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THE WESTERN CANADIAN LABOUR MOVEMENT, 1897-1919

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The objective of this essay is to establish and clarify the dimensions, the character, and the significance of the remarkable labour movement that developed in western Canada in the closing decades of the nineteenth century and flourished during the great boom of the early twentieth. Within this general purpose are some particular ones: to demonstrate the rapidity of the numerical growth of unionism in the West, to suggest some reasons for it, and to show why western unionists were far more radical and militant than eastern ones.

It is a capital fact, if an obvious one, that the labour movements of western Canada and the western United States had marked similarities and interrelationships in this period. Both displayed a radicalism, a preference for industrial unionism, and a political consciousness that differentiated them sharply from their respective Easts. It seems apparent that the labour forces of the two Wests were shaped by similar western forces that need to be identified — the more so because hostile eastern craft unionists and their scholarly apologists have tended to misunderstand these forces.

However, it is no less important to remark (and this, too, has been sometimes confused) that the labour movement of western Canada was no simple offshoot or branch-plant of unionism in the western United States. In fact, the Canadian movement was clearly differentiated from its American counterpart in various ways, particularly by its (relatively) greater size, cohesion, power, and political effectiveness. Appreciation of these differences is essential to an understanding of the evolution of Canada's industrial relations in the first two decades of the twentieth century and, particularly, of the appeal of the One Big Union and the power of the 1919 general strikes.

The Precocious Rise of Western Unionism

Neither the fur trade empire that persisted until 1869 nor the placer mining boom that stimulated British Columbia after 1856 provided a basis for a modern economy in western Canada. Even after the Canadian Pacific Railway

was completed in 1885, the West for some time remained sparsely inhabited and little developed. It is true that, encouraged by railroad building and the brief boom of the 1880's, an agricultural settlement of some significance had been established in Manitoba, but it was only as agricultural prices rose after 1897 that a vigorous "wheat economy" came into being and a conclusive settlement of the Prairies took place. Only in the same period, likewise, for the same reasons, did western logging and mining expand rapidly. These extractive and agricultural activities, along with railroads, introduced a range of large-scale capitalistic activity into the West. However, it was not then usually contemplated — indeed, it is still not contemplated by a good many — that the West should develop a significant manufacturing sector and aspire to the status of a rounded industrial economy. Rather, the region was conceived as a petty bourgeois haven of farmers, fishermen, and placer miners among whom, it may be suspected, unions were expected to occupy a minor place.

The fact is, nevertheless, that unionism flourished in the Canadian West from the 1880's, as the accompanying tables are intended to show. For the nineteenth century only sketchy information is available; but Table I can leave little doubt that by 1891 (at least) union membership constituted a much higher proportion of population in British Columbia than in Canada generally.[1] Table I also indicates that the Prairies, although much less unionized than British Columbia, already in 1891 had about the same proportion of union members in its population as Canada as a whole. The situation remained much the same in 1901 and 1911: with the Prairies holding their own and British Columbia keeping far ahead, the West continued to be decidedly more unionized than the East. Tables II and III show more precisely that the West, although it contained only 11% of Canada's population in 1901 and 24% in 1911, accounted for a much larger share of the growth of unions. Hence, the less-populated West disposed of one-third of Canada's union locals after 1910. The statistics of reported union memberships (Table IV) indicate that the western unions have an even larger share in the years 1911-1914.

On the other hand, the growth of the West's share of population clearly exceeded its share of the growth of unions after 1901, and its position deteriorated further after 1911. The slump and unemployment of 1913-1915 appear to have weakened western unions more than eastern ones. At any rate, it is clear that war employment, while it gave some relief after 1916 to the West, supported a much greater growth of employment and union memberships in the East. The fact is that a great shift occurred at this time in the relative weights of eastern and western unionism as the East (only) experienced a massive expansion in the number and membership of its union locals in the years 1918 and 1919. It was a shift from which the West never recovered and, as we shall notice later, it bore significantly on the conflicting objectives of radical

western and conservative eastern unionists in 1918-1919.

This bare recital of numbers can be rounded out by some consideration of constituencies in the population on which western unionism could actually draw, and of the industrial distribution of unionists.

It is arguable that western unionism *should* have flourished exceptionally between 1880 and 1914 because an exceptional proportion of western population consisted of male adults of working age. In British Columbia, moreover, limited opportunities for agriculture propelled an exceptional share of the labour force into wage-employments in which unions might sooner or later arise.

As against this, Phillips has pointed out that in 1891 nearly half the population of British Columbia (45,000 out of 98,000) were either Indians, or Chinese, at this time less likely than others to attempt unionization.[2] Although British Columbia had a relatively small farm population and relatively large "nonfarm" rural population, it was no more urbanized than Ontario and Quebec;[3] did it, then, really have a stronger basis for forming unions? As for the Prairies, over half its people were still a farm population in 1921 (compared with a Canadian average of 35%) and only 28% were classified as urban.[4] That is, the wage-earning sector of the Prairie population, presumably the part to which unions had to look for support, was distinctly smaller than average. It seems likely, then, that in the Prairies, as in British Columbia, the propulsion to unionism provided by a high proportion of male adults was more than offset by other factors; hence, the propensity to unionize really *was* higher in the West.

Might this propensity reflect the industrial distribution of western employment? Especially in the early days, a major share of western unions consisted of the inevitable locals of railroad workers and building tradesmