. Draper, 5. Cpl. M.V. O'Shaughnessy, 6. Cst. J.H. Campbell, 7. Cst. J. Bennison, 8. Cst. M.J. Black, 9. Insp. B.B. Currie, 10. Supt. C.D. La Nauze ("H" Division RCMP C.O.), 11. Sgt. Major J. Clifford (RCMP service only), and 12. Cpl. A.D. Norman. Tentative identification is given of the 6th man back row as Cpl. M. MacLean, 7th man back row as Cst. D. MacKinnon, and 8th man back row as Cst. E.J. Richard.

A temporary respite from "O" Division.
C.D. LaNauze in Halifax as Maritime "H" Division OC in 1933.

Source: Cst. R.C. Toner and D.C. Perrier, "Nova Scotia Police,"
RCMP Quarterly 47,3 (Summer 1982), 42-43.

personnel embraced these estimates believing that the movement had become a dangerous reality to be “reckoned with”.¹⁷⁹

Although the CP declared the Congress a success, a breakdown in understanding between NHQ and “O” Division RHQ CIB personnel over its importance occurred. The Congress quickly came to symbolize this fact.¹⁸⁰ LaNauze instructed Detective Irvine to attend the Congress’ opening, while a second operative sat in its daily sessions.¹⁸¹ Poor communication meant that Detective Corporal Irvine, who was “unimpressed” by the movement’s sudden national presence and felt that its importance was “grossly exaggerated,” provided mis-analysis of the event and the anti-fascist movement generally.¹⁸² DCI Jennings found Irvine’s assessment “lacking” and in need of immediate “correction” because NHQ considered “the affair” a “decided success” and “one of the most outstanding things accomplished in the CPC’s history.” DCI Jennings wanted as much intelligence on anti-fascist activities as Divisions could secure.¹⁸³

Henceforth, Divisions made the CLAWF and eventually other anti-fascist organizations a priority. They were instructed to assess the extent of communist infiltration and to report their findings back to NHQ.¹⁸⁴ When delegates returned home following the

¹⁷⁹*Ibid.*, SB #728, 17 October 1934, 328; John Manley is quick to remind us that the latter number in other similar events can be taken with a “handful of salt.” Still NHQ spymasters soon felt differently. John Manley, “Introduction,” Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] *The Depression Years, Part II*, 15.

¹⁸⁰Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] *The Depression Years, Part I*, SB# 728, 17 October 1934, 331.

¹⁸¹ATIP request 96-A-00065, NAC RG 146, vol. 791, CSIS file, “League Against War and Fascism, Toronto, Ont. Oct. 1934,” (hereafter, CSIS LAWF), report, Detective Corporal Irvine, 9 October 1934; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Inspector James for Superintendent to Commissioner MacBrien, 9 October 1934.

¹⁸²CSIS LAWF file, memorandum, Assistant Commissioner Jennings, DCI, to OC “O” Division, 18 October 1934; Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] *The Depression Years, Part I*, SB #728, 17 October 1934, 328.

¹⁸³*ibid.*

¹⁸⁴CSIS “LAWF” file, report, source deleted and Inspector James for Superintendent to Commissioner MacBrien, 9 October 1934; Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] *The Depression Years Part I*, SB #728, 17 October 1934, 328; #729, 24 October 1934, 344; #730, 31 October 1934, 355; #738, 28 December 1934, 465.

Congress, public speeches they made were monitored by intelligence personnel in centres such as Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Winnipeg, Montreal, Halifax and elsewhere.¹⁸⁵ Affecting this reorientation and firmly establishing anti-fascist activities was LaNauze's primary contribution to the Division's 1930s intelligence operations.

Following the Congress Detective Corporal Irvine made a few discreet enquires and obtained the address of the CLAWF's Toronto 'Headquarters'. He secured a copy of the Congress Report and the DCI was informed that additional copies could be obtained upon request. The DCI wanted six more forwarded "as soon as possible" and by the end of the month four had been sent while NHQ pursued other copies elsewhere.¹⁸⁶

Irvine attended November Anniversary Celebrations of the Russian Revolution at Massey Hall and reported the event was one of the "most openly communistic to be held in Toronto for some time, [and it] proceeded without any interference from the local police."¹⁸⁷ Force personnel attended a small gathering arranged upon Buck's release from prison at the end of November and also his massive welcome home before 17,000 at Maple Leaf Gardens on 2 December.¹⁸⁸ Municipal elections followed. They earned extensive coverage by Irvine and LaNauze who reported that communist and United Front candidates

¹⁸⁵*ibid.*, report, Source deleted and Assistant Commissioner Dann to Commissioner MacBrien, 16 October 1934; Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] The Depression Years, Part I, SB #731, 7 November 1934, 385; #733, 21 November 1934, 400, 402; #734, 28 November 1934, 423.

¹⁸⁶CSIS LAWF file, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent LaNauze to Commissioner MacBrien, 23 October 1934; *ibid.*, memorandum, Assistant Commissioner Jennings, DCI, to OC "O" Division, 26 October 1934; *ibid.*, Superintendent Mead, OC "C" Division, to Commissioner MacBrien, 3 November 1934.

¹⁸⁷NAC RG 146 CSIS, 175P/ 2494 Stewart Smith file, report Detective Corporal Irving and Inspector Reames to Commissioner, 7 and 9 November 1934.

¹⁸⁸NAC RG 146 CSIS, 175P/ 2035, Tim Buck file, report, source deleted and Superintendent C.D. LaNauze to Commissioner, 26 November 1934; *ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Inspector Reames to Commissioner, 4 December 1934; Kealey and Whitaker [eds.], R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins: The Depression Years, Part I, SB #736, 12 December 1934, 439-444; Momentum for the release of Buck and the others had grown in successive years since the CLDL launched its original petition drive in 1932 and secured 459 000 names.

polled “slightly higher” than in previous years although numbers remained low enough that results were not yet cause for alarm.¹⁸⁹ When workloads increased during the winter Irvine was occasionally assisted by Constables Lamont, Porter and Spanton.¹⁹⁰ In January they attended several “Lenin, Liebknecht, Luxemburg” meetings and other events arranged by the CP and its subsidiaries.¹⁹¹

Just as a noticeable improvement in RHQ CIB operations occurred, in February Superintendent LaNauze became ill. He remained off duty until he was transferred to “A” Division in July.¹⁹² In his absence Inspector Reames was temporarily placed in charge of the Division’s entire operations. Reames was simultaneously responsible for his job as CIB head.¹⁹³ For several months intelligence work suffered as a consequence.¹⁹⁴ Some intelligence also dried up on account of plans revolutionaries made. Buck left the city for a western tour and spent two months out west and then quickly swung back to the east coast

¹⁸⁹CPC TO 1930s, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent LaNauze to Commissioner, 14 and 15 December 1934; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent LaNauze to Commissioner, 26 December 1934; *ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent LaNauze to Commissioner, 27 December 1934; *ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent LaNauze to Commissioner, 3 January 1935.

¹⁹⁰“O” Division, Nominal Rolls, December 1934 and January 1935.

¹⁹¹CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted, 21 January 1935; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent LaNauze to Commissioner, 21 and 22 January 1935; *ibid.*, report, 29 January 1935; *ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent LaNauze to Commissioner, 29 January 1935.

¹⁹²“O” Division, Nominal Rolls, February 1935 - July 1935; RG 18 vol. 3455, file 0-203, Service Record of Albert Edward George Oakleigh Reames, memorandum, Commissioner MacBrien to Minister in Control, RCMP, 6 April 1935; *ibid.*, memorandum, Superintendent Kemp, Adjutant to DOC “O” Division, 27 May 1935; LaNauze replaced Cawdron as supply officer who was going on leave before retiring.

¹⁹³NAC RG 18, box 4941, file 0-203 Service Record of A.E.G.O. Reames (Hereinafter cited as RCMP Service Record of Albert Reames), memorandum, Commissioner MacBrien to Minister in charge of RCMP, 6 April 1935.

¹⁹⁴CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 4 January 1935; report, source deleted, 20 April 1935; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and A/Supt. Reames to Commissioner, 23 April 1935; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and A/Supt. Reames to Commissioner, 26 April 1935; Rivett-Carnac, *Pursuit in the Wilderness*, 303; This ‘doubling-up’ of responsibilities was not unheard of even later periods and at higher levels too. In 1945, the office of DCI had “fallen vacant” with the retirement of its CO. Rivett-Carnac was transferred to Ottawa to head the intelligence section and conjointly occupied the position of DCI until a more senior officer could be transferred.

reducing a potential source. The next time he was “spotted” in the region (and reported on in his dossier) was in mid-June. For two months nothing was deposited on the core Toronto CP file nor the CLAWF file and most intelligence acquired by Division personnel shifted to centres outside Toronto such as Windsor, Hamilton, Stratford and elsewhere.¹⁹⁵

RHQ CIB operations slowly improved in April when an operative positioned himself in the revolutionary community in Toronto and Detective Irvine resumed his reporting on local activities.¹⁹⁶ They were joined by what appear to have been several other casual ‘contacts’ who reported on the infrequent meeting and then disappeared from the files. One operative attended a local “Worker Drive Festival” in support of a daily Worker, he also attended concerts, Toronto United May Day preparatory meetings and participated in a demonstration outside the Finnish Consulate in demand of the release of Toivo Antikainen, a prominent communist in Finland, awaiting trial on the charge of murder.¹⁹⁷ Irvine and the operative attended May Day festivities which were monitored in the usual manner. This intelligence was shared with the OPP and the TCPD and across the Division, Reames reported, it “passed” without any “serious trouble” arising.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁵NAC RG 146 CSIS, 175P/ 2035, Tim Buck file, report, Constable Wilson, Inspector Mercer and Superintendent LaNauze to Commissioner, 4 and 6 February 1935; *ibid.*, report, source deleted, 11 February 1935; *ibid.*, report, Constable Jesse, Constable Rehfeld and Superintendent LaNauze to Commissioner, 12 and 15 February 1935; *ibid.*, report, Corporal Williams, 17 and 18 June 1935.

¹⁹⁶NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, CLPD file, report, Detective Irvine and A/ Supt. Reames to Commissioner, 27 and 30 April 1935.

¹⁹⁷NAC RG 146, CSIS, 175P/ 2494, Stewart Smith File, report, C.F. Zryd, 20 April 1935; One contact or operative’s name was C.F. Zryd; CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted, 20 April 1935; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and A/ Supt. Reames to Commissioner, 23 April 1935; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and A/ Supt. Reames to Commissioner, 26 April 1935.

¹⁹⁸CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted, 3 May 1935; *ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and A/ Supt. Reames to Commissioner, 3 May 1935; report, Constable W.J. Dickson, 24 April 1935; *ibid.*, report, A/Supt. Reames to Cst. I/C Sault Ste. Marie, 26 April 1935; *ibid.*, report, source deleted, 3 May 1935; *ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and A/ Supt. Reames to Commissioner, 3 May 1935; “Communist Admits Agitators Are Paid,” Toronto Star, 2 May 1935; “May Day Loyalties Mixed Parade Puzzles Watchers,” Toronto Star, 2 May 1935; “Down With War And Fascism Too, Parade Demand,” Toronto Star, 2 May 1935.

In July, acting Superintendent Reames' was officially promoted to the rank of Superintendent and given full command of "O" Division.¹⁹⁹ His appointment from within made Walkerville SDHQ OC Robert Mercer the second in command of the Division.²⁰⁰ In June, Mercer was transferred to Toronto, and while Reames kept the CIB portfolio, Mercer's assistance lightened his OC's workload. But technically, "O" Division was entitled to another senior member of the Force being transferred in from outside the Division. NHQ was trying to trim its overhead and Force adjutant Kemp informed Reames that in this instance "therefore no other officer is being detailed to "O" Division."²⁰¹

Mercer's former position as officer in charge of Windsor SDHQ went to Ted Weeks but by this point in the Division's history several other detachments had grown sufficiently in strength such as Hamilton and Oshweken, for instance, so that they now competed with Windsor and had as many personnel stationed there (fluctuating between four and six) which reduced the latter's claim to SDHQ status.²⁰² Consequently, Windsor SDHQ reverted back to its original status as just another detachment and it was not until the 1950s that another SDHQ was established in the Division.²⁰³

Between May and November Detective Irvine and an operative were responsible for nearly all reports deposited on the core file. In May, a federal election was announced for October. In anticipation constituency meetings were held and attended by intelligence personnel and Detective Irvine secretly paid a visit to the CP's Federal Election

¹⁹⁹RCMP G.O. 2368, 1-3-35; NAC RG 18 Service Record of Albert Reames, memorandum, Commissioner MacBrien to Governor General in Council, 2 July 1935.

²⁰⁰"O" Division, Nominal Rolls, April 1935.

²⁰¹NAC RG 18 Service Record of Albert Reames, memorandum, Assistant Supt. Kemp, Adjutant, to DOC "O" Division, 27 May 1935.

²⁰²"O" Division, Nominal Rolls, June 1935.

²⁰³"O" Division, Nominal Rolls, June, July, November, 1935.

Headquarters to purchase copies of the party's election program.²⁰⁴ In June, the operative felt so comfortable in the work he conducted that he graced a CP "Garden Party and Social" held at a local comrade's home where "Canada Bud Ale was served at 5c a glass" and "[b]ox lunches were raffled at various prices" and [a]ll proceeds were donated to the FSU.²⁰⁵ He participated frequently in Toronto CP activities, eventually he became a District #2 Ward #3 Secretary and by the fall served in a local leadership capacity.²⁰⁶ With RHQ short-staffed and Irvine, in particular, swamped with other work, the brutal repression of the Ottawa-bound trekkers in Regina on 1 July earned scant coverage in Toronto files.²⁰⁷ In August DCI Jennings sent a memorandum to "O" Division's OC to the effect that Montreal reported that Stewart Smith was in the Soviet Union attending the Congress of the CI and he wanted that information verified.²⁰⁸ It took Irvine several weeks to respond and his early reports proved inconclusive, while subsequent inquiries made around CP Toronto headquarters were stopped since they threatened to expose a contact.²⁰⁹

The October 1935 federal election was reported by RHQ CIB personnel.²¹⁰ During

²⁰⁴NAC RG 146, CSIS, 175P/ 2494, Stewart Smith File, report, source deleted and Inspector Reames to Commissioner, 1 and 3 April 1935; CPC TO 1930s, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and A/ Supt. Reames to Commissioner, 28 May 1935.

²⁰⁵CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and A/Supt. Reames to Commissioner, 18 June 1935.

²⁰⁶CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 12 December 1935.

²⁰⁷Kealey and Whitaker [eds.], R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins, The Depression Years, Part II, SB #776, 9 October 1935, 523-525; However, Regina Trek leader Arthur Evans' speaking engagements at Toronto, Timmins, Hamilton, Guelph and elsewhere in the province later in the year as part of a national tour were reported extensively by CIB personnel.

²⁰⁸NAC RG 146, CSIS, 175P/ 2494, Stewart Smith File, memorandum, DCI Jennings to OC "O" Division, 2 August 1935; *ibid.*, report, source deleted, 26 October 1935.

²⁰⁹NAC RG 146, CSIS, 175P/ 2494, Stewart Smith File, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 19 August 1935; *ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 21 August 1935; *ibid.*, memorandum, DCI Jennings to OC "O" Division, 4 September 1935; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 6 September 1935.

²¹⁰CPC TO 1930s, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and A/ Supt. Reames to Commissioner, 27 and 28 June 1935; *ibid.*, report, source deleted, 28 June 1935; *ibid.*, "Jobless Here Demand Probe," The Toronto Globe, 6 July 1935; *ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and A/ Supt. Reames to Commissioner, 6 July

the election campaign both Detective Irvine and the operative pursued intelligence that provided insight into alliance and coalition building amongst progressives.²¹¹ The CP ran candidates in 13 constituencies including: Scarlett in Rosedale, Salsberg in Spadina and Norman Freed in Trinity.²¹² In addition to reporting on these activities Detective Irvine and the operative tried to keep tabs on funds being raised while responding as best they could to requests by the DCI that PHFs be generated on local activists who played a prominent role in the election campaign on behalf of CP and “United Front” candidates.²¹³ From the intelligence RHQ CIB personnel secured Superintendent Reames concluded that meetings of communists in connection with the election, in general, were “drawing in very poor crowds in this City” and so were turnouts at other CP-sponsored events.²¹⁴

The October federal election resulted in a massive sweep with Liberals capturing 173 of 245 seats, a 100 seat majority, the largest since Confederation. However ‘credible’ their four-fold increase was across Canada, communists polled just 26,000 votes, elected none, and as Reames predicted fared poorly in Toronto.²¹⁵ The Liberal campaign platform included a promise to Repeal Section 98.²¹⁶

1935; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 6 August 1935; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 16 August 1935; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 26 and 27 August 1935.

²¹¹Thompson and Seager, *Canada 1922-1939*, 272-276, 277-279; For the first time in a federal election with the CCF established two years earlier, rejection of the Tories as a “corollary” did not necessarily mean the election of the Liberals, Thompson and Seager, wrote. Yet the CCF hardly proved much of an alternative as its subsequent history demonstrated.

²¹²Kealey and Whitaker [eds.], *R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins, The Depression Years, Part II*, SB #775, 2 October 1935, 514.

²¹³CPC TO 1930s, memorandum, DCI to OC “O” Division, 31 August 1935.

²¹⁴CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted, and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 5 September 1935; *ibid.*, report, source deleted, and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 28 September 1935.

²¹⁵Manley, “Audacity,” 26; Avakumovic, *The Communist Party in Canada*, 93-51; Manley views it as a ‘credible result’, Avakumovic a failure.

²¹⁶Trades and Labour Congress of Canada, *Report of The Proceedings Of The Forty-Seventh Annual Convention, 1931*, (Ottawa, 1931), 185-186; *ibid.*, 1932, 22; *ibid.*, 1933, 21; *ibid.*, 1934, 182-183; *ibid.*, 1935, 167; J.W. Pickersgill, “The Decay of Liberalism,” 1935), 251-253; For four years in the late

Following the federal election the CP re-emerged in the “open,” as NHQ personnel predicted, and subsequently intensified its activities.²¹⁷ The Toronto CP took several steps to test the issue of its own illegality. They scheduled a meeting in Massey Hall in November under the CP banner the first time since the 1931 CP leadership’s arrests.²¹⁸ CP city offices were opened first at 420 Parliament Street, then along Yonge Street, and eventually elsewhere and before long stalwarts ran a communist instructional school.²¹⁹

Intelligence personnel responded to these developments by alerting their political bosses to the CP’s plans.²²⁰ “Should no action be taken by authorities,” the IO warned, “it is the intention of the Communists to come out openly in the whole Province of Ontario.”²²¹ Detective Irvine contacted the TCPD on the issue of the Massey Hall meeting but the event was left ‘unmolested’ and as a result was filled to capacity.²²² Earl Browder, General Secretary of the CPUSA attended and Stewart Smith and Buck spoke on the CI Seventh

1920s a motion was introduced and passed the House of Commons only to be overturned in the Senate. Then in the 1930s right up until 1936 each year a similar resolution was introduced and passed at the annual Trades and Labor Congress of Canada Conventions.

²¹⁷SB# 874, 27 October 1937, 422; It rose from 5,500 to 15,000; Avakumovic, The Communist Party in Canada, 115.

²¹⁸CPC TO 1930s, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 30 October 1935; “Communist Party Sponsors Meeting,” Mail & Empire, 30 October 1935; *ibid.*, report, source deleted, 5 November 1935; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 5 November 1935; Detective Irvine noted Stewart Smith would report on his visit to Moscow and his attendance as a delegate to the Seventh Congress of the CI.

²¹⁹Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins: The Depression Years, Part II, SB #780, 6 November 1935, 563; #781, 13 November 1935, 577; CPC TO 1930s, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 30 October 1935; “Communist Party Sponsors Meeting,” Mail & Empire, 30 October 1935; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 12 and 13 November 1935.

²²⁰Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins: The Depression Years, Part II, SB# 780, 6 November 1935, 569-570.

²²¹Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins: The Depression Years, Part II, SB# 780, 6 November 1935, 570.

²²²CPC TO 1930s, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 30 October 1935; “Communist Party Sponsors Meeting,” Mail & Empire, 30 October 1935; Kealey and Whitaker, The Depression Years, Part II, SB., 781, 13 November 1935, 577, 580-582.

Congress's implications for Canada.²²³

News of the Soviet shift in foreign policy announced at the CI's Seventh Congress filtered back to Canada and was fully unveiled at the event.²²⁴ Tim Buck, was elected to the Executive Committee of the CI by the Seventh World Congress and news of his appointment had reached NHQ by November. This was the first time, the IO noted, that a member of the CPC was elected "to the general staff of the world revolution."²²⁵ It was a phenomenal feat given the fact that the Canadian party represented at best 2 per cent of the CI's total membership (not including the Russian party) and virtually guaranteed his survival during the difficult period that followed with the reestablishment of "trade-union unity" through amalgamation of third period revolutionary unions with the old internationals, if possible, but in all likelihood their disbandment and return to the latter. The CPC leaders met in early November in Toronto to hammer out a plan and less than two weeks later this was followed by the final WUL convention which basically approved the policy laid out at the Seventh Congress.²²⁶

Superintendent Reames was not going to sit idly by while the CP and its subsidiaries went unchallenged. So he gave RHQ CIB personnel the 'green light' to place an operative in the school. The operative joined 21 others for several weeks while the school thrived. Then a few speakers failed to keep their engagements, the operative reported, and a lack

²²³CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted, and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 5 November 1935.

²²⁴Balawyder, Canadian-Soviet Relations, 188-189.; Kealey and Whitaker [eds.], R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins, The Depression Years, Part II, SB # 775, 2 October 1935, 510-513.

²²⁵ibid., SB #780, 6 November 1935, 563.

²²⁶Claudin, The Communist International, 106; Manley, "Audacity"; Buck carried the full authority of the international whose directives according to Claudin were akin to 'law' for all national sections: "it could expel members of groups or members belonging to any country, or entire national sections, it could change the leadership of a national section, even against the will of the majority of its members, and so on." The 'selling function' that Manley refers to one must emphasize occurred within this framework. Buy if you like but leave if you don't.

of funds became another “obstacle” in the path of the school. It closed temporarily in December and indefinitely the following February.²²⁷ When the CP opened a “new elaborate Headquarters” on Adelaide Street in the “business centre of the city,” Irvine secretly toured its facilities.²²⁸

The intensification of monitoring CP activities that took place at all levels was selective. With limited resources choices were made and sometimes alternative support was drawn by turning to elsewhere in the national network. In the fall Detective Irvine complained that the CLAWF was providing the CP with a “vehicle” to spread its “newly disguised doctrines” through “less militant parties.” Consequently, both its Second CLAWF Congress and the WUL’s Third National Convention held in the city in these months (the latter immediately following a CP National Plenum) were attended by Division personnel.²²⁹ But the CLDL, which held its National Convention in Toronto in October, was seemingly not attended by a Toronto operative.²³⁰ Instead, this work was left to a Montreal operative who was better positioned.²³¹

Municipal election coverage in 1935 was more intense than in some previous years.

²²⁷CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 12 and 13 November 1935; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 23 December 1935; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Reames, 4 and 5 February 1936.

²²⁸CPC TO 1930s, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 20 December 1935.

²²⁹Kealey and Whitaker [eds.], *R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins, The Depression Years, Part II*, SB #781, 13 November 1935, 577; *ibid.*, SB #785, 11 December 1935, 622; CPC TO 1930s, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 20 December 1935; NAC RG 146, CSIS holding, 175P/ 2035, Tim Buck file, cross-reference sheet, 11 December 1935; *ibid.*, cross-reference sheet, 11 December 1935.

²³⁰Kealey and Whitaker [eds.], *R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins, The Depression Years, Part II*, SB #778, 23 October 1935, 541; *ibid.*, SB #780, 6 November 1935, 564-565; It claimed 10,775 CLDL branch members, 33,6000 trade union affiliates and 13,925 language and cultural mass organizations and other affiliates for a total of 58,300.

²³¹NAC RG 146, CSIS, 175P/ 392, A.E. Smith file, report, source deleted, 26 October 1935; This was surprising because usually major conventions were attended by several operatives and normally one from the host city.

It began in late November when the operative attended a special meeting of all Toronto CP District Unit Secretaries at which time the names of CP candidates were announced and the communist election program was “read and thoroughly discussed.”²³² Early intelligence he secured suggested that the CP would be “well represented” which subsequently proved correct. Election meetings were attended by the operative, Detective Irvine, and when meetings multiplied Constable Reg Warner.²³³ When election results were sent to Ottawa Superintendent Reames emphasized the fact that communist candidates in general polled “much higher” than previously even if none had been elected which confirmed MacBrien’s belief that Liberal policies were disastrous and that the CP’s strategy was garnering support.²³⁴

By the winter of 1936 Detective Irvine believed that much of the CP’s local political and industrial work was concentrated in the CLAWF and WUL. He was disturbed by the fact that, in general, the CP had “undergone a complete change during the past year” in that it no longer “profess [es] to be an undercover organization...” It bothered him that stalwarts derived “a great deal of satisfaction” because they were now “on the same footing” as other Labour organizations and he blamed federal authorities.²³⁵ His entire Toronto detective career began immediately following the CP’s period of illegality and in Toronto they were asserting their rights to an extent that he felt flaunted the law.

²³²CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 26 and 27 November 1935.

²³³CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 12 December 1935; *ibid.*, report, Constable Warner and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 20 and 21 December 1935. RCMP G.O. 9018, 12-3-31 notes engagement of Reginald Robert Warner; “O” Division, Nominal Rolls, June 1931; RCMP G.O. 9173, Transfer Depot to “O” 1-6-31; “O” Division, Nominal Rolls, January 1934.

²³⁴CPC TO 1930s, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 3 January 1936.

²³⁵CPC TO 1930s, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 20 December 1935.

In December the CP had established a club at the University of Toronto, Detective Irvine reported, and he complained that “trusted agents” of Moscow were “operating” with the full consent of several college officials. He deplored the fact that at Hart House the “radical element” had a library at their “disposal” to enjoy “their reading of communistic literature without fear of interruption.” He was extremely critical of University officials who encouraged prominent radicals such as Tim Buck to visit them in their studies for discussions on “present conditions.”²³⁶ In an endeavor to learn more Irvine briefly developed a dormitory operative at Hart House to report on CP campus activities. When provincial authorities “called” administrators to the Parliament Buildings for “discussions” on these matters he was pleased that action was taken.²³⁷

When Chief Detective Hugh Mathewson left Toronto in January 1936 for a three-month refresher course at Depot, there was no noticeable decline in investigative work on the part of RHQ CIB personnel.²³⁸ Instead, intelligence personnel demonstrated greater efficacy in the work they conducted. They split counter-subversive responsibilities with Detective Irvine concentrating on anti-fascist activities, an operative targeting WUL industrial organizing and its reentry into the A.F. of L. and Constable Bob Warner handling much of the mundane leg work and follow-up.²³⁹ DCI Jennings also paid particularly close

²³⁶CPC TO 1930s, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 20 December 1935; NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, 175P/ 2035, Tim Buck file, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 17 December 1935; CPC TO 1930s, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 4 and 5 February 1936.

²³⁷NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, 175P/ 2035, Tim Buck file, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 17 December 1935.

²³⁸“O” Division, Nominal Rolls, March and April 1936; RCMP G.O. 3626 for week ending 9 May 1936.

²³⁹CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 30 December 1935; report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 12 December 1935; *ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 6 December 1935; “Near Riot Staged As German Agent Opens Office Here,” *The Mail & Empire*, 6 December 1935; *ibid.*, report, Constable Warner and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 8 and 9 January 1936.

attention to the counter-intelligence work RHQ CIB personnel conducted. Occasionally after reviewing reports that crossed his desk, he instructed his Division OC to send Irvine out into the field to verify intelligence secured and provide additional information.²⁴⁰ In these months Detective Irvine, Constable Warner and the operative attended annual Lenin Memorial Meetings, local unemployment demonstrations and other events the CP announced were part of a “much larger” spring “campaign” stalwarts planned with organizers being sent into the “field” to Niagara Falls, London, Kitchener, Hamilton, east to Markham and Oshawa, and into relief camps with the goal of exploring the possibility of holding another trek in April.²⁴¹

RHQ operations further improved in the spring once Mathewson returned to Toronto having successfully completed the Regina course.²⁴² Before long, CIB personnel learned that a CP National Convention was initially scheduled for Toronto in July. The RHQ operative increased his profile within the Toronto CP and for the first time in years through his work the CIB acquired ward reports of branch unit activities.²⁴³ The April trek was cancelled. Constable Warner was sent to Timmins just before May Day in charge of

SB #804, 29 April 1936, 178; In particular the operative focused on report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 12 December 1935; SB #804, 29 April 1936, 178.

²⁴⁰CPC TO 1930s, memorandum, DCI Jennings to OC “O” Division, 5 February 1936; *ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 26 March 1936; It is unfortunate that the original letter is missing and several lines of Irvine’s report were deleted by CSIS.

²⁴¹CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 9 and 11 March 1936; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 7 and 9 March 1936; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 20 March 1936; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 24 March 1936; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 4 April 1936; NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, 175P/2035, Tim Buck file, cross-reference sheet of report by Constable E.A. Snider, 23 and 28 February 1936; *ibid.*, report, A/Cpl. Woods and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 22 and 23 April 1936; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Inspector Reames to Commissioner, 23 and 24 March 1936; *ibid.*, report, source deleted, 24 March 1936.

²⁴²As soon as a position became available he was in line for promotion to Sergeant.

²⁴³CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 4 April 1936.

that detachment which might have proved a setback for RHQ CIB intelligence work had several others with considerable detective experience not succeeded him in Toronto.²⁴⁴

For May Day 1936 RHQ intelligence personnel focused on CP relations with the National CCF which remained cool despite overtures by the former to forge a united front.²⁴⁵ When the CCF rejected the CP's offer and then expelled three prominent Toronto CCFers and four district organizations for participating in united May Day celebrations, this intelligence was quickly forwarded to NHQ.²⁴⁶ May Day events, in general, were reported more vigorously than in previous years. More intelligence became available with the operative well-positioned, with the appearance of several new weekly mimeographs, and with the conversion of The Worker to a daily and renamed the Daily Clarion as of May 1.²⁴⁷

In the summer of 1936 RHQ CIB operations slowed. The slowdown in activity was tempered partially by the seasonal nature of work and work rhythms. Many stalwarts left town in these months and flocked to northern industries – logging and mining camps.²⁴⁸ The operative was temporarily withdrawn following May Day for reasons that are not known. For six weeks Irvine concentrated on other assignments, and several other RHQ personnel

²⁴⁴"O" Division, Nominal Rolls, January - April 1936; They included Constables G.J. Hayward, L.C. Turner and E.S. Covell, all were granted plainclothes pay at Toronto RHQ. *G.J. Hayward*, engaged at "O" Division 19-8-1931 under RCMP G.O. 9384 and was sent to Regina for training. He worked at "E" Division in 1932 as a detective and was transferred to "O" Division shortly thereafter where he remained conducting piecemeal detective investigations throughout the 1930s.

²⁴⁵RCMP G.O. 3695, 18 May 1936; RCMP G.O. 3726, 6 May 1936; RCMP G.O. 3736, 30 May 1936.

²⁴⁶CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 9 April 1936; "Motion to Join In United Front Banned by C.C.F.," The Gazette, 11 April 1936; "C.C.F. Will Eschew May Day Doings," Mail & Empire, 15 April 1936; *ibid.*, report, source deleted, 4 May 1936; *ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 4 May 1936; *ibid.*, memorandum, Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 11 May 1936; *ibid.*, "Ontario C.C.F. To Expel Three," Ottawa Citizen, 11 May 1936.

²⁴⁷SB# 798, 18 March 1936; SB #799, 25 March 1936, 135; SB 801, 8 April 1936, 153; SB 805, 6 May 1936, 189.

²⁴⁸Ian Radforth, Bush Workers and Bosses: Logging in Northern Ontario, 1900-1980 (Toronto, 1987).

were pulled away from detective and plainclothes duty.²⁴⁹ Then in June Superintendent Reames was granted leave and Inspector Robert Mercer assumed temporary command of the Division.²⁵⁰ Inspector Mercer and Detective Irvine both reported on July Toronto demonstrations held to celebrate the Repeal of Section 98 but little else followed.²⁵¹

The decline in coverage was also the result of other factors. There was a shift in the focus of local CP activity. On the one hand a "slum clearance" campaign was pursued with progressives using existing mechanisms to apply pressure on various municipal and provincial authorities, while on the other, relief strikes, which were often spontaneous, did not lend themselves easily to monitoring.²⁵² With an operative temporarily gone, industrial strikes too, became more difficult to monitor although some effort was made, while other opportunities dried up because key subjects like Tim Buck left the city for a western tour and then eventually headed overseas and was gone until November.²⁵³

Ever since "O" Division's 1932 expansion its resources in terms of infrastructure proved inadequate to the increased responsibilities its personnel faced. A growing roster, more support staff and greater requirements meant that like "E" Division out west (and in

²⁴⁹CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted, 4 May 1936; *ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 4 May 1936; *ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Inspector R.E. Mercer to Commissioner, 22 June 1936; "O" Division, Nominal Rolls, June - August 1936.

²⁵⁰RCMP G.O. 3588, 31 May 1936; RCMP G.O. 3657, 19 June 1936; RCMP G.O. 3862, 12 August 1936; Irvine, Veitch and Weeks demonstrated their continued enthusiasm for CIB investigations by signing five-year contracts and re-engaging in the Force for periods lasting beyond the end of this study.

²⁵¹CPC TO 1930s, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Inspector Mercer to Commissioner, 22 June 1936; *ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent Mercer to Commissioner, 6 and 7 July 1936; NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, 175P/ 2035, Tim Buck file, cross-reference sheet, Detective Corporal Irvine, 6 July 1936.

²⁵²CPC TO 1930s, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Inspector Mercer to Commissioner, 7 July 1936, "Mass March on June 26," The Daily Clarion, 3 June 1936, 1; "Communist Party to Protest Slums," The Daily Clarion, 6 June 1936, 1; "Tim Buck Urges Slum Clearance to Civic Board," The Daily Clarion, 11 June 1936, 1-2; "Relief Strikes Spread, Involved Guelph, N. York," The Daily Clarion, 3 January 1936, 1-3.

²⁵³NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, 175P/ 2035, Tim Buck file; CLPD file, report, Assistant Commissioner Dann to Commissioner, 8 July 1936; *ibid.*, "Tim Buck, Now In Europe Outlawed From Canada," Toronto Globe, 30 October 1936; report, detective corporal Irvine and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 12 and 13 November 1936; *ibid.*, report, source deleted, 12 November 1936.

particular its CIB) Toronto RHQ was no longer able to function in its old premises on Charles Street East (Postal Station 'F').²⁵⁴ Space in the old quarters had become "entirely inadequate" and many offices "decidedly cramped." A search for a suitable alternative was initiated in the spring, eventually the funds required were made available and relocation to the Dominion Public Buildings at Bay and Front Streets (not a coincidence either that it was the west wing of the 'Customs Building') followed in September. This disruption added to the general shortage experienced by seasonal duties which drew personnel away from CIB activities.²⁵⁵

Superintendent Reames returned to duty in August and resumed full operational control of the Division. Before long, RHQ CIB operations improved.²⁵⁶ Detective Irvine resumed his investigations and an operative was developed. The operative was well-positioned since within weeks he obtained District Bureau monthly meeting minutes.²⁵⁷

The Spanish Civil War broke out in July. But it was another month before the Force fully directed its attention toward domestic activities concerning this event.²⁵⁸ The first substantial rally in Toronto they monitored in support of Spain post the commencement of hostilities was held in mid-August at Queen's Park and the same week the IO reported that the Ontario District of the CP was preparing for a campaign in aid of the Spanish

²⁵⁴n.a. "'E' Division Vignette," RCMP Quarterly 14,4 (April 1949), 223-225.

²⁵⁵"'O' Division," RCMP Quarterly, 4,3 (January 1937), 219-220; This was the heart of the commercial activity in the city and tied the Force further into this culture. The building itself was of "modern construction" fully equipped with new "steel cabinets" and shelving which would house the secret intelligence files. All that would remain at the Charles Street facility was the Division Orderly and duties in connection with applications for naturalization.

²⁵⁶A.E. Smith's file, for instance, had nothing deposited on it from mid-January until late August.

²⁵⁷CPC TO 1930s, DB minutes, 13 July 1936; *ibid.*, DB minutes, 22 July 1936; *ibid.*, DB, minutes, 16 September 1936; *ibid.*, DB, minutes, 10 October 1936; *ibid.*, "First Annual Rally Canadian Amateur Sports Federation, Program" and report, Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 11 August 1936; *ibid.*, report, source deleted and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 14 August 1936; NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, 175P/ 2035, Tim Buck file, cross-reference sheet, report, Detective Corporal Irvine 19 and 22 June 1936; Balawyder, Canadian-Soviet Relations, 189.

²⁵⁸Manley, "Audacity," 23.

Government.²⁵⁹

Nearly all full-time intelligence reports deposited on core files and many on PHFs concerned anti-fascist activities and Spain.²⁶⁰ In September, NHQ learned a “United Committee to Aid the Spanish People’s Republic” was established in Toronto to “coordinate” the collection of funds and that the organization planned to send money cables weekly overseas. In September, the King administration lifted its 1931 embargo on the importation of Soviet goods, mainly staples to Canada, and the Soviet government responded in kind.²⁶¹ Officially the federal government adopted a position of “neutrality” in the Spanish conflict, but in reality it aided the insurgents and Franco.²⁶² When the CP postponed its National Convention for a year in October the operative quit reporting on DB monthly meetings.

In the fall Commissioner MacBrien firmly believed that action had to be taken against domestic organizations which provided support for democratic forces in Spain. He encouraged Minister of Justice, Ernest Lapointe, to move against the CLAWF. He reminded the Minister that the CLAWF is a “subsidiary” of the CP by which organization it is “directly controlled.” He requested that Canadian authorities prevent delegates from the Madrid government from entering Canada for speaking engagements since it would

²⁵⁹“7000 Meet to Support Spain,” The Daily Clarion, 20 August 1936, 1-2; Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins: The Depression Years, Part III, SB #820, 19 August 1936, 345, 353.

²⁶⁰ibid., SB #822, 2 September 1936, 368.

²⁶¹Balawyder, Canadian-Soviet Relations, 151, 216-217; Since May Mackenzie King had instructed Vincent Massey, Canada’s high commissioner in London, to open dialogue with the Soviet Ambassador to the United Kingdom with the goal of “normalizing” trade relations with the Soviet Union by lifting the 1931 embargo.

²⁶²“Canada and Spain,” The Canadian Forum, 16, 190 (November 1936), 3-4; For instance, foreign trade figures for Canadian exports to Morocco (where many insurgents were recruited) in September 1935 were \$1,924 and a year later they stood at \$296,752 and as even a Mail & Empire correspondent noted, “[t]he authorities have no delusions about where the shipments are going to ultimately – to General Franco, but they don’t feel called upon to take any action.”

"...infringe the neutrality agreement which is in effect insofar as the Dominion."²⁶³ Lapointe ignored this protest. But MacBrien kept the pressure up. When the Spanish government's representatives toured the country in the fall, MacBrien responded by sending Force personnel to attend their meetings. Highlights of their meetings were reported in the IO's weekly summaries. Several months later MacBrien forwarded Lapointe further intelligence on the CLAWF's Toronto activities, a group he labeled an "extremist radical faction."²⁶⁴

In October, as MacBrien encouraged the federal authorities to adopt a tougher stance against anti-fascist organizations, Superintendent Reames strengthened "O" Division intelligence operations. Inspector R.E. Mercer was appointed to the position of senior officer in charge of the Division CIB.²⁶⁵ Constable R.J. Cherry, who had joined the RHQ CIB months earlier, along with Detective Irvine was ordered to attend CP, CLAWF and CASD-sponsored public meetings.²⁶⁶ They also developed a source close to the CASD executive.²⁶⁷ By December "O" Division CIB personnel began reporting on recruiting for overseas service.²⁶⁸

Momentum in monitoring anti-fascist activities was gaining in these months. It

²⁶³NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, CLPD, memorandum, Commissioner MacBrien to Minister of Justice, Ernest Lapointe, 15 October 1936.

²⁶⁴NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, CLPD, ibid., memorandum, Commissioner MacBrien to Minister of Justice, Ernest Lapointe, 15 February 1937.

²⁶⁵"O" Division, Nominal Rolls, October 1936.

²⁶⁶NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, CLPD, report, Constable R.J. Cherry and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 21 and 23 October 1936; "O" Division, Nominal Rolls, May 1936; ibid., December 1937; ibid., May 1939; RCMP G.O. 30 April 1939;

R.J. Cherry had joined the CIB in May 1936. During the summer it appears as though he was conducting other investigations. He was appointed a detective the following December and he remained more or less stationed in Toronto undertaking an array of CIB investigations right up until he purchased his discharge in April 1939.

²⁶⁷CPC TO 1930s, "\$1,000 From Toronto To Aid Spanish Reds," The Globe, 18 August 1936; ibid., report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent Reames, 19 and 20 August 1936; ibid., report, source deleted and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 6 October 1936;

²⁶⁸NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, RSA file, memorandum, Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 28 December 1936.

continued right up until mid 1938 and it was in this context that many core anti-fascist focused organizational/ operational files were opened in successive years, among the earliest beginning in 1935 with a Canadian League Against War and Fascism file²⁶⁹ (renamed the Canadian League for Peace and Democracy in 1937), a Recruiting For Spanish Army (RSA) operational file²⁷⁰ in October 1936, a Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy (CASD) file²⁷¹ in early 1937, and a Friends of the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion (FMPB) file²⁷² in 1938.

These three popular front antifascist organizations (the CLPD, the CASD and the FMPB) served different purposes. With different programs and goals their success levels across the country varied considerably.²⁷³ Although the CLPD, the CASD, and the FMPB

²⁶⁹CSIS CLPD file, "Peace and Democracy Is League's New Name," Citizen, 13 August 1937; see Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] The Depression Years Part IV, SB #868, 25 August 1937, 343. It was not closed until September 1970; The CLPD was voted into existence in August 1937 at a Toronto CLAWF National Committee meeting. With its name change the intelligence personnel drew upon earlier CLAWF reports and those of other organizations and back-filled its CLPD file beginning February 1935 when some of the earliest CLAWF intelligence had been gathered by "O" Division.

²⁷⁰NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, RSA file; It was opened once intelligence personnel had become aware of the plans party stalwarts and other progressives had to send Canadians overseas to fight on the side of democratic forces. It was officially closed in August 1979. During the busiest period 1443 pages of material were generated.

²⁷¹It was opened following a visit to Canada by Walter Shevenels, the Secretary of the Amsterdam-based International Federation of Trade Unions.

²⁷²The FMPB file was opened in July 1938 when it was apparent that the state's primary interest in investigating progressives' activities had shifted away from overseas recruiting to providing aid for those returning home from the overseas campaign. The file remained open until May 1980.

²⁷³CSIS CLPD file, secret report, "Re: Canadian League for Peace and Democracy," 15 September 1970; CSIS CASD file, report, "Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy," Toronto, 19 January 1938; The CLPD extended the work of its predecessor and its main objective was to form committees across the country for the widest possible struggle with demonstrations in front of provincial and federal parliaments and foreign consular offices. Conversely, the CASD's main goal was to provide direct assistance to overseas projects such as the work of blood transfusion, hospitalization, milk for children and the support of a youth home near Valencia and the Salem Bland home near Madrid. Revolutionaries such as Tom Ewen described it as more of a "humanitarian endeavor." The FMPB served as an auxiliary to "combatants." It looked after their "needs and comforts." In its overseas work, it was an extension of the CLAWF in that it provided aid to antifascists. Its goal in this respect was to collect donations for the volunteers. More important still, it played an extremely important role in providing for the "wounded" and "maimed" Canadians who returned home "building up sentiment" based on their "heroism."

all claimed a national focus with Toronto as their national headquarters, their campaigns met with greater success in some parts of the country. The RCMP tailored its counter-subversion operations accordingly. Recruiting campaigns were much more successful in Ontario and Western Canada than in the East.²⁷⁴ Hence the CIB's early emphasis in its coverage of these groups focused more on Western Canada.²⁷⁵ Toronto, Montreal and other locations in Southern Ontario served as the final Canadian destination point before recruits headed overseas. Hence there was an increasing priority attached to "O" Division Toronto and "C" Division Montreal RHQs in this respect. Most veterans returning home passed through Halifax so consequently it played a much more significant role in 1938 and 1939 in the CIB's coverage of the movement.

There was a general shift from West to East over the years in antifascist surveillance coverage with Toronto and to a lesser extent Montreal as key anchors in national CIB operations. Table 5.1 identifies each of these four key antifascist file sets by organization/operation, the "unofficial opening date" (when the earliest information was obtained), the "drop-off date" (when intelligence declined), their respective period of greatest activity (in terms of months), and their volume frequency. Table 5.2 provides a breakdown by intelligence material type gathered and deposited on each of these four key antifascist file sets.²⁷⁶ Table 5.3 demonstrates how these subtle shifts in CIB geographic focus can be

²⁷⁴Lobigs, "Canadian Responses", 56-132, esp., 66-67.

²⁷⁵*ibid.*, 66-68. Most recruiting activity occurred during 1937 and early 1938 and was centred in the following centres: Winnipeg (160), Regina (nearly 20), Saskatoon (at least 12), Edmonton and Calgary (more than 30 each), Lethbridge (at least 14), and Vancouver (200). Ontario had contributed about 500 volunteers (250 from Toronto, and other important centres included Port Arthur-Fort William, Hamilton and Windsor with 80, 40 and 30 respectively).

²⁷⁶Intelligence volumes and deposit frequencies in core antifascist organizational/operational files varied considerably. Some files saw a massive amount of material deposited upon them in a relatively short period of time. Still other files had very little deposited on them, the intelligence being thinly spread over several years which was a reflection of the expansion and contraction capabilities of CIB operations to contend with real and imagined threats. It was also a reflection of the expanded activity of these groups. Deposit frequencies suggest something of the level of intensity as do operational and material types. The

gleaned by even a basic file set analysis of reports.²⁷⁷ All these tables suggest a fairly rigorous, systematic, national intelligence strategy orchestrated and applied to CIB monitoring of counter-subversion popular-front organizations. It is within this framework that "O" Division's RHQ CIB operated making its contribution to the national strategy.

Table 5.1
"Organizational/ Operational files":
NHO's Average Monthly Input During Files
Peak Periods of Activity

File	Open/ Drop Dates	Period of Greatest Activity	Repressive Input Volume Frequencies
CLPD	Feb 1935 - July 1940	66 Months	less than 1 page per week
RSA	Oct. 1936 - Feb. 1939	29 Months	50 pages per month
CASD	Apr. 1937 - Dec. 1939	22 Months	28 pages per month
FMPB	Aug. 1938 - Dec. 1938	6 Months	135 pages per month

Sources: NAC RG 146 "Canadian League For Peace and Democracy"
 NAC RG 146 "Recruiting For Spanish Army"
 NAC RG 146 "Committee In Aid of Spanish Democracy"
 NAC RG 146 "Friends of the Mac Pap"

CIB's CLPD file had 188-plus pages deposited on it during slightly more than five years of activity making it the thinnest of the sets detailed here. By comparison, the RSA operational file consisted of 1727 pages. Most of the RSA intelligence was generated during a relatively short window (29 months of RSA peak activity averaging 50 pages per month). The CASD and the FMPB files rested comfortably in the middle in terms of total volume of materials deposited. Yet their deposit frequencies tell two very different stories. The CASD file consisted of 618-plus pages, most of it deposited over 22 consecutive months (an average of 28 pages per month). Much more impressive was the FMPB organizational file which netted 818-plus pages of intelligence deposited in just 6 months (an astounding rate of 135-plus pages per month during its peak period). We must use qualify the number of each file sets pages with a "plus" or "at least" since materials may have been severed at some point and removed from the file.

²⁷⁷In particular, the RSA file, the CASD and FMPB file sets demonstrate the priority associated with surveillance activities in the western provinces. Yet since the FMPB is also the major demobilization file it is not surprising that there is also a fair number of maritime reports contained within it. These numbers are even somewhat misleading because the coverage given demobilization and reintegration at Halifax was concentrated during a couple of weeks during late 1938 when men returned home.

Table 5.2
“Organizational/ Operational files”:
Material Breakdown of Intelligence.
Total Volume by Material Type

File ²⁷⁸	Rpts	CRS	Ord.	Tel.	Other Dept.	Court Mat.	CP Docs.	Clps.	Misc	Pge Vol.
CLPD	51	9	1	—	2	—	5	37	6	188
RSA	288	15	102	1	183	11	9	257	43	1727
CASD	152	20	2	—	—	—	—	90	44	618
FMPB	216	9	23	3	28	2	6	93	17	818
Total	708	52	128	4	213	13	20	477	110	3351

Sources: NAC RG 146 “Canadian League For Peace and Democracy”
NAC RG 146 “Recruiting For Spanish Army”
NAC RG 146 “Committee In Aid of Spanish Democracy”
NAC RG 146 “Friends of the Mac Pap”

Table 5.3²⁷⁹
“Organizational/ Operational files”
Report Generation by Region

File	BC	Prairies	“O” Div.	“A” Div.	Que.	Maritimes	Misc.	Total
CLPD	1	19	15	1	7	2	7	52
RSA	14	143	53	5	57	1	14	287
CASD	14	70	44	4	4	4	12	152
FMPB	25	79	60	4	27	15	6	216

²⁷⁸The material types here included: RCMP intelligence reports of detectives, agents and other operatives; Cross Reference Sheets; Orders; Telegrams; Correspondence with other Government Departments; Court materials; Communist Party Documents; Newspaper Clippings; Miscellaneous Items (anything else found in the file set).

²⁷⁹Table 5.3's Prairie and Maritime data was aggregated since neither was the primary focus of this study. Similarly, Ontario data was dis-aggregated separating out “O” Division and “A” Division (Ottawa) CIB intelligence sections' contributions so we can see how heavily “O” Division was involved in covering the national centre of these progressive movements' activities.

Total	54	311	172	14	95	22	39	708
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Sources: NAC RG 146 "Canadian League For Peace and Democracy"

NAC RG 146 "Recruiting For Spanish Army"

NAC RG 146 "Committee In Aid of Spanish Democracy"

NAC RG 146 "Friends of the Mac Pap"

While expansion in numerous directions occurred, RHQ CIB personnel still had to monitor familiar developments such as municipal elections. This tension was present earlier in the 1930s with a strengthening national unemployed movement and a stronger CLDL and WUL. It was again present with the anti-fascist organizations. With the operative inside the CP serving on the District Bureau until late October early election plans, strategies and tactics were secured as was a copy of the "People's Program" and a list of the slate of candidates for the various wards being contested.²⁸⁰ Before long, it was also learned that the Toronto CP was planning to resurrect its Labour College. Although, with an operative working effectively from within the CP, the idea of using the Labour College as a possible entry point for an agent was not pursued.²⁸¹

Both Detective Irvine and Superintendent Reames kept NHQ apprized of the December 1936 election outcome as in previous years through a mix of passive investigations and OSINT.²⁸² The election results concerned them since there had been a tremendous increase in support for CP candidates over previous years.²⁸³ Irvine attributed

²⁸⁰CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted, 10 October 1936; *ibid.*, report, source deleted, 19 October 1936; *ibid.*, "People's Program," 20 October 1936.

²⁸¹CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted, 10 October 1936; *ibid.*, circular, name deleted, 13 October 1936.

²⁸²CPC TO 1930s, memorandum, Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 19 October 1936; *ibid.*, "Toronto Civic Election Program for the year - 1937," 20 October 1937.

²⁸³Stewart Smith won an Aldermanic seat in Ward 5, John Weir was elected to the Board of Education in Ward 4 and Ewart Humphreys was elected Deputy-Reeve in the York Township. At 31,342, Tim Buck's bid for Board of Control had increased by over 21,000 votes since the election in 1935.

these gains to the success of the popular front strategy.²⁸⁴

Tim Buck predicted that 1937 would be a banner year for labour. In January he warned that danger might arise if the forces of reaction continued to gain momentum in Quebec. On both counts he was proven correct. However, 1937 was not a banner year in "O" Division surveillance of the CP, not at least its core Toronto branches. The year began poorly as intelligence volumes dropped and the quality and the quantity ebbed and flowed until the fall. Again much of the work being conducted was transferred over to the anti-fascist organizations whose files were briefly described above.

Other changes influenced the level of work conducted. Superintendent Reames took sick in December 1936 and remained off-duty more or less until he was forced into accepting early retirement in October.²⁸⁵ Intelligence sources also dried up with the amalgamation of the city's two morning papers The Globe and The Mail, with the loss of the operative by December, with CIB personnel being detailed to other duties, while others like Sam Wrigglesworth and Constable Spanton, longtime members of the RHQ CIB, were transferred or loaned to Ottawa Division.²⁸⁶

With Reames off duty Inspector Mercer was appointed temporary OC and

²⁸⁴CPC TO 1930s report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 9 and 10 December 1936; *ibid.*, "Claims Church Taught Lesson By Communists," Evening Telegram, 27 December 1937.

²⁸⁵"O" Division, Nominal Rolls, February 1935 - July 1935; RG 18 vol. 3455, file 0-203, Service Record of Albert Edward George Oakleigh Reames, memorandum, Inspector Mercer (for OC) to Commissioner, 29 December 1936; *ibid.*, memorandum, G.L. Jennings to DOC "O" Division, 28 May 1937; *ibid.*, , memorandum, Superintendent Kemp to DOC "O" Division, 2 September 1937; *ibid.*, memorandum, Commissioner MacBrien to Reames, 10 September 1937; *ibid.*, memorandum, Superintendent Reames to Commissioner, 14 September 1937; RCMP Quarterly, 11 July 1941, "Major A.E.O. Reames. Noted RCMP Officer Dies Here"; Reames continued to meddle in "O" Division affairs even though his condition only marginally improved until he was forced into accepting early retirement in October 1937 which put enormous pressure on Mercer and turned ugly in September weeks before Reames left.

²⁸⁶"Your Morning Paper," The Canadian Forum, 16, 192 (January 1937), 6-7; RCMP G.O. 4358, 1-1-37; "O" Division, Nominal Rolls, January - March 1937; MacDowell, 'Remembering Kirkland Lake' 41-42.

eventually Staff Sergeant C.C. Batch was transferred from “D” to “O” Division RHQ to assist him. Batch eventually assumed duties as head of the Division CIB although seemingly seldom did he concern himself with intelligence work at this juncture.²⁸⁷ Beneath him detective work remained split between Mathewson and Veitch while Irvine continued on as the principal Toronto investigator. Annual meetings such as the Lenin Memorial were attended by Division personnel but for months little of substance was obtained.²⁸⁸

Intelligence deposits made to the core file also dried up as a consequence of a massive rebirth in strike and industrial activity, the largest increase since the postwar. In 1937 Ontario saw over half the strikes held nationally.²⁸⁹ These events shifted CIB priorities and the late 1930s strikes concerned different groups than those earlier in the decade. More often these strikes were by unions that had experienced massive losses in the 1920s and early 1930s, especially mass production industries such as steel, meat packing, automobiles and heavy machinery, but had since rebounded and seen dramatic growth.

The US Wagner Act of 1935 had codified workers’ rights to belong to unions of their own choosing. It fostered conditions that helped facilitate the growth of the Committee of Industrial Organizations (CIO) and herein lay one of the centres of working-class power.²⁹⁰ Born in 1935 as a breakaway of the AF of L, the CIO it took its “first hesitant steps” in Ontario in February 1937.²⁹¹ The 15-day Oshawa strike that followed in April earned some coverage by Division personnel. Hepburn requested the federal troops. MacBrien dispatched a contingent of 67 men in response and promised an additional 50

²⁸⁷RCMP G.O. 4427, 1-2-37; RCMP G.O. 4671, 1-4-37.

²⁸⁸NAC RG 146, CSIS, 175P/ 2035, Tim Buck File, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Inspector Mercer to Commissioner, 26 and 27 January 1937.

²⁸⁹Jamieson, Times of Trouble, 251.

²⁹⁰Jamieson, Times of Trouble, 249-250.

²⁹¹Abella, “The Oshawa Strike,” 98.

from "O" Division who were placed on stand-by.²⁹² This clearly disrupted what had become 'traditional' patterns of surveillance activity.²⁹³

Although these events precipitated a revival in Division intelligence reportage, the gains were temporary.²⁹⁴ For months afterward the only worthwhile intelligence the Division secured seemed to be procured by Division personnel outside the RHQ.²⁹⁵ Much of the CIO's activities in the province centred in the mining communities in Northwestern Ontario. For much of the year the employers Ontario Mining Association (OMA) hired undercover men to spy on the labour organizations in the centers in which the OMA members operated. Their reports on CIO activities, and on union organizing and communist activity generally were forwarded to provincial authorities and to various policing agencies.²⁹⁶

Dissatisfied with the RHQ CIB's performance as early as March, DCI Wood asked his Toronto OC to improve work being conducted in the city. A Winnipeg secret agent reported that the CLDL was being forced to undergo a major reorganization and DCI Wood wanted Toronto CIB personnel to verify this intelligence. However, this was something that

²⁹²NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, CASD file, report, source deleted, TCPD, 13 May 1937.

²⁹³CPC TO 1930s, memorandum, Commissioner MacBrien to Chief Draper, 8 April 1937; *ibid.*, memorandum, Superintendent DCI Mellor to OC "O" Division, 9 April 1937; *ibid.*, memorandum, Commissioner MacBrien to Chief Draper, 10 May 1937; NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, CASD file, report, Toronto City Police Department, 13 May 1937; Making matters more difficult Draper bypassed Toronto RHQ's OC altogether and sent intelligence on "CP/CIO activities" directly to NHQ to MacBrien and the DCI which suggested not only the level of urgency but hinted at friction between the RHQ and TCPD.

²⁹⁴NAC RG 146, 175P/ 2035, Tim Buck File, report, source deleted, and A/ Superintendent Mercer to Commissioner, 17 and 20 April 1937; *ibid.*, report, source deleted, 20 April 1937; *ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal Irvine, 3 May 1937.

²⁹⁵NAC RG 146, 175P/ 2035, Tim Buck File, report, Corporal Turner and A/Superintendent Mercer to Commissioner, 6 and 9 March 1937; For instance, personnel like Turner in Sudbury attended meetings revolutionaries like Buck held in that centre as part of a national tour. Their reports remained thorough even if Toronto reports were poor.

²⁹⁶MacDowell, 'Remember Kirkland Lake' 63-64.

at this juncture "O" Division CIB personnel were unable to accomplish.²⁹⁷ All too often CIB personnel who assisted Irvine lacked experience like Scots Constable Durward Clarkson who had recently joined the CIB.²⁹⁸ Or like Constable G.J. Hayward they were distracted by other duties such as PS work and consequently their intelligence work often turned up little new material.²⁹⁹

The decline in intelligence gathering on Toronto party branch activities lasted into the fall. It also extended elsewhere including deposits on PHFs. Nothing from Toronto, nor the Division for that matter, was deposited on Buck's file between mid-April and September. The same situation occurred in Stewart Smith's dossier where intelligence levels plummeted. Between mid-April and October only a couple of fleeting intelligence reports from "O" Division were deposited on his file and pretty much anything of value originated outside the city. Only later did both these files see an improvement once an operative had finally been developed.³⁰⁰

As government apprehension and RCMP concern about the Spanish conflict increased in these months, most work being conducted targeted specific anti-fascist

²⁹⁷NAC RG 146, CSIS, 175/ P392, A.E. Smith File, memorandum, DCI Wood to OC "O" Division, 10 March 1937.

²⁹⁸"O" Division Nominal Rolls, August 1936 - February 1937; CPC TO 1930s, report, Constable D. Clarkson and A/ Supt. Mercer to Commissioner, 6 April 1937; RCMP, Quarterly, 48,4 (Fall 1983), obituary of Ex Cpl. Durward Clarkson,

Durward Clarkson, born September 1905 at Falkirk, Scotland. He joined the Force in 1930 at Vancouver and served in "D" Division, "O" Division from August 1936 (mainly stationed at Long Lac and Toronto) until April 1938 when transferred to "A" Division and Halifax in July 1946. He retired to pension in 1957 and died in 1983.

²⁹⁹NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, RSA file, report, Constable Hayward, Superintendent Mercer to NCO Hamilton Detachment and to Commissioner, 28 and 29 June 1937; *ibid.*, report, Constable Mason, Corporal Williams and A/ Supt. Mercer to Commissioner, 22 July 1937; *ibid.*, report, Corporal Williams and A/ Supt. Mercer to Commissioner, 6 and 11 August 1937; NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, CASD file, report, source deleted and A/ Supt. Mercer to Commissioner, 19 and 20 May 1937; *ibid.*, report, source deleted, 1 April 1937; CPC TO 1930s, report, Constable G.J. Hayward and A/ Supt. Mercer to Commissioner, 27 May 1937; *ibid.*, report, Constable Hayward and A/ Supt. Mercer, 30 June and 3 July 1937;

³⁰⁰NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, 175P/ 2494, report, source deleted, 19 May 1937; *ibid.*, memorandum, A/ Superintendent Mercer to Commissioner, 11 August 1937.

activities such as demonstrations and rallies.³⁰¹ CIB personnel also began reporting the earliest veterans returning home from Spain.³⁰² For two years dozens of clippings would be deposited on the RSA and other anti-fascist files. From this OSINT exhaustive lists were generated so that Immigration authorities would be in a position to refuse re-entry to Canada those persons who were either British Subjects by naturalization or British Subjects not born in Canada who had been absent more than a year and not adhered to the provisions in the immigration act while overseas.³⁰³

In June, Assistant DCI Superintendent Mellor forwarded all Divisions copies of the Foreign Enlistment Act (FEA) to familiarize personnel with its various sections.³⁰⁴ Weeks later Mercer reported that stalwarts were concerned by the FEA's passage but had yet not made any decision to challenge the law.³⁰⁵ It was in this context that in August, the DCI tasked Sergeant John Leopold to investigate the possibility of prosecution of anti-fascists, both at home and abroad once they returned, under the FEA. Leopold doubted that the legislation would hold up in court.³⁰⁶ MacBrien agreed. He believed that neither the FEA nor a further OC making it specifically applicable to the war in Spain went far enough to stop recruits. Furthermore, with mostly passive investigations being conducted in "O"

³⁰¹NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, CASD file, extract from Vapaus, 2 and 3 June 1937; A careful reading of Vapaus revealed to intelligence personnel that the FMPB had opened a permanent office in Toronto (its file was discussed briefly above)

³⁰²NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, CASD file, report, source deleted, 30 May 1937; *ibid.*, report, source deleted, and Superintendent Mercer to Commissioner, 1 and 2 June 1937; *ibid.*, report, Constable Warner, Corporal H.J. Nelson, and A/ Supt. Mercer to Commissioner, 9 and 12 July 1937.

³⁰³NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, RSA file, memorandum, Commissioner MacBrien to Ernest Lapointe, 25 August 1937.

³⁰⁴NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, RSA file, memorandum, Superintendent Mellor to all Division, 5 June 1937; Balawyder, Canadian-Soviet Relations, 195-197.

³⁰⁵AC RG 146, CSIS holdings, RSA file, memorandum, A/ Supt. Mercer to Commissioner, 13 August 1937.

³⁰⁶NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, CASD file, report, source deleted, 16 July 1937; *ibid.*, report, source deleted, 22 July 1937; NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, RSA file, report n.a., 6 July 1937; *ibid.*, memorandum, Sergeant John Leopold to DCI, 16 August 1937.

Division and likely elsewhere the Force was without the kind of intelligence it required to secure convictions under existing legislation.

In September, MacBrien suggested to Lapointe in another memorandum marked “Secret & Personnel” that to “take action” against those persons responsible for recruiting for overseas service would require the services of “agents of a temporary nature whose duties would consist of the securing of evidence for purposes of prosecution and who would afterwards give evidence in Court.” He asked Lapointe if the government required such action?³⁰⁷ If in March Lapointe had stated in the House of Commons that communists were best beaten at the ballot box; by the fall he supported a much tougher program. He felt a response was required, that those breaking the law overseas should not be “exempted” and that a conference should be arranged between Immigration, O.D. Skelton and one of the Force’s officials to clarify the matter.³⁰⁸ Then after further consideration Lapointe backed down from his initial idea. He informed MacBrien that Section 19 of the FEA provided the Cabinet with the authority to make regulations for “prosecutions, seizures, detentions and forfeiture proceedings...” He added, that until such were in place under this section, “no machinery is available for enforcing the provisions of the Act.”³⁰⁹

MacBrien certainly felt otherwise. He believed that drastic action was required and he tried to arrange meetings with Skelton on this matter, but they were postponed indefinitely.³¹⁰ By September Superintendent Mercer and other intelligence personnel

³⁰⁷NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, RSA file, memorandum, Commissioner MacBrien to Ernest Lapointe, 1 September 1937.

³⁰⁸NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, RSA file, memorandum, Ernest Lapointe to Commissioner MacBrien, 13 September 1937.

³⁰⁹NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, RSA file, memorandum, Ernest Lapointe to Commissioner MacBrien, 15 September 1937.

³¹⁰NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, RSA file, memorandum, Commissioner MacBrien to Skelton, 20 September 1937; ibid., reply, M. McKenzie, Secretary to Commissioner, MacBrien 23 September 1937; ibid., F.C. Blair to Commissioner MacBrien, 29 September 1937.

across the national network had consistently demonstrated that there was a rise in CP activity in both the industrial and anti-fascist work the party undertook. Mercer shared intelligence on industrial unrest with officers commanding Military Districts One and Two. He also reported to NHQ numerous strikes in progress throughout the region.³¹¹ It was clear, however, that "O" Division was only scratching the surface and that the RHQ CIB's intelligence work left something to be desired.³¹²

As a consequence, in September and early October "O" Division RHQ CIB personnel reconsidered their existing operations. In light of MacBrien's discussions with Lapointe and intelligence reports by Constable Hayward and other personnel who attended CASD and FMPB meetings which noted substantial turnouts and large sums raised, Mercer moved to install an operative.³¹³

The most pressing priority "O" Division CIB personnel faced became the CP's Eighth Dominion Convention set for Toronto from 8-10 October. It had originally been slotted for the fall of 1936 but was postponed a year 'officially' at least on account of Buck being overseas. Acting Superintendent Mercer managed to get an operative inside the party in a position to gain access to the event. This was a remarkable development given the poor state of Toronto counter-subversion operations since the previous spring. The operative produced a substantial eight page report addressing nearly 50 points concerning the direction the party was heading and its assessment of existing conditions in Canada and abroad. In forwarding the report to NHQ, obviously impressed by the operative's

³¹¹NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, CASD file, memorandum, A/ Supt. Mercer to Commissioner, 7 August 1937; *ibid.*, report, A/ Supt. Mercer to Ocs Military Districts One and Two, 7 August 1937.

³¹²NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, CASD file, "Peace and Democracy Is League's New Name," Ottawa Citizen, 13 August 1937.

³¹³NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, CASD file, report, Constable Hayward and A/ Supt. Mercer to Commissioner, 17 September 1937.

thoroughness, Mercer added, "[t]his is the first report received."³¹⁴

Provincial elections in October also became a concern and they were monitored by an operative who managed to work his way into the anti-fascist movement. He attended traditional November 7th Anniversary Celebrations which were reported.³¹⁵ Then the National Congress for Peace and Democracy was held in Toronto on 19-21 November.³¹⁶ It was considered so important that in addition to a Toronto operative "C" Division's OC Acting Assistant Commissioner Fred Mead arranged to send an operative from Montreal to attend and lengthy reports followed.³¹⁷

For several weeks in December the operative's work slowed.³¹⁸ Other CIB personnel concentrated on municipal election coverage. They relied heavily on OSINT which even at the best of times was a poor substitute for other investigations. Yet during one week alone intelligence personnel drew nearly two dozen articles. The elections were held during the second week of December. Communists and united front candidates fared

³¹⁴NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, 175P/ 2035, Tim Buck File, report, source deleted and A/ Superintendent Mercer to Commissioner, 14 and 15 October 1937.

³¹⁵NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, CASD file, report, source deleted and A/ Supt. Mercer to Commissioner, 25 and 27 October 1937.

³¹⁶It claimed 155 delegates, (60 were trade union representatives, 41 observers and 75 visitors, representing the combined interest of 300,000 Canadians)

³¹⁷NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, CLPD file, "Distinguished Speakers Open Peace Session,"Daily Clarion, 20 November 1937; "Peace Congress Asks Canadians Boycott Goods,"Daily Clarion, 22 November 1937; ibid., report, operative, 19 November 1937; ibid., report, source deleted and A/ Supt. Mercer to Commissioner, 23 and 25 November 1937; ibid., report, source deleted and A/ Supt. Mercer to Commissioner, 25 and 29 November 1937; ibid., report, source deleted and Acting Assistant Commissioner Mead to Commissioner, 29 and 30 November 1937; ibid., memorandum, A/ Supt. Mercer to Commissioner, 30 December 1937.

³¹⁸CPC TO 1930s, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and A/ Superintendent Mercer, 8 and 9 October 1937; ibid., report, source deleted and A/ Supt. Mercer to Commissioner, 9 and 11 November 1937; ibid., "Vote for These Candidates,"The Clarion, 1 December 1937; "More Exercised Franchise At City Election Monday,"Toronto Daily Star, 7 December 1937; ibid., "Personnel of Toronto Council And Education Board for 1938,"Toronto Daily Star, 7 December 1937; ibid., "Fervor of Election Lacking on Street,"Toronto Daily Star, 7 December 1937; "Dr. F.J. Conboy Is Winner In Board of Control Race,"Toronto Daily Star, 7 December 1937.

well and the results concerned Assistant Commissioner DCI Wood.³¹⁹

In mid-December DCI Wood reviewed his Toronto election intelligence and he complained to his Toronto OC that work being conducted in this respect was sloppy. Wood noted that nothing on Buck's campaign was forwarded to NHQ. Wood was critical of his OC adding: "[i]t is presumed that the Globe and Mail and probably the other newspapers had some comment to make in this connection and if this is the case newspaper clippings relative to the election should be forwarded as soon as possible."³²⁰ Mercer believed that the best response under such circumstances was action and he made no excuse for the RHQ CIB's poor election coverage. He forwarded six clippings from various papers on Buck's campaign and added: "[T]he instructions contained in the memorandum under reply have been noted, and will be complied with in future."³²¹

While election coverage was sloppy "O" Division CIB personnel were swamped with work elsewhere. In November and December they were following up complaints that potential anti-fascist fighters had obtained false passports and were using Poland as an entry point en route to Spain. Polish Consular officials wanted the matter investigated.³²² Canadian intelligence personnel also suspected the possible misuse of their passports by communists elsewhere. NHQ CIB personnel believed that they were being obtained illegally in Spain. They were right and although a fuller understanding of what had happened did not materialize until 1945-1946 (and the consequences stemming from Soviet

³¹⁹NAC RG 146, CSIS, 175P/ 2494, Stewart Smith file, report, Detective Corporal Irvine, 9 December 1937; *ibid.*, report, source deleted, and A/Superintendent Mercer to Commissioner, 12 and 14 December 1937; Stewart Smith, Alderman candidate for ward 5, was among those elected. Irvine reported Smith's tremendous increase at the polls: 8038 in December 1937 when compared with 3754 in 1936

³²⁰CPC TO 1930s, memorandum Assistant Commissioner DCI Wood to OC "O" Division, 14 December 1937.

³²¹CPC TO 1930s, memorandum, A/ Supt. Mercer to Commissioner, 18 December 1937.

³²²NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, RSA file, memorandum, Assistant Commissioner DCI Wood to OC "C" Division, 2 December 1937.

Embassy clerk Igor Gouzenko's defection), already in 1939 W. G. Krivitsky, a former chief of Soviet Military Intelligence in Western Europe published a book, In Stalin's Secret Service which described the importance ascribed to US and Canadian passports.³²³ It was also clear that the CI had established networks in North America that were functional at this point even if a fuller picture again came as a shock in the immediate postwar period.³²⁴

In mid-December "O" Division personnel along with Montreal and Ottawa CIB personnel had suddenly become fully absorbed by plans to execute some sort of strike against anti-fascist recruiters and those being recruited and still domiciled in Canada. In the winter months the campaign intensified and considerable energy shifted to the building of a cadre of confidential contacts and informants.³²⁵ By early 1938 RHQ CIB personnel managed to place an operative within the CASD temporarily. He profiled its local activities while confidential contacts at Hamilton and Windsor provided additional intelligence.³²⁶ Toronto RHQ CIB personnel also briefly developed a secret agent #1005 (whose identity remains a mystery) within the city's anti-fascist community. He added a number of reports to the RSA file on local recruiting activities.³²⁷

³²³MacKenzie Commission, 541-563; W.G. Krivitsky, In Stalin's Secret Service (London, 1939), the following year he also published, I was Stalin's Agent (London, 1940); NAC RG 146, CSIS holdings, RSA file, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Inspector Blake to Commissioner, 6 December 1937; Haynes and Klehr, Venona, 183-185; Weinstein and Vassiliev, The Haunted Wood, 84-109.

³²⁴Haynes and Klehr, Venona, 93-115.

³²⁵CSIS RSA file, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Acting Superintendent Mercer to Commissioner MacBrien, 31 December 1937; ibid., memorandum from Assistant Commissioner King, DCI, to "O" Division OC, 23 March 1938; ibid., report, Detective Sergeant Weeks and Acting Superintendent Mercer to Commissioner, 29 and 30 March 1938; ibid., report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Acting Superintendent Mercer to Commissioner, 30 and 31 March 1938; CSIS CASD file, report, Acting Superintendent Mercer to Commissioner MacBrien, 7 August 1937; ibid., report Acting Superintendent Mercer to Officer Commanding Military Districts, 7 August 1937.

³²⁶CSIS CASD file, report, source deleted, 21 January 1938; By that summer "O" Division was generating nearly a third of all intelligence deposited on the CASD's file.

³²⁷CSIS RSA file, report, S.A. 1005 and Acting Superintendent Mercer to Commissioner MacBrien, 12 January 1938; ibid., report, source deleted, Detective Corporal Irvine and Acting Superintendent Mercer to Commissioner MacBrien, 18 January 1938; ibid., report, source deleted, Detective Corporal Irvine and Acting Superintendent Mercer to Commissioner MacBrien, 20 and 21 January 1938; ibid., memorandum,

By early 1938 much of the region's revolutionary recruiting network lay exposed. Through hard work "O" Division CIB personnel had located Toronto anti-fascist offices, identifying several key individuals responsible for this work as reports moved from the general to specific.³²⁸ Detective Corporal Irvine submitted a full-length report which explained how contact agents were established in towns and districts across the country, how travel to Toronto was arranged, and to whom and where they went once recruits arrived in the city. Anti-fascist organizers such as Peter Hunter, whose story is well-known, were singled out for investigation.³²⁹ Irvine also highlighted the arrangements stalwarts like Hunter made for recruits until they were ready to leave for the next leg of their journey.³³⁰ Intelligence reports were so detailed that travel arrangements such as the location and the specific time of day steamship tickets were handed out to recruits in Toronto was noted.³³¹ They had identified and singled out Communist Jack Cowan who established Overseas Travel Limited in Toronto to purchase tickets, and another party organizer who conducted screening once recruits arrived in the city. These networks had ties to CI agents operating in New York and Washington and the agencies were used to protect stalwarts and to funnel monies into North America although how much the RCMP understood this then remains unknown.³³² Once they passed their second screening, recruits were given tickets for their journey to France. Groups had to be broken up into no more than twenty and this task

Assistant Commissioner Wood, DCI, to OC "C" Division, 21 and 28 January 1938.

³²⁸CSIS RSA file, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Acting Superintendent Mercer to Commissioner MacBrien, 31 December 1937.

³²⁹On Hunter's involvement in this period's activities see his autobiography, Which Side Are You On Boys..., esp., 53-117.

³³⁰CSIS RSA file, Detective Corporal R.W. Irvine and A/ Supt. Mercer to Commissioner MacBrien, 5 February 1938.

³³¹CSIS RSA file, report, source deleted 16 July 1937.

³³²Lobigs, "Canadian Responses," 103, 105.

became Fred Collins' responsibility.³³³ This kind of intelligence was put to use only weeks later to build cases against anti-fascist organizers and party stalwarts.³³⁴

As the campaign intensified the Division participated in NHQ's massive plans to destroy the recruiting networks and a substantial number of organizations involved in the process with a series of raids and arrests.³³⁵ Plans to carry out this general clampdown were initiated by MacBrien and the DCI in consultation with a number of federal government departments including the PMO's office at the end of 1937. Frank Zaneth was placed in charge of this work.³³⁶ Montreal became Zaneth's operational base where he established a legal team to address the finer points of provincial and federal jurisdictions and to make sure that no aspect of the operation was overlooked.³³⁷ He generated lists of individuals to be targeted in major centers across the country: Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, Regina, Saskatoon, Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver. He worked closely with senior intelligence officers in each Division. He also traveled across the country early that winter and by mid-March had established a series of RHQ CIB "special squads." During his trip he lectured RHQ CIB personnel on the materials he wanted them to obtain in raids that NHQ had planned.³³⁸

³³³CSIS RSA file, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Acting Superintendent Mercer to Commissioner MacBrien, 20 and 21 January 1938; *ibid.*, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Acting Superintendent Mercer to Commissioner MacBrien, 18 and 20 January 1938; Collins was a communist organizer, a TTLC executive and a member of the Upholsterers and Carpet and Linoleum Mechanics Union. Preliminary SS reports were followed by enquiries as to the exact number who had booked passage on steamship lines.

³³⁴CSIS RSA file, Secret Brief, Mr. F.P. Brais to W. Stuart Edwards, Deputy Minister of Justice, forwarded along with a cover letter by Acting Assistant Commissioner Mead, OC "C" Division to the Commissioner MacBrien, 26 and 27 January 1938.

³³⁵Lobigs, "Canadian Responses," chap. 5, 219-277.

³³⁶Durbro and Rowland, *Undercover*, 229-236.

³³⁷CSIS RSA file, memorandum, Mr. F.P. Brais to W. Stuart Edwards, Deputy Minister of Justice, forwarded along with report, Acting Assistant Commissioner Mead, OC "C" Division to Commissioner, 26 and 27 January 1938.

³³⁸CSIS RSA file, report, Detective Inspector Zaneth and A/ Commissioner Cadiz OC "E" Division, Vancouver, to Commissioner, 25 March 1938.

Final discussion with respect to the raids was conducted at NHQ by Acting Deputy Commissioner Wood and senior Department of Justice personnel. By early February both parties were heavily involved in considering whether or not successful prosecution was possible under FEA Sections 17 and 19. By 24 February these details had been worked out and the Force was given clearance to proceed with the raids.³³⁹ "O" Division was kept fully informed of these developments.³⁴⁰

In Toronto, Detective Corporal Irvine remained in charge of much of the local leg work. When Zaneth stopped off in Toronto on his western tour, he handed his list of Toronto targets over to RHQ CIB staff. The list consisted of eight individuals [names deleted] and an undisclosed number of organizations [also deleted] that would be part of the series of raids. The names, addresses and locations were verified by Irvine and a series of final reports were forwarded to NHQ in late March and early April.³⁴¹

Zaneth was in Vancouver by early April when the raids were about to be carried off. He planned to remain there until after zero hour. He intended to gather information in each city stopping over for a day or two on his way back to NHQ. But recruiting died just as the raids were about to be conducted. Furthermore, fearing serious repercussions by progressives had they gone ahead and also equally concerned by the effect such actions might have on the RCMP's relations with at least Saskatchewan's Attorney General, on 6 April Acting Commissioner Wood called the raids off.³⁴²

³³⁹CSIS RSA file, memorandum, Deputy Minister Edwards, Department of Justice, to Commissioner RCMP, 24 February 1938.

³⁴⁰CSIS RSA file, memorandum, Acting Deputy Commissioner Wood to "O" Division OC, 5 February 1938; *ibid.*, memorandum, Acting Deputy Commissioner Wood to "O" Division OC, 10 February 1938.

³⁴¹CSIS RSA file, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and A/Supt. Mercer to Commissioner, 5 and 15 April 1938.

³⁴²CSIS RSA file, memorandum, A/ Supt. Mercer to Commissioner, 7 April 1938; memorandum, Assistant Commissioner King, DCI to OC "O" Division, 22 April 1938; and reply, Special Constable Black and Acting Superintendent Mercer to Commissioner, 4 May 1938.

Phase 3: Black Days and Trolove: A Changing of the Guards,
and a return to earlier practices, 1938-1939

By the winter of 1938 both NHQ and "O" Division faced the realization that Toronto's CIB was not performing as effectively as was needed.³⁴³ The Division's acquisition of CP intelligence had been poor. With the CIB's attention focused on anti-fascist activities and industrial unrest, 1937 was one of the worst years in gathering core Toronto CP intelligence in the inter-war period.³⁴⁴ For many months intelligence personnel lacked an understanding of Toronto CP recruiting and organizing and other work it was conducting. In this state of intelligence stasis "O" Division RHQ CIB's staff had trouble meeting NHQ's occasional requests and those of other Divisions.³⁴⁵ Fortunately for Division personnel, the economic upturn of 1937 quickly collapsed. Strike activity declined as a consequence and there were half as many strikes in 1938 as in 1937 and fewer still in 1939.

Intelligence personnel gave the RHQ CIB's dismal coverage of core Toronto CP activities serious consideration. Initially, this problem's resolution appeared simple once they learned that the CP planned to open a permanent Labour College in Toronto in January 1938.³⁴⁶ They would send an operative to attend its classes. This approach had worked previously in the inter-war period and proven an effective entry point for a serial agent.

³⁴³By this point "O" Division RHQ had been reduced further having lost another staff member to its outlying detachments.

³⁴⁴In 1937 only 127 pages of material had been deposited on "O" Division's core Toronto CP file. With just 27 reports this represented the lowest since 1931. In fact, only 1923 after Secret Agent Catt had been withdrawn and 1930 once the "Free Speech" battle's press coverage waned (another year in which there was no secret agent operating within the party) had been worse.

³⁴⁵CPC TO 1930s, report, Detective Corporal Irvine and Acting Superintendent Mercer to Commissioner, 21 March 1938; *ibid.*, memorandum, Assistant Commissioner C.H. King (DCI) to OC "C" Division, 25 March 1938.

³⁴⁶Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] The Depression Years, Part IV, SB# 879, 22 December 1937, 487.

The course program the CP planned to establish in early 1938, like its earlier ones, intelligence personnel expected, would be modeled on similar programs elsewhere, at institutions such as Marx House in London and the New York Worker's School. Its curriculum would include a wide variety of subjects such as political economy, working-class history, journalism and public speaking. Since its staff consisted of a whole cast of prominent communists such as J.B. Salsberg, Sam Carr, Charles Sims, Joseph Wallace, William Rigby, Charles Marriott and Oscar Ryan, not only would RHQ CIB personnel be in a position to get inside the CP, but they would also be able to stay on top of municipal, provincial, perhaps even national developments in revolutionary quarters.³⁴⁷ J.B. Salsberg had just been elected to city council as Alderman for Ward 4, Sam Carr was serving as CP National Secretary, and Bill Rigby was the CP's national Director of Education. Each of these individuals' were under surveillance. So prominent a group were they that their activities made the IO's SBs.³⁴⁸

Through the school intelligence personnel would gain access to a whole host of ancillary organizations such as David Pressman's Toronto theatre group which since 1931 had played an increasingly important role in advancing working-class consciousness through its activities.³⁴⁹ CIB staff would also be able to keep abreast of other developments such as the CP's involvement in anti-fascist organizations. The timing was especially prescient since NHQ was preparing its massive assault against the CP and its umbrella organizations under various sections of the FEA.

In February 1938 their operative reported that the journalism course at the Labour

³⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 489.

³⁴⁸*Ibid.*, SB# 874, 27 October 1937, 441; *ibid.*, SB #878, 10 December 1937, 478-479, 482.

³⁴⁹Toby Gordon Ryan, *Stage Left: Canadian Theatre In The Thirties. A Memoir* (Toronto, 1981); On even earlier Toronto progressive theatre see, Robin Endres, "Introduction," to Richard Wright and Robin Endres [eds.] *EIGHT MEN SPEAK and other plays from the Canadian workers' theatre* (Toronto, 1976), xi-xxxvi.

College is “holding up well.” Attendance on the evening of 8 February, the source reported, was 19.³⁵⁰ The students were paired up and were instructed to practice interviewing each other “on the general theme of why they are attending the Labour College, their previous activity in the labour movement, [and] what they intend to do when the course is finished.”³⁵¹ Their interviews were to be written down and turned in the following week.³⁵² Caught off guard by this not-so-subtle screening process the RHQ must have decided that their plan to install an agent might fail. Their operative never returned to the course. The attempt was aborted and “O” Division RHQ’s CIB was temporarily forced to return to more passive modes of intelligence gathering.³⁵³

It is clear that NHQ had been involved in the original decision to launch the penetration operation at “O” Division. When the attempt failed, Acting Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Wood informed Special Constable Mervyn Black in Regina that he was to be transferred to “O” Division’s RHQ as soon as possible to join its intelligence staff. Wood felt that Black’s experiences, his politics, and his “aptitude” for this “type of work” was exactly what “O” Division RHQ needed. His assessment was right on the mark. They had worked together earlier in the decade in Saskatchewan. Black had assumed command of “F” Division’s intelligence operations when Wood was serving as the Division’s OC. MacBrien had criticized Wood for giving Black such power since he was

³⁵⁰CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Acting Superintendent Mercer to Commissioner, 11 and 12 February 1938; Kealey and Whitaker, The Depression Years, Part V, SB #883, 9 February 1938, 61, 64-65; #885, 1 March 1938, 81,87; With the exception of a Lenin Memorial and a coal handlers’ strike little activity was being reported in Toronto in the IO’s SBs in general during these weeks. Even the Labour College activities had gone unreported. The Coal Handlers and Truckers Union, Local 83, strike began on 18 February and was answered by 1,500 men who were joined by 30 members of the International Hoisting Engineers Union.

³⁵¹CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted and Acting Superintendent Mercer to Commissioner, 11 and 12 February 1938

³⁵²Ibid.

³⁵³Ibid., report, source deleted and Acting Superintendent Mercer to Commissioner, 2 and 4 March 1938.

only a Special and not a regular member of the Force. Wood had defended Black on account of his skills and the Commissioner made an exception.³⁵⁴ With this history between them in early 1938 Wood confidently informed "O" Division's OC that Black's "transfer will greatly strengthen your C.I.B. by having him in charge of subversive investigations."³⁵⁵ Black was "to take charge of subversive activities" and the running of Secret Agents (one or two were temporarily positioned within the unemployed and anti-fascist movements) which Wood now felt was "most important from the Communist standpoint."³⁵⁶ Sensitive to Black's potential importance to the national intelligence network, Wood made it clear, that although Black was needed immediately in Toronto "It is not desired to cause Special Constable Black any hardship in connection with his transfer. Possibly his family and effects could follow at a later date."³⁵⁷

Mervyn Black was a Russian emigre born in 1890 in Petrograd. Black had left Russia following the Bolsheviks rise to power. He was fluent in seven languages (English, Swedish, Spanish, Slavic, Ukrainian, Russian, and German) and was a rabid anti-communist.³⁵⁸ He moved to Canada in 1925 and began farming near Kuroki, Saskatchewan. By 1932 his attempt at farming had failed so he put in an application with the Force emphasizing his special language skills and his early experiences in Russia.³⁵⁹ Like Zaneth,

³⁵⁴Betke and Horrall, *Canada's Security Service*, 398-399.

³⁵⁵NAC RG 146, 91 ATIP-0459, Service Record of Special Constable Mervyn Black (hereafter cited as RCMP Personnel File -- Mervyn Black), memorandum, Acting Deputy Commissioner Wood to OC "O" Division, 15 February, 1938.

³⁵⁶*ibid.*, Acting Deputy Commissioner Wood to OC's Regina and Toronto, 15 February 1938.

³⁵⁷*ibid.*, memorandum, Acting Deputy Commissioner Wood to OC "O" Division, 15 February 1938.

³⁵⁸*ibid.*, "Brief re. Spl/Cst. Black, M. Personal History," Assistant Commissioner Ryan, CO "F" Division, Regina, 15 April and 3 May 1936; *ibid.*, letter, Mervyn Black to Acting Deputy Commissioner Spalding, Regina, 24 November 1932; He was the son of two Scottish-born emigres who had moved there in 1886 when his father assumed the responsibilities of Managing Director of a manufacturing and saw miller's firm. Black was educated in Belfast, Dundee, Kelsingfors (Finland) where he completed courses in textile and mechanical engineering and mill management.

³⁵⁹*ibid.*, letter, Mervyn Black to Acting Deputy Commissioner Spalding, Regina, 24 November, 1932.

Leopold and many others, Black was eventually hired. From the beginning he worked undercover as a Special Agent in Regina and Moose Jaw, where he submerged himself in the activities of the Doukhobors and was also keeping tabs on revolutionary organizations such as the CLDL.³⁶⁰

Special Constable Mervyn Black reported to Toronto RHQ on 1 March 1938.³⁶¹ Black was given time to adjust to his new environs. He was briefed on local communist activities and he soon began overseeing the Division's intelligence work. He needed very little guidance in this respect since he was already a leading expert on communism, arguably second in importance nationally to John Leopold, and Black's reliability, his special language skills, and his knowledge of Russian life arguably made him Leopold's equal in many respects.³⁶² Once Black settled into his work and was fully acquainted with the Division's intelligence operations, he was to replace Detective Corporal Irvine who was to be detailed to another branch.³⁶³

Seldom had NHQ intelligence personnel had a clearer appreciation of "O" Division's counter-subversion needs than at this juncture in the Division's inter-war history. Acting Deputy Commissioner Jennings had headed "O" Division earlier and he knew only too well from his own experience what could go wrong if the Division's CIB lacked

³⁶⁰*ibid.*, memorandum, Inspector Tait to CO Yorkton, Saskatchewan, 25 November 1932; *ibid.*, report, Detective Sergeant Anderson, Inspector Moorhead to OC Saskatchewan District, Regina, 9 December 1932; *ibid.*, report, Inspector Nicholson, i/c CIB Halifax to OC "H" Division, Halifax, 21 February 1933; *ibid.*, memorandum, Acting Assistant Commissioner Acland to Commissioner, 19 January 1933; *ibid.*, memorandum, Assistant Commissioner Jennings, DCI to CO "F" Division, Regina, 28 January 1933.; NAC RG 146 CSIS, ATI Request 94-00014, vol. 4157, PHF 175P/392, A.E. Smith file 1930-1939, report, Mervyn Black and Inspector Munday, Saskatoon, to CO Southern Saskatchewan to Commissioner, 21 July 1934. (Hereinafter cited as NAC RG 146, CSIS 175P/392, A.E. Smith file)

³⁶¹RCMP Personnel File, Mervyn Black, 'Record of Service,' n.a. finalized 16 October 1957.

³⁶²Carl Betke and Stan Horrall, Canada's Security Service: An Historical Outline, 1864-1967 (Unpublished manuscript, R.C.M.P. Historical Section, Ottawa, 1978), released by the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) in response to Access-to-Information request, 117-90-107, 397.

³⁶³RCMP Personnel File - Mervyn Black, report, Acting Deputy Commissioner Wood to OC "O" Division, 15 February 1938.



Special Constable Mervyn Black. A translator with the Force from 1933-1957, Black's role was of central importance to many 1930s Toronto political police investigations.

Source: S.W. Horrall, "R.C.M.P. Translation Services,"
RCMP Quarterly, 52.1 (Winter 1987), 19

sufficient intelligence. The same month Black arrived to the Division Assistant Commissioner King assumed responsibilities as DCI.³⁶⁴ With King's appointment as DCI the lines of communication between "O" Division and NHQ were further strengthened. Now Leopold too, was working in Ottawa. Both former "O" Division OCs knew the Toronto policing community intimately.³⁶⁵

While there would be a remarkable improvement in "O" Division RHQ CIB's intelligence-gathering capacity, the Force soon also had to contend with the fact that a second front was slowly being opened. As of February 1938, just as the operative began attending the Toronto Labour College and weeks prior to Black's arrival, the IO began reporting on Fascist movements in Canada.³⁶⁶ Yet, as some scholarly work has convincingly argued, the Force's response to Fascist organizations such as the Canadian Union of Fascists (CUF), whose head offices were maintained in Toronto, more often met with "indifference."³⁶⁷ Nevertheless, this work to a limited extent did open up another surveillance front and required more effort from intelligence personnel at all levels. Its impact, for instance, meant that the IO's SBs now had a second focus. No wonder there was

³⁶⁴RCMP, Annual Report, 1938, 49. At NHQ, Superintendent C.H. King, DCI, worked alongside former "O" Division OC Assistant Commissioner C.D. LaNauze who now served as OC "A" Division and doubled as NHQ Supply Officer. Superintendent V.A.M. Kemp, the Force Adjutant, would be transferred to "O" Division as OC a year later.

³⁶⁵He had succeeded Jennings as its DOC in early 1932 and had worked with Draper and the Red Squad during the Workers' Economic Conferences and the hunger marches in the mid-1930s.

³⁶⁶Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins, Part IV, SB# 884, 17 February 1938, 71-76.

³⁶⁷Michelle McBride, "From indifference to internment: an examination of RCMP responses to nazism and fascism in Canada from 1934 to 1941," MA Thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1997; Only a few SS files appear to have been opened up on fascist organizations prior to 1938. Those listed in NAC RG 146 CSIS holdings include, Adrian Arcand, file 4163, records dating 23 February 1934 until 27 June 1939; *ibid.*, a few on the "Aukland Organization of the National-Sozialistische Deutsche Arbeiter Partei, Canada"; *ibid.*, "German Canadian Federation"; *ibid.*, "Italian Fascist Party"; *ibid.*, "Nazi Clubs Canada"; *ibid.*, "Ordine Italo Canadese". The positioning of the IO's intelligence in Security Bulletins, reflected this reality. After an initial zealotry in reporting of fascist groups they were pushed down in SBs and communists and other leftists remained the number-one priority.

a delay in their production and they were reduced slightly to a bi-weekly format as of February 1938.³⁶⁸

During Black's transition Acting Superintendent Mercer kept a close watch over Black's earliest Toronto reports. He digested Black's intelligence assessments and added his own analysis prior to forwarding reports to NHQ. OC's were always required to carry out such activity with their intelligence section and particularly the work of the Force's own undercover personnel, but Mercer's coverage of Black's work was especially rigorous.³⁶⁹ As an appointment from within "O" Division and its former CIB head, Mercer had a special interest in making sure that intelligence work was being conducted in an efficient manner. With Mercer overseeing his work, Black's adjustment and his familiarization with local issues and activities was proceeding smoothly.³⁷⁰ But before his immersion was completed orders arrived that Mercer was to be transferred to "K" Division in June so Corporal Irvine's transfer out of the RHQ CIB was delayed as a result.³⁷¹

Mercer's replacement was carefully selected. With the CP's and its subsidiaries' strength increasing and eventually the prospect of war growing Mercer's successor had many challenges ahead. The Commissioner chose Superintendent Walter Munday for the assignment. Munday proved a good choice. He was nearing the end of his career, he had vast experience in policing workers in the Lethbridge strikes of 1906, the Saskatoon Relief

³⁶⁸Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] The Depression years, Part V SB #884, 17 February 1938, 71; SB #885, 1 March 1938, 81.

³⁶⁹CPC TO 1930s, report, Special Constable Mervyn Black and Acting Superintendent Mercer to Commissioner, 4 and 5 April 1938; *ibid.*, report, Special Constable Mervyn Black and Acting Superintendent Mercer to Commissioner, 3 May 1938.

³⁷⁰*Ibid.*, report, Special Constable Mervyn Black and Acting Superintendent Mercer to Commissioner, 19 and 21 April 1938; *ibid.*, 5 May 1938.

³⁷¹"O" Division Nominal Rolls, June 1938. The transfer took place under RCMP GO 5878 dated 1 June 1938; CPC TO 1930s, report, Superintendent Munday OC "O" Division to Commissioner, 17 June 1938. By that point, in addition to RHQ, "O" Division consisted of 22 subdistrict headquarters and detachments with a staff ranging from seven at Windsor to one at each of the following: Cobourg, Kirkland Lake, Lindsay, Owen Sound at Sudbury.

Camp Workers' Strike in 1932 and other local events.³⁷² Munday had also served with the CEF "B" Squadron which went to Siberia. He had worked previously at "O" Division in the early 1920s: he was an "O" Division original who was responsible for leading the first contingent from out west once Beyts and a handful of other personnel had established the Division and for several years (as noted earlier in this study) Munday headed the Niagara Falls detachment.³⁷³ His Toronto appointment, in part, was a reward for his long service. "O" Division after all was a plum posting. Unlike prairie Divisions and those east of Quebec, "O" Division seldom interfered in provincial policing matters. As a result many Force personnel viewed "O" Division in a comparable manner to both Montreal and Vancouver as one of those Divisions where a OC's workload was less than elsewhere.³⁷⁴ Yet it got better. He had much in common with other Division intelligence personnel. He was British born and had even worked in the textile business like Black prior to his engagement.³⁷⁵ More important still, Munday was an ideal candidate to supervise the process of stepping up the Division's intelligence work because he and Special Constable Mervyn Black had already worked together on intelligence matters several years earlier

³⁷²Luta Munday, *A Mountie's Wife* (London, 1930), 25.

³⁷³*ibid.*, letter Inspector Munday to Commissioner Starnes, 31 January 1924; *ibid.*, memorandum, V.A.M. Kemp to "O" Division OC, 8 April 1938; "Supt. Munday of R.C.M.P. to Take Over Ontario Post," *Regina Leader Post*, 14 April 1938; In the 1920s and 1930s Munday worked at numerous places across the West and North such as: Chesterfield ("F" Division), Regina, Prince Albert, Winnipeg, and Saskatoon.

³⁷⁴Kemp, *Without Fear*, 200.

³⁷⁵NAC RG 18, vol. 3456, file 0-217, Walter Munday Service Record Part I, NWMP Form # 59. n.d. (hereafter cited as RCMP Personnel File B Walter Munday); *ibid.*, reference letter, n.d. Henry M. Cooke Director to Messrs. W. & J. Sloane, New York.; *ibid.*, letter Fred White to Mrs. Scholfield, 13 May 1908; *ibid.*, Commissioner Perry to Fred White and reply 16 May and 22 May 1908; *ibid.*, letter, Mayor, the Pas to Minister of the Interior, Robert Rogers, 2 July 1912. *ibid.*, letter, Munday to DOC "F" Division, 2 January 1914. We also learn here that his stepmother was related to Thomas Birkett an ex. MP. *ibid.*, letter Munday to Senator George Taylor, 30 May 1918; and *ibid.*, Commissioner Perry to Taylor, 22 July 1918. Munday worked as a carpet salesman in New York when he first made the transatlantic voyage in 1895. He had moved to Canada in late 1902 or early 1903 and first applied to join the Force in September 1903.

when Munday was Inspector in charge of the Force's Saskatoon operation.³⁷⁶ Munday trusted Black's ability and judgement much in the same manner King had trusted Reames and came to rely upon him increasingly at "O" Division.³⁷⁷

By early 1938 the RHQ CIB staff consisted of nine Force personnel. A year and a half later it would be split between its General CIB and Intelligence Section duties and the latter had a staff of 21. Staff Sergeant Charles Batch was the Division's senior CIB officer.³⁷⁸ Yet his workload was heavy and increasingly he concentrated more on the supervision of the enforcement of other Federal Statutes dealing with Customs, Excise, Indian, and the Opium and Narcotic Acts leaving supervision of the Division's intelligence work to Black.³⁷⁹

As Division workloads increased the expanding intelligence section relied more and more upon Miss W. Bottoms, Miss. E.M. Cullen and Miss M.G. Dickson, civilian personnel employed as stenographers who brought continuity to CIB work offsetting the many personnel changes taking place. By July 1938 the Division also gained its first civilian translator.³⁸⁰ If the RHQ CIB staff was in a transitory phase, in decline during much of the preceding year, by mid-1938 enough rebuilding had taken place that it was brimming with

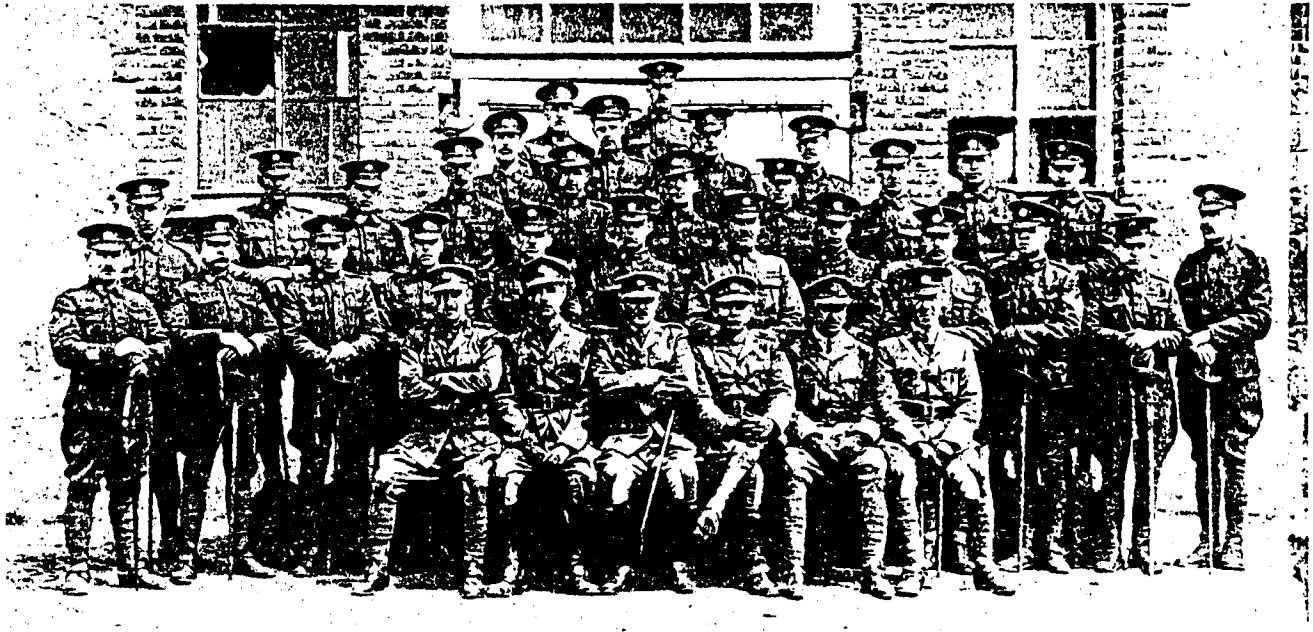
³⁷⁶NAC RG 146 175P/392, A.E. Smith file, report, Special Constable Mervyn Black and Inspector Walter Munday, 21 July 1934.

³⁷⁷CPC TO 1930s, For instance, report, Special Constable Mervyn Black and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 16 August 1938; *ibid.*, 17 September 1938; *ibid.*, 22 September 1938; *ibid.*, report, Special Constable Mervyn Black and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 7 and 11 October 1938.

³⁷⁸"O" Division Nominal Rolls, January - February 1937; As noted earlier the transfer took affect as of 1-2-37 under RCMP G.O. 4427; He had arrived to "O" Division on a transfer from "D" Division in January 1937 and was appointed officer in charge of "O" Division RHQ's CIB a month later.

³⁷⁹RCMP, Annual Report, 1937, 45-47, 126-135; "O" Division Nominal Rolls, April 1937; *ibid.*, November 1938; *ibid.*, April 1939; *ibid.*, September 1939. He was promoted Sub-Inspector in November 1938. Yet in September 1939 Batch became officer in charge of the Division's vastly expanded Intelligence Branch. Batch brought a number of important investigations such as counterfeit, theft, smuggling, drugs and illegal distilling, to successful conclusion.

³⁸⁰"O" Division Nominal Rolls, July 1938. The translator, employed as a civilian, was Mr. E. Gronberg.



OFFICERS AND N.C.O.'S, R.N.W.M.P. 'B' SQUADRON, 1918-1919.

Front Row, left to right: Lt T. B. Caulkin; Capt. A. W. Duffus; Major G. S. Worsley; Lt R. Y. Douglas; Lt T. S. Belcher; Lt C. E. Wilcox. *Second Row:* Sgt J. E. Margetts (pensioned as sergeant, living in Ottawa district); Sgt G. H. Bridger; Sgt W. V. M. B. Bruce (now superintendent, O.C. 'J' Division); Sgt W. Munday (ex-superintendent, now employed by Dept of Justice); Sgt F. Darwin; Sgt R. E. Mercer (now superintendent, O.C. Calgary Sub-division); Sgt Major R. W. McLeod; Sgt A. J. Robbins; Sgt C. Richardson (pensioned as staff sergeant, now living at Sydney, N.S.); Sgt H. M. Powell (now superintendent, O.C. Dauphin Sub-division); Sgt W. E. Tyson; Pre W. E. Ashworth (pensioned as sergeant, living in England). *Third Row:* A/Cpl F. A. Miller (acting corporal at Wainwright, Alta); A/Cpl R. S. Bossard; Cpl E. M. Curry; Cpl J. C. Bithell, now living in Montreal; Cpl J. Craig; Sgt W. Mulhall (pensioned as sergeant major, living at Weyburn, Sask.); Sgt W. A. 'Ginger' Johnson; Cpl W. C. Bryant; Cpl J. E. F. Wight (now sergeant stationed at Yarmouth, N.S.); Cpl D. Sabey. *Fourth Row:* A/Cpl J. Outterson; A/Cpl S. Moore; A/Cpl E. D. Fryett (now sub-inspector, O.C. Swift Current Sub-division); A/Cpl Clare. *Fifth Row:* A/Cpl G. D. Paveley (pensioned as sergeant, living in Ottawa); A/Cpl J. V. Stinson (now sergeant stationed at Weyburn Detachment).

Looking forward, looking back. Many future key "O" Division personnel forged relationships and shared similar experiences in the early years including "B" Squadron members, Walter Munday, Robert Mercer and Arthur Duffus.

Source: RCMP Quarterly, 9,2 (October 1941), 194.

talent. Many "O" Division RHQ CIB personnel had gained considerable experience in and around Toronto, while still others with intelligence experience, had been drawn from elsewhere in the Force. These RHQ personnel filled the gap occasioned by the unsuccessful placement of an agent within the CP.

Despite the RHQ CIB's adjustments and improvements by the summer of 1938 "O" Division RHQ CIB still had one crucial step to take to fully reinvigorate their operation. Toronto intelligence personnel relied heavily upon Chief Draper and the TCPD who once again had promised the "closest cooperation" and "assistance" in keeping tabs on communist activities.³⁸¹ However, the need to expand was apparent because intelligence personnel had been trying to track several agitators on trips through Northern Ontario since the spring, to no avail. They were not cutting the mustard. Detectives were showing up at events only to learn that they had been canceled.³⁸² The CP was increasing its presence nationally, its membership was growing at a phenomenal rate. A May Daily Clarion subscription drive had exceeded its quotas in Northern Ontario by 142.9 per cent and in Southern Ontario by 108.3 per cent.³⁸³ In June, in Toronto, the 13th Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPC had been a decided success with hundreds of guests and foreign delegates such as Earl Browder, General Secretary of the CPUSA, and Blas Roca, Secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba, in attendance.³⁸⁴ Even CP umbrella organizations such as the American Lithuanian Workers' Literary Association were reporting substantial gains in recruiting drives. While they had fared poorly in Toronto, they had done remarkably well

³⁸¹CPC TO 1930s, report, Special Constable Mervyn Black and Superintendent Walter Munday to Commissioner, 9 August 1938.

³⁸²NAC RG 146 file "Recruiting for Spanish Army," memorandum, Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 5 August 1938.

³⁸³Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] The Depression Years, Part V SB #892, 25 May 1938, 166.

³⁸⁴ibid., SB #893, 7 June 1938, 183.

elsewhere, once again exceeding their objective.³⁸⁵ Likewise, in its two years of existence the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee (SWOC) reported remarkable gains at its Ontario conference in June. It was brokering peace between AFL and CIO unions. John Weir had even successfully arranged a secret ballot for the Toronto Artists Union who voted to apply for affiliation to the CIO.³⁸⁶ Restaurant workers were on strike in the city and the unemployed had become more militant and had "taken possession of the Bandstand" at Queens Park and earned a police response.³⁸⁷ These were just a few events taking place receiving coverage by the Division and the IO's SBs, while many other events had gone unreported. To be effective intelligence personnel had to expand their operation further passive investigations were recognizably a poor substitute.

"O" Division RHQ's CIB needed someone who could operate undercover, who had experience in this capacity and whose background would be protected provided the CP made inquiries. Corporal Robert Leaconsfield Trolove fit this profile. In July, Commissioner Wood sent Superintendent Munday a memorandum which read, "Owing to the fact that I find it utterly impossible to arrange an Inspection of your Division within the near future, it will be necessary for you to come to these Headquarters. There are several matters dealing with the organization, particularly, that it is desired to confer on."³⁸⁸ Munday made the trip to Ottawa. Intelligence work was likely discussed since weeks later Trolove was transferred to "O" Division RHQ CIB.

Ronald Leconsfield Trolove was born in England (Narborough, Leicestershire) in 1901.³⁸⁹ An English public school boy during World War I he served with the First

³⁸⁵*Ibid.*, 185-186.

³⁸⁶*Ibid.*, SB #894, 24 June 1938, 198-199.

³⁸⁷*Ibid.*, SB #897, 4 August 1938, 242.

³⁸⁸*Ibid.*, RCMP Personnel File B Walter Munday, memorandum, Commissioner Wood to Superintendent Munday, 26 July 1938. Wood arranged a meeting for 29 July 1938 at 10 am.

³⁸⁹Obituary "R.L. Trolove," RCMP Quarterly 53,2 (1988).

Battalion Machine Gun Corps and later the Seaforth Highlanders until being discharged as “under age” in September 1917.³⁹⁰ He was part of the wave of postwar British recruits that included Constable J.T. Goudie. Trolove joined the Force in July 1920 at Ottawa. Once Trolove had completed basic training in Regina he was posted to “E” Division, British Columbia, where he served at Vancouver. By 1921, “mounted, wearing red sash with hammer and sickle,” according to RCMP historians Carl Betke and Stan Horrall, Trolove was leading Vancouver demonstrations with communists in the Canadian National Union of Ex-Servicemen. The following year Trolove posed as a returned soldier in search of work and he joined a “throng” of unemployed men camped in Hastings Park protesting against the system.³⁹¹ He managed to get into the WPC but was soon exposed and had to be withdrawn thereafter.³⁹²

Likely for security purposes, to protect their Mountie, in December 1922, Trolove was transferred to “D” Division and stationed at Winnipeg.³⁹³ In April 1925 Trolove was transferred to “O” Division. He worked for a decade at several “O” Division detachments including: Hailebury, Oshaweken, Camp Borden, Windsor and Toronto.³⁹⁴ In the early

³⁹⁰Betke and Horrall, *Canada's Security Service*, 446; R.L. Trolove, “Musical Ride 1921,” *RCMP Quarterly* 35,3 (January 1970), 50-52; Since his service record has been destroyed little else is known about his early life.

³⁹¹*ibid.*, 374 (c); See overleaf behind photo of Trolove. This incidentally was one of the organizations that Constable Henry Catt was affiliated with in Toronto to gain access to the revolutionary movement

³⁹²*ibid.*, 446-447.

³⁹³For that purpose he had been attached to “N” Division. Trolove then served in Edmonton at “G” Division. He performed in 1925 with the Musical Ride at the British Empire Exhibition, Wembley Park, in London, England.

³⁹⁴“O” Division Nominal Rolls, January 1929 until August 1930 Camp Borden; *ibid.*, September 1930 to June 1931 Haileybury and promoted Corporal 1-7-31 under RCMP G.O. 9234; *ibid.*, July 1931 to December 1932 Oshaweken; *ibid.*, January 1933 to March 1933, On Command Regina; *ibid.*, April 1933 to September 1933 Oshaweken; *ibid.*, October 1933 to February 1934 Walkerville; *ibid.*, March 1934 to January 1935 Windsor; *ibid.*, March 1935 ‘on lone’ to Rockcliffe pending transfer to “N” Division, transfer 1-3-35 under RCMP G.O. 2236.

1930s he had participated in the surveillance campaigns against Ottawa-bound trekkers heading for the WEC and lost an old friend Inspector L.J. Sampson who died during the May 1933 "disturbance" in Saskatoon when he fell from his horse. He was twice recognized for his work (some of it detective), in the Commissioner's Annual Report.³⁹⁵

In March 1935 Trolove was transferred to "N" Division and in December back to "D" Division, Winnipeg RHQ where again he was attached to the CIB. He functioned first as a detective and then became a "successful" Special Agent in Winnipeg. He joined the Single Unemployed Men's Association (SUMA) using the alias of "Benson." Eventually he was made SUMA's Secretary.³⁹⁶ He also began reporting on local recruiting for Spain activities. He was one of the first agents in Western Canada to report on these activities and one of the best.³⁹⁷ He was well established in Winnipeg's revolutionary circles. In addition to getting inside SUMA and eventually the CP, he had built up a cadre of trustworthy informants with whom he had developed a good rapport.³⁹⁸

³⁹⁵RCMP, Annual Report, 1926, 35; ibid., 1932, 45; It was opened in September. It was "established to cope with conditions said to be existing among the Indians in that district." First in 1926 when he established a new Divisional detachment at Moose Factory. Then in 1932 for undercover work in Southwestern Ontario; While in charge of the Ohsweken Detachment he became aware that Indians of the reserve were obtaining wine and spirits from a bootlegger in Hamilton. He went undercover and joined four Indians in a buy at the bootlegger's house in Hamilton. The bootlegger's house was raided and a quantity of spirits was found on the premises.

³⁹⁶Betke and Horrall, *Canada's Security Service*, 447.

³⁹⁷AC RG 146 file "Recruiting for Spanish Army", on SUMA see report, Corporal Trolove, 11 January 1937; On Spain see, ibid., report, Corporal R.L. Trolove and Assistant Commissioner Dann "D" Division OC to Commissioner, 15 January 1937; CPC TO 1930s, report, source deleted, 16 November 1938; NAC RG 146, "Recruiting for Spanish Army" file, report, Corporal Trolove and Assistant Commissioner Dann "D" Division to Commissioner, 15 January 1937; ibid., report, Corporal Trolove and Assistant Commissioner Dann "D" Division to Commissioner, 18 January 1937; ibid., report, Corporal Trolove and Assistant Commissioner Dann "D" Division to Commissioner, 20 January 1937.

³⁹⁸ibid., "Recruiting for Spanish Army," file, report, Corporal Trolove and Assistant Commissioner Dann "D" Division to Commissioner, 10 February 1937; ibid., report, Corporal Trolove and Assistant Commissioner Dann "D" Division to Commissioner, 13 February 1937. He also reported extensively on anti-fascist file sets. For instance, when he learned that five recruits for Spain had alluded authorities and "gotten away over the weekend" Trolove informed his OC that this was likely since he had always found his source "reliable."

Other operatives were developed in Winnipeg during 1937. A replacement for Trolove was successfully positioned in SUMA.³⁹⁹ As a result, Trolove's future as an undercover agent was discussed between his OC and Assistant Commissioner Wood, the DCI, during the spring.⁴⁰⁰ At first they agreed that Trolove would keep operating undercover until May Day events had passed since there was considerable fear that increased numbers of single unemployed men were becoming more militant.⁴⁰¹ Trolove remained undercover for several months and then as the perceived threat dissipated was returned to regular duty. But by the following winter it was clear that Trolove's talents were being wasted in Winnipeg especially when Toronto was having considerable difficulty resurrecting its principal RHQ CIB Toronto CP counter-subversion operation.

Following the meeting Munday had in Ottawa with the Commissioner in July 1938 arrangements were made to further improve "O" Division's intelligence operations. In September 1938 Trolove was transferred to "O" Division RHQ.⁴⁰² With Trolove's return Superintendent Munday had all the key ingredients in place. For the first time in a long while intelligence personnel prepared to open up and broaden the depth of their Toronto CP operations. Now Munday and Black were ready to push the RHQ CIB intelligence operations hard returning them to the covert counter-subversion practices of an earlier period.

Within a week of his Toronto transfer Trolove once again was covering revolutionary activities. He had likely maintained his alias "Benson" because it certainly

³⁹⁹CPC Winnipeg 1930s, memorandum, Assistant Commissioner Wood to DOC "D" Division, 17 April 1937.

⁴⁰⁰*ibid.*, memorandum, Superintendent T. Dann to Commissioner, 22 April 1937.

⁴⁰¹*ibid.*

⁴⁰²Obituary "R.L. Trolove," *RCMP Quarterly* 53, 2 (1988). In March 1940 Trolove was sent to "A" Division, Ottawa, before being relocated to "C" Division Montreal RHQ. He was promoted Corporal on 1 July 1931, and Sergeant 12 December 1944. He was retired to pension as of 1 January 1948 and died on 19 February 1988 at Burk's Falls, Ontario, at age 86.

made sense to keep up his cover. He contacted someone at Toronto CP offices and subsequently turned out to hear an A.E. Smith lecture.⁴⁰³ Days later he attended a Clarion staff banquet and the following day a house party that had likely been arranged to welcome him to the city.⁴⁰⁴

Trolove knew many party stalwarts. He had known Leslie Morris, for instance, for sixteen years.⁴⁰⁵ Becky Buhay also confided in him. At the house party Buhay informed Trolove that she was terribly shaken by the fact that she and Ewen had separated and that he had moved to British Columbia.⁴⁰⁶ Trolove also attended a peace rally held at Queen's Park in late September and reported on local CP organizing troubles his comrades were facing.⁴⁰⁷

Although Trolove had been reintegrated into revolutionary circles he still needed to strengthen his cover so at some point he began posing as a machine fitter. Yet this occupation was a poor choice as in time he would be working six days a week and as many as twelve hours a day to keep up his cover. This led to a flurry of correspondence between NHQ and RHQ over whether or not he was entitled to keep his pay.⁴⁰⁸

Trolove's cover also influenced to a certain extent the focus of some of his early investigations. At the beginning of November the Toronto Street Railway Employee's

⁴⁰³*ibid.*, report, (source deleted up top), Special Constable Black and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 17 September 1938.

⁴⁰⁴*ibid.*, report, source deleted, Special Constable Black and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 22 September 1938.

⁴⁰⁵ ²¹⁷*ibid.*, report, Special Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday, 18 and 24 March 1939.

⁴⁰⁶*ibid.*, report, (source deleted up top), Special Constable Black and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, September 1938; *ibid.*, report, source deleted, Special Constable Black and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 22 September 1938.

⁴⁰⁷*ibid.*, report, source deleted up top, Special Constable Black and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 27 September 1939; *ibid.*, Cross Reference Sheet, source deleted and Special Constable Black and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 29 September 1938.

⁴⁰⁸Betke and Horrall, *Canada's Security Service*, 447; How it was resolved remains a mystery.

Union was preparing to strike over health and occupational safety issues such as shorter hours and the implementation of one-man street cars which was going into effect on the city's busiest routes.⁴⁰⁹ Trolove attended a couple of these meetings. Management feared the union was full of communists, which was unfounded. Although supported by the CP in their demands, about the only ties Trolove uncovered was that "every member of the Street Railwaymen's Union received a copy of the Daily Clarion, gratis, through the mail."⁴¹⁰ If anything, the T.T.C. had become more a home for RCMP operatives and agents. Through the help of the transit authority a decade earlier it had provided Special Agent Goudie with a base.⁴¹¹ The Force had a *quid pro quo* arrangement with the transit authority. The Force passed intelligence to them when it concerned labour unrest, contract negotiations with their unions, and the transit authority reciprocated by providing employment for operatives or agents.

As Trolove's general workload increased the RHQ CIB tried to relieve some of the pressure he was experiencing. They wanted to acquire more intelligence to improve their analysis and broaden their understanding of local revolutionary developments before they committed Trolove to a particular CP branch or perhaps even an ancillary organization in the city. Toward that end they pulled in Constable S.O.F. Evans from Niagara Falls at the beginning of November to attend a civil liberties' meeting being held at a Toronto collegiate in opposition to Quebec's Padlock Law. His main assignment was to assess

⁴⁰⁹CPC TO 1930s, report, Corporal Trolove, 6 November 1938; *ibid.*, "Would Delay T.T.C. Order," Globe & Mail, 7 November 1938; *ibid.*, "Strike Talk Is Heard Among T.T.C. Workers As Winter Fair Near," Toronto Daily Star, 7 November 1938; *ibid.*, "Asserts Tram Union >Not Talking Strike," Toronto Daily Star, 8 November 1938.

⁴¹⁰*ibid.*, report, Corporal Trolove, 6 November 1938; *ibid.*, memorandum, Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 9 November 1938.

⁴¹¹Goudie had maintained his cover as a janitor working the night shift for the transit authority.

where within the city the most activity was taking place.⁴¹²

Evans remained in the city afterwards. He continued working for the CIB initially as a detective (yet in time his job was expanded) and as the scope of revolutionary activities increased Special Constable Black also sent Constable Le Roy Yeomans out on several occasions to cover other public events.⁴¹³ For instance, both Black and Yeomans attended a CP Massey Hall mass meeting to get a better sense of the support the CP had and what activities it was then undertaking.⁴¹⁴

Trolove, who at this point was still shopping for a “home” within one of the many progressive groups active in the city, began attending FMPB meetings, dances, and other local events. He also reported on CP plans to initiate a recruiting drive for China. He was watching SUMA’s local activities and also began to involve himself in upcoming municipal elections.⁴¹⁵

Yet despite these initial modest gains in “O” Division RHQ CIB’s intelligence gathering, in late November the DCI was still dissatisfied with its overall performance. He wanted information from one of Trolove’s early reports verified. It had noted that the Winnipeg and Toronto CPs had launched an overseas recruiting drive for China.⁴¹⁶ But

⁴¹²*ibid.*, report, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 15 and 16 November 1938.

⁴¹³RCMP, *Quarterly*, 36,3 (January 1971), “Obituary of ex-Sgt. Le Roy Hamilton Yeomans,” 79; born, 26 August 1905 at Rockville, N.B., joined the RCMP on 31 July 1929. He was promoted to Corporal in November 1945, sergeant in November 1952 and retired to pension in July 1955. He was stationed at Rockcliffe, Toronto, Oshweken, London, Ottawa, Montreal, Port Burwell and Port Harrison. He died in August 1970 at Merrickville, Ontario.

⁴¹⁴*ibid.*, report, Constable Yeomans and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 10 and 11 October 1938.

⁴¹⁵NAC RG 146 “Friends of the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion”(FMPB) file, report, Corporal Trolove, Special Constable Black and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 26 and 29 November 1938; CPC TO 1930s, report, Corporal Trolove, 23 November 1939; *ibid.*, secret memorandum, Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 29 November 1938. *ibid.*, Corporal Trolove, 16 November 1938.

⁴¹⁶CPC TO 1930s, memorandum, Assistant Commissioner King, DCI to OC “D” Division, 22 November 1938; *ibid.*, report, source deleted (Toronto), 16 November 1938.

without better access Trolove was unable to provide this intelligence. He had to get inside the CP. The DCI's request sped up the decision as to where and when Trolove would be positioned. Days later, Trolove attended his first meeting of the CP's Riverdale Branch in a working-class neighborhood. Fittingly, Sam Scarlett's address that night was titled "Why you should be a Communist."⁴¹⁷

Even with Trolove positioned inside the CP the DCI's impatience with RHQ CIB operations mounted. So much so in fact that the DCI sent Munday a stern memorandum:

We do not appear to have received a report on particulars concerning the meeting held at Toronto to celebrate the 21st anniversary of the Soviet Revolution. Presumably such a meeting took place and, in such instances, and also on the occasion of other important meetings held, it is desired to have full particulars regarding the identity of the speakers and the subject matter of their address together with the number of persons who attended the meeting and the general reaction to the speeches, etc., etc.⁴¹⁸

CIB personnel scrambled to try to meet his request. Superintendent Munday blamed this apparent oversight on Special Constable Black and briefly distanced himself from the matter. He demanded Black provide an answer and waited for an official response. It took two weeks before Black answered in a memorandum addressed to his OC which reported that with the exception of an ULFTA Hall meeting no event had been held. Furthermore, to appease the DCI, and echoing responses by senior RHQ personnel made earlier in the Division's intelligence history, Black assured him that "[a]ll important meetings held under the auspices of the C.P. or its affiliated organizations have been covered wherever possible and this policy will be continued in the future, as per instructions."⁴¹⁹

In December 1938 "O" Division RHQ CIB substantially increased the number of intelligence reports it generated. The majority of its field investigations were conducted by

⁴¹⁷*ibid.*, report, Corporal Trolove, Special Constable Black and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 25 and 29 November 1938.

⁴¹⁸ *ibid.*, Assistant Commissioner King, DCI, to OC "O" Division, 25 November 1938.

⁴¹⁹*ibid.*, memorandum, Special Constable Black to OC "O" Division.

Trolove and then reviewed by Black and Munday. Trolove was sent to spy on a housewives' association being organized in the city, then an East Toronto Humanity Club. Many community-based women's associations had sprung up across Canada and somehow it became Trolove's responsibility to keep tabs on these "militant mothers" and their city activities.⁴²⁰

Municipal elections were less than a month away. Trolove now began participating more fully in the CP's city Ward life. He attended the regular meetings of the CP's Riverdale Branch. At one of them he was invited to act as an election scrutineer, a position he accepted.⁴²¹ Trolove also began working in the CP's Ward One committee rooms "assisting" in Tim Buck's election campaign.⁴²² He attended a scrutineers' meeting just days prior to the election.⁴²³ He reported that both the Humanity Club and the Housewives'

⁴²⁰*ibid.*, report, Corporal Trolove, Special Constable Black and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 7 and 12 December 1938; *ibid.*, "First Annual Convention of the Housewives' Association," 30 November 1938; *ibid.*, "When Housewives Unite," by Margaret Gould reprinted from The Toronto Daily Star, 11 October 1938; *ibid.*, report, Corporal Trolove, Special Constable Black and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 1 December 1938; *ibid.*, report, Corporal Trolove, Special Constable Black and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 6 and 9 December 1938; The SS opened up a file on Housewives' associations in Toronto and Montreal during these years. See, NAC RG 146 file 3440 "Housewives Consumers Association: Communist Activities Within Toronto," opened, 29 November 1937, closed, 22 July 1947; *ibid.*, NAC RG 146 file 3394 "Housewives League Montreal" opened, 27 November 1939, closed, 7 December 1947; Joan Sangster, Dreams of Equality: Women On The Canadian Left, 1920-1950 (Toronto, 1989), 137-142; In 1937 intelligence opened up files on these housewife's organizations in both Toronto and Montreal and their files remained active for a decade and were superseded by groups like the Houewives' Consumer Association (HCA).

⁴²¹CPC TO 1930s, report, Corporal Trolove, Special Constable Black and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 25 and 29 November 1938; *ibid.*, report, source deleted, Special Constable Black and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 30 November 1938; *ibid.*, report, Corporal Trolove, Special Constable Black and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 29 December 1938 and 5 January 1939.

⁴²²*ibid.*, report, Corporal Trolove, Special Constable Black and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 14 and 17 December 1938; *ibid.*, report, Corporal Trolove, Special Constable Black and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 29 December 1938 and 5 January 1939. Jewish Women who turned out to assist Buck were referred to by Trolove as "Jewesses".

⁴²³*ibid.*, report, Corporal Trolove, Special Constable Black and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 29 December and 3 January, 1938-1939.

Association simply were established to further progressives' success at the polls.⁴²⁴ As important, he noted, was the work the Toronto Labour Representation Association undertook, which met in offices on Wellington Street each Friday night leading up to the election.⁴²⁵ Trolove had infiltrated that organization too. Trade Union delegates comprised the majority of those who attended its meetings, the CP "guided" them, Trolove reported, and they went back to their unions to tell their membership whom to vote.⁴²⁶

Intelligence personnel instructed Trolove to keep tabs on communist election preparations throughout December. On election day Trolove was at the Ward One Tim Buck committee room by 8:30 a.m. to assist at the polls. He returned in the evening to hear the radio results. He submitted a full three-page report on the election outcome. His primary sources of intelligence were longtime associate Leslie Morris and Sam Scarlett whom he had befriended.⁴²⁷ The 1939 elections were heavily reported. Newspaper clippings taken from Toronto papers were forwarded to NHQ. The names of communists and progressives who had run were underlined as were their election results. Like previous years these results were eventually packaged and reported in the IO's quarterly intelligence summary.⁴²⁸

After the elections Trolove broadened his work. He left the Riverdale branch and

⁴²⁴*ibid.*, report, Corporal Trolove, Special Constable Black and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 29 December and 3 January, 1938-1939.

⁴²⁵A.E. Smith, *All My Life: An Autobiography* (Rpt., Toronto, 1977), 195 ; Penner, *Canadian Communism*, 146.

⁴²⁶CPC TO 1930s, report, Corporal Trolove, Special Constable Black and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 12 December 1938.

⁴²⁷*ibid.*, report, Corporal Trolove, Special Constable Black and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 3 and 6 January 1939. Although the party had polled better in each of the Wards the narrow defeat of Buck for Board of Control was a major disappointment.

⁴²⁸*ibid.*, "Aldermanic Vote Throughout City," and "Result of Voting For School Board," and "Scarboro and Aurora Upsets Mark Elections," *Toronto Daily Star*, 3 January 1939; See Kealey and Whitaker [eds.] *R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins: The Depression Years, Part V*, Civil Security Intelligence Summary, No. 1, January-March, 1939, 373-377.

joined the CP's Ward Two branch where a great deal of local activity was conducted.⁴²⁹ By attending Ward Two meetings Trolove soon learned of plans the CP had to split the ward's branch since it had grown significantly and was now well in excess of fifty members. The CP also planned to establish a new branch that would push into Ward Three with the ultimate goal of extending and enlarging the CP's presence in north Toronto.⁴³⁰ By the end of January both these feats had been accomplished. The Ward Three branch was established. Both A.A. MacLeod and Major Ed Cecil-Smith had openly joined it and were playing a significant role in its activities.⁴³¹ With a reinvigorated FMPB during the winter of 1939, it was not surprising that intelligence personnel instructed Trolove to get close to MacLeod and Cecil-Smith. Furthermore, there was considerable growth occurring in Ward Three. The CP had consolidated its position in Ward Three by quickly establishing a Ward YCL branch and an unemployed organization.⁴³² Trolove's workload shot up dramatically in this period. He was kept busy attending both wards' activities.⁴³³ He also attended other significant local CP events increasing his contacts and broadening his support base.⁴³⁴

Fearing the continued rapid growth of the Toronto CP, Assistant Commissioner R.R. Tait, who had replaced King as DCI by this juncture, prepared to open up the Toronto CP

⁴²⁹CPC TO 1930s, report, Special Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 15 and 16 January 1939.

⁴³⁰CPC TO 1930s, report, Special Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 15 and 16 January 1939; *ibid.*, Special Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 19 January 1939. So many new recruits were being endorsed and accepted into the party that it was felt that only by expanding its geographic presence could they meet this demand.

⁴³¹*ibid.*, report, Special Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday, 27 January and 1 February 1939.

⁴³²*ibid.*, report, Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 27 February 1939.

⁴³³*ibid.*, report, Special Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 2 and 9 February 1939; *ibid.*, report, Special Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 5 and 9 February 1939.

⁴³⁴*ibid.*, report, Special Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 22 and 24 January 1939; *ibid.*, report, Special Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 22 and 24 January 1939.

intelligence network further. Toward this end he sent Munday a memorandum requesting that CP membership cards be secured. In addition, Tait wanted RHQ CIB personnel to evaluate old cards to make sure that the cards they secured were authentic. To avoid suspicion, if stalwarts kept a tight reign over the cards and would notice any missing, then cards were to be duplicated and returned quickly. This operation was to be undertaken with extreme care.⁴³⁵ Special Constable Black oversaw this assignment. He obtained several cards from an undisclosed source (perhaps Trolove). One card was from 1930, another from 1938, and a third from 1939. Black subsequently reported that the text of the three cards were essentially the same. He also reported that he was uncertain as to whether or not all cards were printed in Toronto for all the Districts. Yet at the same time he believed that this would be the “logical procedure.” Otherwise, he felt, that the CP’s ability to “control” the “checking of dues” in particular, would become a “somewhat troublesome matter for the centre.”⁴³⁶ He promised that an agent or confidential contact would have that subject “investigated” and a further report would be submitted.⁴³⁷

NHQ’s interest in local CP activities increased during this period. The volume of RHQ intelligence gathered by this point also grew as a consequence. Both factors brought about a further realignment of RHQ intelligence personnel. Detective Inspector F.W. Zaneth joined the Division’s RHQ CIB staff in January and remained “attached” (with a brief exception when he was sent to “C” Division Montreal for February) until the end of August.⁴³⁸ The RHQ CIB also drew upon the services of Inspector R.E. Webster (the Division’s Duty Officer) and Inspector C.H. James (the Officer in charge of Preventative

⁴³⁵*ibid.*, memorandum DCI to OC “O” Division, 11 January 1939.

⁴³⁶*ibid.*, report, Special Constable Black and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 30 January 1939.

⁴³⁷*ibid.*

⁴³⁸“O” Division Nominal Rolls, January-September 1939.

Service Branch). They lent assistance to the CIB in February acting briefly as handlers reviewing intelligence reports.⁴³⁹ Constable Evans' status within the CIB operations was also elevated. He began to run 'confidential contacts' along with Special Constable Mervyn Black who, although still in charge of the CIB's intelligence operations, was also involved in a series of other ongoing federal investigations in the southwestern part of the province. For several months Evans replaced Black as Agent Trolove's handler.⁴⁴⁰ In February Constable H.W. Kirkpatrick was moved from RHQ general duty over to the CIB. The following month he was also dispatched to cover revolutionaries' public meetings.⁴⁴¹

Trolove's burden was enormous. For more than a month he covered the activities of two Wards; he attended the meetings of the Beaver and Jack Murray Branches in Ward Two and the Uptown branch in Ward Three; and he had gone back and forth every couple of nights to a CP function.⁴⁴² So in February intelligence personnel managed to get another operative placed within the Toronto CP using the membership cards they had obtained. Not only did this move lighten Trolove's responsibilities, but it provided insurance in the event something happened to Agent Trolove. By this juncture intelligence personnel simply felt they needed another source.⁴⁴³

⁴³⁹CPC TO 1930s, report, Special Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Inspector Webster, 14 and 18 February 1939; *ibid.*, report, source deleted, Constable Evans and Inspector James, 15 February 1939.

⁴⁴⁰*ibid.*, report, source deleted, Constable Evans, and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 6 and 7 January 1939; *ibid.*, report, Corporal Trolove, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday, 12 and 13 January 1939; *ibid.*, report, Constable Kirkpatrick and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 13 April 1939.

⁴⁴¹"O" Division Nominal Rolls, January-March 1939; CPC TO 1930s, report, Constable Kirkpatrick and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 14 March 1939.

⁴⁴²He was enduring in three jobs that he held: 1) as a machine fitter, 2) as a party stalwart and 3) as an RCMP Special Agent. He was working six days a week, 12 hour days and then expected to participate in party life. He was then expected to fill out reports on his outings for the SS.

⁴⁴³CPC TO 1930s, we know that a second agent had been placed because of report, source deleted, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 12 April 1939. Munday wrote at the bottom of a report, "Reg. No. 9539 also submitted a report on this meeting, the contents of which are confirmed in the above report." It had been a joint meeting of Ward 2 and 3 CP branches of CP.

In March and April Trolove's workload lessened. RHQ intelligence personnel carved up the city's North and East Ward and an agreement was reached whereby the operative would continue to attend Ward Two meetings, while Trolove would remain more actively engaged in Ward Three CP life. Before long, a third operative joined Trolove and the Ward Two sleuth as local intelligence networks were expanded further. He kept tabs on developments at the city's easternmost point (and just beyond) attending an East Toronto branch's regular Sunday Forum. He reported that the CP was making inroads offering classes in Scarborough and although its Scarborough Heights branch was not very "active," he reported, its YCL group was "one of the best" in the region.⁴⁴⁴

The intelligence that "O" Division RHQ's sleuths were gathering increased again by this point. By the spring Trolove was submitting on average several reports weekly which ended up in "O" Division RHQ CIB's core Toronto CP file. So was the Ward Two operative. All three were also producing other reports which were being deposited on other files. Yet of the three, Trolove's work was the most impressive. By mid-March he had joined Ward Three's Uptown Voter's Association and had begun attending its weekly open forums.⁴⁴⁵ He was also sent to attend a regional unemployed congress held in the city in April and he subsequently increased his coverage of the CP's efforts to mobilize the unemployed.⁴⁴⁶ He kept tabs on the Clarion offices and reported that its staff was having a hard time "making a go of it" and that branches were under considerable pressure to raise

⁴⁴⁴ibid., report, source deleted, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 15 and 17 April 1939; ibid., report, source deleted, Constable S.O.F. Evans and Superintendent Walter Munday to Commissioner, 20 and 21 April 1939.

⁴⁴⁵ibid., report, Special Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 17 and 23 March 1939.

⁴⁴⁶ibid., report, source deleted, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 2 May 1939, This report refers to one that Trolove had filled out on the event.; ibid., report, Special Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 25 and 29 April 1939, This report refers to SUMA city activities.

funds. One solution stalwarts pursued was the establishment of cooperatives across the city in the hope that their profits could be used to fund other CP activities. Trolove learned that 15 cooperatives had been converted. Seven cooperatives he identified by name and provided their addresses.⁴⁴⁷

Trolove also began detailing the steps his branch took to arrange a series of weekly street-corner meetings. Through the intelligence he gathered CIB personnel identified a contact within the TCPD whom branch members planned to approach to secure a permit. The permit was granted and the first street-corner meeting was held on 4 June. Like others that followed during the summer it was attended by Agent Trolove and reports were written and forwarded to NHQ.⁴⁴⁸

Efforts to shore up the CP's alliance in the city's trade union movement were also being reported by Agent Trolove during this period. Yet this work met with little success.⁴⁴⁹ In fact, most of the CP's efforts during June were absorbed arranging an International Picnic. It was to be the principal money raiser for election campaigns at all levels and other projects the CP had planned. Trolove attended several organizing meetings and reported splits with respect to securing the use of Eldorado Park as well as troubles the CP had run

⁴⁴⁷*ibid.*, report, Special Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 18 and 26 May 1939.

⁴⁴⁸*ibid.*, report, Special Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 24 and 27 March 1939; *ibid.*, report, Special Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 4 and 7 June 1939; *ibid.*, report, Special Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 12 and 19 June 1939; *ibid.*, report, Special Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 17 and 21, July 1939; *ibid.*, report, Special Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 11 and 12 July 1939; *ibid.*, report, Special Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 3 and 4 July 1939.

⁴⁴⁹*ibid.*, report, Special Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 27 March 1939.

into with the Food Workers' Union who had operated the concessions at the previous year's festival and gone unpaid. Operatives later reported that the event had proved a bust.⁴⁵⁰

After several months' absence Special Constable Mervyn Black resumed handling responsibilities and stepped up his direct supervision of agents and operatives.⁴⁵¹ Since his workload was heavy, Constable Evans continued in a similar capacity.⁴⁵² Superintendent Munday had taken ill in February and in mid-March he announced his plans to retire to pension after 35 years service at the end of July.⁴⁵³ Inspector Frederick William Schutz was attached to the Division in May as second in command.⁴⁵⁴ In June, Schutz was appointed head of "O" Division's CIB.⁴⁵⁵ This was the final major Divisional RHQ intelligence change until August, just before Canada declared war. Schutz's appointment, first as CIB head, then as temporary officer in command of the Division was an exceptionally good one.

⁴⁵⁰ibid., report, Special Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 3 and 19 June 1939; ibid., report, source deleted, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 9 June 1939.

⁴⁵¹ibid., report, source deleted, Special Constable Black and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 23 and 24 June 1939.

⁴⁵²ibid., report, Special Agent Trolove, Special Constable Black and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 23 June 1939.

⁴⁵³RCMP Personnel File -- Walter Munday, memorandum, Commissioner Wood to Superintendent Munday, 16 March 1939.

⁴⁵⁴NAC RG 18, vol. 3460, file 0-239, Service Record of Frederick William Schutz (Hereinafter cited as RCMP Personnel File -- F.W. Schutz): Like so many other Mounties Schutz was born in Britain, in 1884. A staunch Church of Englander, Schutz emigrated to Canada in 1902 and shortly thereafter had taken up farming at Brandon. By 1908 he had given up on farming and in May that year joined the Force. As a rookie he served in the North Mackenzie river valley and the Yukon. He was discharged in May 1913 and re-engaged in August 1914. Like so many others, Schutz served in Siberia from August 1918 to July 1919 and upon returning served in Regina, Prince Albert and Weyburn. In 1931 he was promoted Inspector and sent to Regina HQ. He was Officer Commanding Prince Albert, then transferred to "O" Division in May 1939.

⁴⁵⁵"O" Division Nominal Rolls, June 1939, Transfer "F" to "O" Division, 1/600. 7058; ibid., July 1939, Inspector James, retired to pension as of 6 July 1939, under RCMP G.O. 7306.

He had all the requisite experience like most of his predecessors and would become "O" Division's OC in 1943.⁴⁵⁶

By the summer Trolove had risen marginally in the CP and was sitting on the Ward Three executive while the Ward Two operative was now positioned on the East Toronto Section Committee.⁴⁵⁷ While Trolove's position on the executive enabled him to get more involved in local activities only a slight improvement was made in the quality of the intelligence he secured.⁴⁵⁸ His focus remained local CP activities such as branch membership recruiting and efforts to expand the popular front in the city with organizations such as the East Toronto CCF.⁴⁵⁹ Another group the CP were trying to bring under its control, he noted, was the Veteran's Welfare Committee and he was also active in local CLPD functions.⁴⁶⁰ He was also filling in details on the activities of revolutionaries in June, July and August, adding to their dossiers. For instance, he had reported on Leslie Morris' poor financial situation, identified his Toronto address and provided details about his wife and children living in Winnipeg.⁴⁶¹ Yet consistently Trolove's summertime reports noted that the CP's democratic-front initiatives were met with indifference. Despite the repeated statements to the contrary made by CP leaders such as A.E. Smith, whose talks at Ward and

⁴⁵⁶RCMP Personnel file, F.W. Schutz. In September 1942 Schutz was appointed Acting Superintendent OC "O" Division, and confirmed as of 1 May 1943. He retired to pension on 1 January 1945 and died in Vancouver on 23 February 1956; Kemp, *Without fear*, 202.

⁴⁵⁷CPC TO 1930s, report, Secret Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 21 June 1939.

⁴⁵⁸*ibid.*, report, Secret Agent Trolove, another operative (name deleted), Constable Evans and Inspector Schutz to Commissioner, 7 and 10 July 1939.

⁴⁵⁹*ibid.*, report, Secret Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday, 25 and 26 May 1939.

⁴⁶⁰*ibid.*, report, Secret Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday, 25 and 31 May 1939; NAC RG 146 CSIS holdings, file "FMPB," report, Secret Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 5 and 9 May 1939.

⁴⁶¹NAC RG 146, ATI Request, 94-A-00011, vol. 857, Leslie Thomas Morris, file, PHF, 175/P2440, report, Secret Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Inspector Schutz to Commissioner, 11 and 12 July 1939; *ibid.*, report, Secret Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 12 June 1939.

branch meetings stressed the importance of cooperation, the CP was slowly being isolated.⁴⁶² Several operatives confirmed Trolove's analysis of the situation in the city. For instance, they reported that the CP's "cosy" relationship with W.D. Herridge's "New Democracy" movement was "beginning to cool."⁴⁶³ Nor was much happening on the trade union front. In general, since the May Clarion sustaining drive, CP city work was dismal.⁴⁶⁴

Secret Agent Trolove attended Ward Three executive committee and East Toronto CP meetings in July. But somewhere within the network and for unknown reasons Trolove had also fallen under suspicion.⁴⁶⁵ He operated undercover for a further seven weeks reporting the occasional piece of intelligence. He survived the outbreak of hostilities and Canada's entry into War as an agent working undercover.⁴⁶⁶ But within a couple of weeks he could not shake off whatever confidence he had lost. Intelligence personnel had to assess the situation, weighing the value of his intelligence against the larger interests of regional and national intelligence operations. Ultimately they decided that the damage his exposure might cause to the organization significantly outweighed the value of the intelligence he was able to secure. Furthermore, with a number of other operatives well positioned within the network, they had insurance which they had been without during the 1920s fiasco. As a result Trolove's career as an undercover agent abruptly ended. By the fall "O" Division intelligence personnel had relocated Trolove and stationed him at Muncy detachment. In a matter of weeks he had gone from being an agent inside the Toronto CP and was now

⁴⁶²CPC TO 1930s, report, Secret Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Inspector Schutz to Commissioner, 12 June 1939.

⁴⁶³ibid., report, source deleted, Constable Evans and Inspector Schutz to Commissioner, 20 and 21 July 1939.

⁴⁶⁴ibid., report, Secret Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 18 and 26 May 1939; ibid., 25 and 31 May 1939.

⁴⁶⁵Betke and Horrall, *Canada's Security Service*, 447.

⁴⁶⁶NAC RG 146, CSIS, 175P/ 392, A.E. Smith File, report, Secret Agent Trolove, Constable Evans and Superintendent Kemp to Commissioner, 20 and 26 September 1939.

simply a Force regular running a small detachment with a staff of two. Another undercover career had come to a close.⁴⁶⁷

“O” Division RHQ’s 1930s counter-subversion operations met with mixed success. In general, the 1930s was a more difficult period for CIB personnel in trying to establish operations and acquire intelligence from the Toronto CP. First of all for years the RHQ CIB found it virtually impossible to penetrate the underground party, this was exactly what Starnes had feared might happen in the late 1920s under such circumstances. Entirely unable to develop long-term penetration agents meant that early RHQ CIB reports more often lacked the luster, the basic depth and understanding of the CP’s internal workings achieved by 1920s penetration agents. Reportage was superficial and focused primarily on issues such as crowd control at demonstrations, disruption of treks and while often effective (given the circumstances) more often it highlighted the fact that CIB personnel lacked an effective long term strategy for ‘dealing’ with communists and other revolutionaries.

In the mid-1930s slowly RHQ CIB personnel in conjunction with NHQ intelligence personnel began to make adjustments and refocus their investigations. Better guidance only began following a failure on the part of CIB personnel to realize the substantial transformation taking place in the CP during 1934. For several years operatives had joined Irvine, but their restricted access had limited the kinds of questions that could be asked. Furthermore, their temporary development more often meant that they were never able to provide a regular flow of intelligence at even the most rudimentary level. Work conducted was not steady and concentrated but rather haphazard.

⁴⁶⁷“O” Division, Nominal Rolls, August - October, 1939.

Despite the massive increase in attention paid intelligence work during late 1930s the RHQ CIB still encountered enormous difficulties. Although better positioned to access information and certainly further ahead over earlier Depression work conducted intelligence operations faced other hurdles equally as challenging. Toronto personnel often lacked the requisite skills that would make for more effective gathering such as a sound knowledge of communism, languages, or even a basic intelligence savvy. Quite often structural and bureaucratic impediments hurt 1930s operations as did the Force's parsimonious attitude and poor remuneration toward this work and its many obligations elsewhere. By the end the forced withdrawal of Corporal R.L. Trolove from undercover work was just one of the more obvious signposts that the RHQ CIB was not all it was supposed to be.

In some respects 1930s Divisions still remained technological backwaters. Symptomatic of much larger problems was an early 'PUMA' operation, namely the CIB's attempt to secure party membership cards. While gaining access was not likely to be a problem in this specific operation Black complained that as late as January 1939 there were still no facilities for making photostat copies at the Division Headquarters. Instead, his intelligence personnel would have to work within a tight schedule to try to get the cards to NHQ and then back to the Division so they could be returned before their loss were noticed.⁴⁶⁸ Other seemingly basic equipment such as radio receivers for cars was not readily available which also made intelligence work more difficult than it might otherwise have been.⁴⁶⁹ These were just a few of the problems the CIB encountered.

⁴⁶⁸CPC TO 1930s, report, Special Constable Black and Superintendent Munday to Commissioner, 30 January 1939.

⁴⁶⁹RCMP, Annual Report, 1938, 9; On technology in policing in general see Greg Marquis, Policing Canada's Century: A History of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (Toronto, 1993), 168-174.

Thus the key to understanding the 1930s is in recognizing that it was a decade of discord in terms of the Force's evolution of its key intelligence operations. Unlike the 1920s there was no neat and tidy string of agents to develop a narrative upon. Yet there was an overriding story had a certain coherence to it. Political investigations intensified in the 1930s and CIB networks were transformed going through several stages. First detective work was the basic modus operandi, then CIB personnel adopted a mixed operational strategy with a series of operatives run alongside a primary detective. This clearly was how continuity achieved in earlier periods by anchoring the CIB's work in OSINT or a serial penetration agent run inside key CP branches was realized for most 1930s investigations. Coverage was increased whenever possible on an as-per-required basis. Sometimes when the work became particularly taxing investigative duties were divided amongst the ranks. Finally by the end of the decade agents were reestablished. In general, the early 1930s saw the state rely upon its most extreme forms of overt coercion, namely courts and jail sentences. In this period intelligence services relied more upon OSINT, then passive investigations. As the 1930s progressed and liberalism (however constrained) enabled the CP to forge a larger open public space, the secret state resorted to more intrusive forms of monitoring the CP and its umbrella organizations activities.

Conclusion

This dissertation has offered the first in-depth analysis of an inter-war Canadian domestic intelligence operation in which the RCMP and its personnel are as central to the story as those individuals and organizations placed under surveillance. It goes beyond the intriguing work of Mark Leier and James Dubro and Robin Rowland whose studies are largely biographical, focused entirely on the work of a single agent, and in the case of the former preoccupied with the agent's ties to labour and mysticism and in the latter many issues outside the political policing context.¹ My study enables us to see how intelligence networks changed over time and how penetration agents, operatives and informants were only just part of the period's intelligence story. This advance, I argue, is more in keeping with those intelligence historians who suggest that penetration agents reflect only a small part of what intelligence agencies do and the kinds of operations they conduct.

I approached the period's history by adopting a methodology similar to authors such as Nigel West and Chapman Pincher and yet in doing so turned on its head their perspective passing it through a historical lens much more sympathetic to the aspirations of the Canadian Left.² I also built upon the work of Steven Hewitt, whose nicely-crafted Ph.D. dissertation clearly demonstrated that class, gender and ethnicity matter in intelligence studies and are important tools of historical analysis.³ However, in echoing his sentiment I believe that I move the debate forward (or at least shifted its focus) by

¹Leier, Rebel Life; Dubro and Rowland, Undercover; Porter, Plots and Paranoia, 8; I accept Bernard Porter's definition of a political police which can be defined as "a body of men [and women] whose duty is to keep tabs on the political opinions, activities and intentions of the subjects of a state."

²Nigel West, Mole-Hunt: The Full Story of the Soviet Spv in MI5 (London, 1987); Chapman Pincher, Their Trade Is Treachery (London, 1981); Unlike West I refuse to reduce an assessment of any service to the three functions of 'integrity', ability to conduct operations, and skill at making the best use of the product. Nigel West, Games Of Intelligence: The Classified Conflict of International Espionage (London, 1989).

³Hewitt, "Old Myths Die Hard"

choosing to consider how the RCMP's intelligence operations constantly reinvented themselves to keep their political bosses apprised of activities in the revolutionary community. My work, influenced by scholars such as Ralph Miliband and Leo Panitch, joins those individuals who view "the state" as something more than a benign force, but rather as an agency working to uphold the interests of a privileged minority.⁴ In this process of inverting West and Pincher and accepting Miliband's and Panitch's views on the state, instead of a hunt for 'moles' worthy of 'rooting out,' the story becomes one of members of the Force, who invaded progressive organizations, seeking to destabilize and destroy a progressive politics however misguided and misplaced, at times, that politics might have been.

Although NHQ set national objectives through a series of Confidential Memorandums (C.M.s) and General Orders (G.O.s) domestic intelligence operations were, in the last instance, rooted in the communities in which they functioned, and lived. We need to keep in mind that much of the daily decision making occurred at the local level, which in many respects is truly the 'front-line' for intelligence work to borrow former CIA chief Allen Dulles' military metaphor.⁵ Therefore, as this thesis has demonstrated, intelligence history is often best explored from the "bottom up."

After a brief introduction and literature survey my study began by exploring the rise of the national intelligence apparatus and it broke important ground by considering in detail the manner in which the Western Ontario "O" Division was created in the winter of 1920 and its reception in the communities it entered. Earlier studies, such as Carl Betke and Stan Horrall's (1978) internal history of the RCMP and its security and

⁴Ralph Miliband, The State in Capitalist Society: an analysis of the Western system of power (New York, 1969); Leo Panitch, [ed.] The Canadian State: political economy and political power (Toronto, 1977); Susan Watkins, "A Socialist Cassandra," New Left Review 19 (Jan/Feb 2003), 152-160 review of Michael Newman, Ralph Miliband and the Politics of the New Left (London, 2002).

⁵Dulles, The Craft of History.

intelligence service, suggested that the absorption of the DP had occurred with little difficulty. Only a few “disgruntled” personnel such as A.J. Cawdron felt slighted by the process.⁶ My exploration of the ‘rise of “O” Division suggested otherwise. A more accurate picture is only possible once we begin to study the grass-roots response within each of the Eastern Divisions. The transformation from one policing regime to another could prove just as bumpy as the arrival of a new detachment to the region. Class lines were drawn in the process but tensions also cut across them and conflict in the nationalization and absorption process came from sources previously not expected.⁷

In my study I have restored human agency to members of the police, something neglected in much labour writing which often chooses to simply dichotomize organizations into opposing camps of good and evil. Time and time again through a case study approach my work demonstrates that the fledgling inter-war Canadian intelligence service was more egalitarian than previously assumed.⁸ Within the RCMP intelligence work was often rewarded and, in fact, for many inter-war personnel intelligence experience served as a stepping stone to important portfolios and was part of the training required to make it into the Commissioned ranks.⁹

For the first time in Canadian history we get a detailed sense of the establishment

⁶Betke and Horrall, *Canada's Security Service*.

⁷The rapid entry of the Force into Eastern Canada drew the ire not only of progressives and their organizations but also other government departments and other elite groups many of whom had enjoyed the relationship that they had already established with the DP.

⁸Sawatsky, Men In The Shadows, 15-16; Miles Copeland, Without Cloak and Dagger New York, 1974); Philip Agee, Inside the Company, A CIA Diary (London, 1975); Mann and Lee, RCMP vsThe People, 137-139.

⁹Cortlandt Starnes was rewarded for his work conducted during the Winnipeg General Strike and was appointed Commissioner in 1923. S.T. Wood, Clifford Harvison, George McLellan, were only a few other notables whose careers included considerable intelligence work and who made the leap from DCI/ DSI to Commissioner before their retirement. At “O” Division numerous additional examples can be cited. Both Superintendents Newson and Jennings, were promoted for their intelligence work during the Winnipeg General Strike. Mercer, Fish, Darling, Reames and Mathewson also benefitted because of this work.

of a RHQ in 1920, its organization and evolution, and specifically an appreciation for the formation of an RHQ CIB. All previous published studies are weak on this process and the early period more generally.¹⁰ In addition, we learn a great deal about fledgling Division personnel and specifically members of the CIB, their backgrounds, their strengths and weaknesses in the kinds of work they conducted, and their contributions to these early operations.¹¹ In mapping out the contours of the Division and the way in which it evolved, we also learn something about the presence of stenographers, chauffeurs, clerks, readers, officers in charge, translators, and other personnel instrumental to the intelligence supply chain.

In the immediate aftermath of nationalization, spying in Southern Ontario was socialized and brought increasingly under the control of the RCMP. Spying had become too important to be left in the hands of private firms. Consequently, the material contribution private firms made to the total volume of intelligence obtained in successive years declined in the early 1920s. At "O" Division RHQ in core CP files it stood as high as 70-80 percent in 1920, but by 1923 had dropped to a maximum of 5-10 percent of the total in the core Toronto file. In the changeover that took place my discussion of the running of the early CIB explained how a triumvirate of sorts emerged as the dominant form of intelligence gathering. DOCs and Officers in Charge of the CIB served in a liaison capacity with informants, operatives and secret/penetration agents gathering intelligence, writing up detailed reports which became increasingly standardized before forwarding the material to NHQ for further indexing and filing and

¹⁰Sawatsky, Men in the Shadows; Mount, Canada's Enemies; Hewitt, Spying 101; R.C. Macleod, The North-West Mounted Police and Law Enforcement 1873-1905 (Toronto, 1976). There is a great need to bring similar detailed attention to the study of the RCMP, albeit from a much more critical vantage-point, that R.C. Macleod showed when studying the Force's early history in Western Canada.

¹¹This builds upon the work done by Gregory S. Kealey at the national level. See Kealey, "Spymasters, Spies and Subjects".

additional action. The Division as a whole, like the intelligence networks that were constructed, adapted to economic and social circumstances.

The Force's post-war "power grab", its expansion nationally as a political police, paralleled changes elsewhere. The RCMP's emergence as the federal government's most coercive instrument and as a replacement for the militia, was part of a much larger tapestry that included: a narrowing industrial legal regime, a new labour discipline imposed on progressives by conservative unions who increasingly dominated the labour side in the ongoing struggles between capital and labour, corporate mergers, mass production industries, company welfare strategies, a homogenized and mass marketed working class culture, and burgeoning government bureaucracies who played an expanded role in all facets of social life.¹² The "Cold War" had its origins in the 1917-1920 period and not in the 1940s as a vast historiography still seeks to suggest in claiming that it was the outcome of a series of events between the great powers which led to both positive and negative assessments of the five decades that followed.¹³ It is obvious that for the RCMP and their political bosses the Cold War commenced in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution.¹⁴

¹²Paul Craven, 'An Impartial Umpire': Industrial Relations and the Canadian State 1900-1911 (Toronto, 1980); Leo Panitch and Donald Swartz, The Assault On Trade Union Freedoms (Toronto, 1988); Fudge and Tucker, Labour Before The Law; Doug Owsram, The Government Generation: Canadian intellectuals and the state 1900 - 1945 (Toronto, 1986); Struthers, No Fault of their Own; Palmer, Working-Class Experience.

¹³A few of the more well known include: John Lewis Gaddis, The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941-1947 (New York, 1972); William Appleman Williams, The Tragedy of American Diplomacy (New York, 1972); Fraser J. Harbutt, The Iron Curtain: Churchill, America, and the Origins of the Cold War (New York, 1986); Denis Smith, Diplomacy of Fear: Canada and the Cold War 1941-1947 (Toronto, 1988); for a historiographical survey of the domestic focus origins in the US writings see, John Earl Haynes, "The Cold War Debate Continues: A Traditionalist View of Historical Writing on Domestic Communism and Anti-Communism," Journal of Cold War Studies, 2,1 (Winter 2000), 76-115.

¹⁴Kealey, "The Surveillance State"; and Kealey, "State Repression"; Horrall, "The Royal North-West Mounted Police"; Horrall, "Canada's Security Service"; Betke and Horrall, *Canada's Security Service*.

My third chapter explored a series of intelligence “operations” during the first wave of RHQ CIB activity which broadly speaking went from 1920-28. It reconsidered in light of Ian Angus’ and William Rodney’s studies the level of infiltration by operatives in the progressive movement in Toronto and eventually the fledgling WPC/CP as it emerged as the main voice on the Left in the city in this period.¹⁵ The period’s first of three RHQ CIB penetration agents was Constable Henry (aka Harry) Catt. I detailed his Force career from 1921 until his departure from the CP in late 1922/ early 1923 and his eventual discharge from the Force in 1925. I then examined the secret career of James Thomas Goudie from the time of his RCMP recruitment by former Force Comptroller Lawrence Fortesque in England in 1920 through his arrival at “O” Division RHQ in early 1924 and withdrawal from undercover work by early 1927. Johan (John) Leopold’s (aka J. W. Esselwein’s) more familiar story and his brief undercover career in Toronto was studied next. In general, through examining local operations in my study, I showed a great deal more about how agents entered the party, who they befriended, and what kind of information they were able to secure. This contributes to the field of social history by providing a partial reconsideration of key events in Canada’s past such as a more complete understanding of the founding meeting of the CPC and A.E. Smith’s radicalization and ascendancy to the presidency of the CLP.

The uncovering of Leopold in May of 1928 ended one period in the Division’s operations. How Leopold had fit into “O” Division’s 1920s operations has not been previously examined. Nor does the historiography offer an assessment of the consequences his uncovering had on intelligence operations. Only by studying the interplay between those who organized and run the CIB intelligence operations, their agents and informants and other operatives do we get a sense of what happened at the local level. Agents did not operate in a vacuum, but as part of a larger plan. When

¹⁵ Angus, Canadian Bolsheviks; Rodney, Soldiers of the International.

something went wrong, if they were exposed, then there were serious repercussions for the network as a whole. If the 1930s emerged as the heyday of penetration agents in the international cold war geopolitics with the presence of the Cambridge ring, then what emerged from my story is the sense that the 1920s was largely the period in which the Toronto RCMP was often most effective at getting their key penetration agents, run serially, inside local CP branches and on national committees.

Chapter four considered what happened in Toronto at “O” Division once news of Leopold’s uncovering became public.¹⁶ By studying hundreds of intelligence materials deposited on the core Toronto file and by turning to PHFs on subjects placed under surveillance it became clear that after Leopold’s exposure a new period emerged in Toronto activities. It was a period that lasted up until the end of 1931. The major change that took place in the 1928-31 period, with the loss of penetration agents as the basis for operations, was an increased reliance upon Open Source Intelligence (OSINT). The major kind of OSINT deposited on the core file and in the Toronto segment of PHFs suddenly became newspaper clippings. This shift in focus coincided with the appointment of Toronto city police Chief Draper, who quickly moved to establish a red squad modeled on similar bodies found in US cities. Nicely captured in the work of Michael Horn and Lita-Rose Betcherman, until now the “Free Speech” battles on the streets of Toronto has not received any treatment from an intelligence perspective.¹⁶ In my study not only was Canada being kept “Canadian” by the RCMP, but the security and intelligence apparatus was also being kept alive in Toronto by the publicity the “Free Speech” debate earned in the bourgeois press, and through this transformation to OSINT was preparing itself on an operational level for Depression-era challenges.

In this context, personnel changes in the Division are discussed. So too were

¹⁶Horn, “Free Speech within the Law”; Horn, “Keeping Canada ‘Canadian’”; Betcherman, The Little Band.

problems of obtaining accurate and timely information and the strengths and weaknesses of being able to expand the network by relying on others to support the local CIB in the gathering of information. However, whether the Division's intelligence operational change with Leopold's exposure was symbolic of a larger national debate over intelligence practices is a question this study raises and yet cannot answer until much more work is undertaken. Had the 'moralism' of those who believed that spying was something distasteful and largely outside the proper sphere of policing in the English realm briefly triumphed in the aftermath of 1928? It certainly appears so at "O" Division. But the experience elsewhere at centres right across the country from Vancouver to Halifax still needs to be examined to confirm this hypothesis.

There was a pseudo-scientific quality to gathering intelligence through more 'passive' means such as OSINT. To a certain extent this process could be improved upon just like report writing. Passages that identified the ethnicity of crowds, their size and evidence that either supported the notion that there was increased militancy or that support for a particular organization or movement was waning were underlined. By the end of the 1920s something of a new intelligence operational story was beginning to unfold. The graph below nicely captures the essence of the main contour of "O" Division's shifting operations in its core inter-war Toronto file. The substantial peak in OSINT reflected a marked change in the way the core network functioned.

"O" Division Core Toronto CP Material Volume, 1921-39

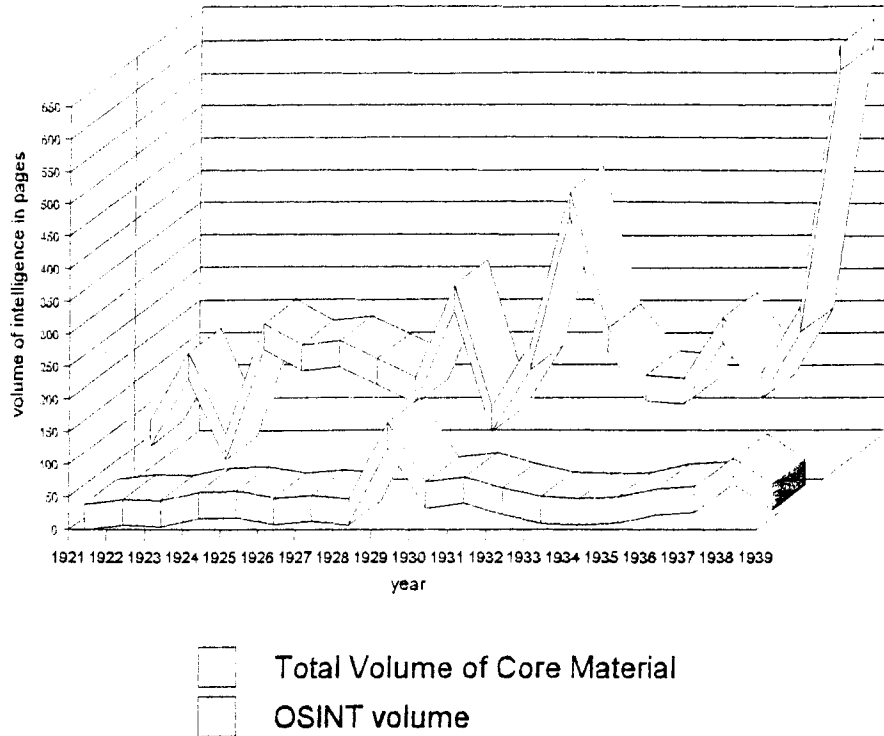


Figure 1

Leopold's uncovering, the Depression, and eventually the mobilization of the unemployed through the WUL and organizations such as the NUWA induced fear among Ottawa officials and especially the newly-elected Bennett administration. As pressures being applied on the Force to curb protest increased, tensions escalated over intelligence practices between NHQ and Toronto "O" Division personnel during the winter of 1930-31. Commissioner Starnes' confidence in Superintendent Jennings' and his CIB staff's abilities was eroding quickly. Jennings felt that the crisis was simply that the Division had been unable to secure much useful intelligence without a penetration agent. Leopold's legacy, simply put, was this failure. His uncovering and the turn to OSINT had

set the basis for the Division's intelligence operational framework for its participation in the 1931 round-up and arrests of the CPC leadership. This is a dimension missing entirely from the interpretations of these events in the treatment by earlier scholars.¹⁷ Starnes was not 'dreamily' thinking about retirement in the heady winter months of 1931, as Betcherman claimed, but instead was looking to escape Ottawa for a Western tour at the earliest possible movement. However, the planning prior to the raids, the lengthy winter/spring session in the House of Commons and pressures by Bennett were preventing this departure. "O" Division personnel made a significant contribution to the court trials that followed something also largely overlooked by other writers. Only by knowing the contributions Fish and other personnel made to 1920s operations can a more complete assessment of their involvement in events such as the trials be achieved.¹⁸

Thus the success and failure of the Canadian State's use of its most coercive instrument in the 1931 arrests and the lessons learned in the years following Leopold's uncovering along with the Force's plans to expand its policing organization in the spring of 1932, resulted in a series of changes to "O" Division. Ultimately, the CPC's entry into a new period of illegality and consequent return to operating underground forced a reconsideration of existing intelligence practices. The limits of OSINT became known during the arrests and by the end of 1931 enough distance had been put between Leopold's debacle to begin considering a return to more obtrusive forms of intelligence gathering. It was in this context that 1930s operations at "O" Division emerged and that the Division reconstituted the intelligence work that it undertook.

In 1930s "O" Division RHQ CIB operations more emphasis was placed on the use of detectives sent out to cover meetings. Less emphasis was directed toward a reliance

¹⁷Betcherman, The Little Band; Adams "The 1931 Arrest and Trial"; Adams, "The Anti-Communist Role".

¹⁸Smith, All My Life; Ewen, The Forge Glows Red.

on newspaper clippings. Periodically, informants were pulled into the loop to provide intelligence and there was the occasional flirtation with the development of penetration agents. For much of this period the Toronto CIB relied on the work of Detective Irvine and for many years a mixed operational strategy. Irvine functioned as a surrogate for penetration agents during the tremendous rise in unemployment and even later on in the Depression. His career on the one hand highlighted the benefits of having at least one individual who provided consistency to the operational work being conducted especially as the challenges "O" Division personnel faced shifted dramatically. On the other he represented the limits of an operation without a penetration agent.

As the Depression worsened in the winter of 1932-33 and the CPC capitalized on its early turn to "popular-front" strategies by working within broad umbrella organizations, first at the local and then eventually national level, the RCMP responded, in part, by making changes to its organization at the RHQ level. Former Division intelligence personnel went to Ottawa to assume even more important intelligence posts. Herbert Darling became the Assistant to the DCI. Superintendents Newson, Jennings and King eventually served as DCIs. By the 1930s Toronto increasingly became the ideal training ground for intelligence personnel since it was the national centre of the communist movement.

Not everything was entirely satisfactory in the running of the Division nor the intelligence work that its RHQ CIB conducted in the mid 1930s. Some senior personnel were more interested in intelligence work and were better at it than others. In the 1932-34 period the inability of the Division to place long-term penetration agents within the CP meant that both it and NHQ, despite Irvine's efforts, functioned for much of the worst years of the Depression without the kind of, nor quality of, intelligence they had grown accustomed to in the 1920s. Nowhere was this clearer than in their coverage of the emergence of anti-fascist popular front movements in the summer and fall of 1934.

For much of 1934 neither NHQ nor many Division personnel had paid attention to the rise of these anti-fascist organizations. Student youth congresses in the summer, for instance, had gone largely ignored, and events elsewhere were poorly covered. By the time of the CLAWF's First National Convention in the fall of that year NHQ and Division personnel split once again over the need to cover the movement in a much more thorough manner. Division personnel, failing to see the importance of the mass mobilization of the popular front, through broad-based anti-fascist coalitions which tried to sink their roots into the middle class broadening their influence across Canada, were 'lectured' on the need to make these organizations a priority.

Henceforth a reorientation took place and we have the beginning of the opening up of a number of 1930s investigative fronts on the part of Toronto CIB intelligence personnel. The closest that anyone comes to my work in detailing aspects of these operations is Martin Lobigs' fine treatment of the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion and the various phases of its struggle against the State and the RCMP, and in a few papers notably Paul Axelrod's study of student protest.¹⁹

In my analysis of the Depression campaign, my chapter five title "Reconfiguration, Reorientation and Redeployment" nicely encapsulates the changes underway within the Division in the 1930s. Issues such as the strength of various progressive organizations, the debates that captured their attention and their method of protest significantly influenced how intelligence personnel at Toronto "O" Division responded. But many, many, other issues also affected investigations such as seasonal nature of work, obligations elsewhere, and for the Force: pay and working conditions, transfers, periods of sickness and leave and so on and so forth. Although security networks could be expanded to tackle issues such as regional marches or those on Ottawa, they operated under many constraints. The CP was able to elude the Force on numerous occasions, for

¹⁹Lobigs, "Canadian Responses"; Axelrod, "Spying on the Young"

instance, by taking the movement underground, screening candidates for membership and in the treks by publishing the location of RCMP checkpoints in the working class press.

In the 1930s the Division's Toronto intelligence network has become much more closely linked to the national framework which reflected a maturation of NHQ CIB and also the ties forged with the Division. The 1931 Arrests, the rise of a national and international anti-fascist movement and the shift away from agents all culminated in the 1937-38 wintertime plan to strike again at the heart of this movement. Leopold reemerged, but at the last minute a strike against the CP was called off by the Liberal administration. By the winter of 1937-38 once again it became increasingly clear to NHQ and Division personnel that the latter was not getting the quality of information that was needed. Especially with a massive anti-fascist campaign and strike wave on the home front and as the evidence mounted overseas that Canada might likely be headed for another conflict. Once again the Division RHQ intelligence networks would adapt.

The steps "O" Division RHQ personnel took to transform its intelligence operations during 1938-39 completed this narrative. My final chapter explained many of the changes taking place within the Division linking the late 1930s to the earlier phases in the Division's intelligence history. My study identified the transfer of new personnel into the Division and the decision to resurrect old tried and true methods. After months of rejigging the Division personnel rosters and sorting out what intelligence was missing and after a failed bid to install an agent NHQ and Division personnel moved to install another agent by transferring Corporal Robert L. Trolove (aka Benson) into the Division. Before long his entry into the CP was completed and further insurance was provided by the placement of two additional operatives in Ward Branches in the city. For reasons that are not known, Trolove was withdrawn as the 'hour' darkened and Canadians headed overseas to participate in a new war.

Wartime marked a massive change in social conditions in Canada and the context in which the political police operated. Civil liberties were eroded and the CP was outlawed and again moved underground. 1939 marked a significant cleavage in the domestic story. In the fall of 1939 "O" Division underwent a massive transformation. In October, following NHQ's earlier lead, the Division's CIB separated its intelligence section from other investigative duties.²⁰ The creation of a new intelligence section was a significant development in the history of the Division and specifically its political policing operations. Its arrival meant that the importance of intelligence duties had finally filtrated down to the Division RHQ level and was being further embedded by Commissioner Wood within the RCMP bureaucratic structure. Such a move served as an internal vote of confidence for intelligence duties even if ministerial approval for the elevation of intelligence duties to a separate branch status was only to follow later.

In late 1939 "O" Division's intelligence branch staff subsequently increased to more than twenty making it the largest intelligence section outside of NHQ and it remained so for the duration of the War.²¹ In addition, "O" Division expanded its civil service staff which went from six to 60 and hired additional translators, 120 Reserves, and 225 veterans. The translators were reclassified and they joined the security branch as did most of the Reserves who formed the "anti-subversive squads" which "roamed the province," while the veterans guarded strategic works. The result was that "O" Division's total strength soared from a peacetime figure of less than 80 to more than 350 personnel making the increase the largest in the Division's history and an appropriate

²⁰Rivett-Carnac, Pursuit in the Wilderness, 294; Betke and Horrall, *Canada's Security Service*, 510-513, 612.

²¹"O" Division, Nominal Rolls, October 1939; Betke and Horrall, *Canada's Security Service*, 511 - 513; In early 1939 the entire intelligence section at NHQ consisted of five personnel: Rivett-Carnac, one Staff Sergeant, one Lance Corporal and two Stenographers. In 1940 it grew to 19 plus civilian support and by early 1941 it consisted of 82 personnel. After "O" Division RHQ was Montreal "C" Division with a staff of about 16.

ending point for this study of domestic intelligence operations at the local level.²²

In my examination of Canada's domestic intelligence past, my study has demonstrated how information and patterns within file sets can become a key to unlocking many of the period's puzzles. There is a significant difference of analytical approach in my study from others in the field. There is a great gulf between my work and the conservatives and liberal institutionalists on the one hand and social historians in the field on the other. With the former my story is largely at right angles because the central protagonists are less than noble and the subjects of their surveillance have been elevated in stature. With the latter we differ over the question of "agency," that of balancing different stories and storylines, and deciding where the 'true' deficiency in the field lays. In trying to recover the voices of the working-class and the subjects under surveillance we need to know a great deal more about the institutions and those targeting them. Painting all members of the police force with the same political brush creates a rather static and uni-dimensional understanding of the motivations and ideas that all people have about class and society. Through the new story that emerges within these pages we begin to see how an intelligence network was organized and how it transformed itself during three significant periods of operation: 1) the 1920-1928 period or the early years with agents as the *modus operandi*; 2) 1928-31 a heavy reliance on OSINT and; 3) 1932-39 a period of rebuilding, reorientation and finally a return to earlier practices bringing my study full circle. "O" Division RHQ CIB personnel had a mix of both success and failure in the intelligence operations they conducted during the inter-war period. However, with a political police organized nationally and functioning in the interests of the privileged elite in a systematic and sustained manner, labour capital relations in

²²Kemp, *Without fear, favour, or affection*, 201-202, 229-230; S.W. Horrall, "R.C.M.P. Translation Services," *RCMP Quarterly*, 54,1 (Winter 1987), 18, notes that "O" Division's translation service was headed by Black and had a staff of nine under him which included: A. Calzone, M. Ellis, G. Hausman, A. Moroz, M. Secombe-Hett, E. Weiser, B.M. Ylinen, E.W. Elfvengren, and M.E. Szekely.

Canadian society shifted enormously after 1920.

Appendix "A"

"O" Division Inter-war
Commanding Officers/ Acting OCs

<u>Name</u>	<u>Years</u>
Walter James Beyts	1920
Arthur W. Duffus	1920-1922
Henry Montgomery Newson	1922-1928
George Leslie Jennings	1928-1932
Charles Deering LaNauze (Acting OC)	1929
Charles Herbert King	1932-1934
Charles Deering LaNauze	1934-1935
Albert E.G.O. Reames	1935-1937
Robert E. Mercer	1937-1938
Walter Munday	1938-1939
Vernon A.M. Kemp	1939-1943

Table 1.
Source: "O" Division, Nominal Rolls

Appendix "B"

"O" Division Inter-war
Officers In Charge of CIB/ IS

<u>Name</u>	<u>Years</u>
George W. Fish	1920-1921
Hebert Darling	1921-1931
George W. Fish	1931
Albert E.G.O. Reames	1932-1936 (as of 1935 also OC)
Hugh Patrick Mathewson	1932-1938 (i/c Western Ontario District and senior Toronto detective)
Robert E. Mercer	1936-1937 (as of January 1937 also temporary OC)
Charles Batch	1937 -194?

Table 2.
Source: "O" Division, Nominal Rolls.

NOTE ON SOURCES

The major portion of this study consisted of security and intelligence files released under provisions and guidelines in the ATI Act. They are held at the National Archives of Canada and contained in NAC Record Group 146 – the holdings of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS). Many files were consulted at both the CSIS reading room and at the Gregory S. Kealey private archives in Fredericton, New Brunswick. In addition, James Naylor provided me with access to several RG 146 file sets from his collection.

1 - Gregory S. Kealey Archives and NAC RG 146 Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) Records, key files viewed at both locations:

i) Core 1920-1939 files on CPC branches for:

Vancouver
Edmonton
Calgary
Winnipeg
Toronto
Montreal
Halifax

ii) PHF's

Ahlquist, J.W.
Bell, Tom
Bethune, Norman
Bryson, James
Buck, Tim
Buhay, Rebecca
Buhay, Mike
Corbin, Jeanne
Custance, Florence
Lakeman, Jan
MacDonald, Jack
Maguire, Trevor
McEwen (Ewen), Tom
Moriarty, William
Morris, Leslie
Penner, Jacob

Popowich, Matthew
Smith, A.E.
Smith, Stewart
Spector, Maurice

2- Holdings only consulted at the Gregory S. Kealey Archives , St. John's, Newfoundland

-Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Subject: Royal Canadian Mounted Police" (cited as FBI 1930s RCMP file)

NAC RG 146 Organizational/ Operational files:

The Canadian League for Peace and Democracy (CLPD)
The Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy (CASD)
The Friends of the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion (FMPB)
Recruiting for the Spanish Army (RSA)

RCMP "O" Division Nominal Rolls
RCMP General Orders

3 - James Naylor Private Collection (drawn from NAC RG 146)

CLWF First Convention 1934
Youth Congress Against War and Fascism 1934
Canadian League Against War and Fascism 1935

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Archival Collections

a. National Archives of Canada, Ottawa.

MG28 IV 4. Communist Party of Canada Papers
MG 30 A 94. J.L. Cohen Papers
MG 30 E173. Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion Collection
MG 32 G3. Tim Buck Papers

RG 7 Governor Generals Records
RG 18 Records of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police
RG 146 Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) Records

b. Other Archives Holdings

Communist Party of Canada, Toronto Office Collection
Fisher Library, University of Toronto, Robert Kenny Collection
Kealey, Gregory S., Archives, Fredericton, New Brunswick
Provincial Archives of Ontario, RG 4-32, Attorney General's records
United Church Archives, Victoria College, A.E. Smith Papers

Contemporary Press

a) Communist Press:

Daily Clarion
The Masses
Party Organizer
The Unemployed Worker
The Worker

b) Newspapers:

The Canadian Forward
Cotton's Weekly
Industrial Banner
The Labor News (Hamilton)

One Big Union Bulletin
Toronto Globe
Toronto Mail & Empire
Toronto Daily Star
Western Labour News

c) Other Contemporary Periodicals

Canada Yearbook
Canadian Forum
McLean's Magazine
RCMP Gazette
RCMP Quarterly

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Himmelfarb, Lil (nee Ilomaki), interview with author, December 1995; Notes in interviewer's possession.

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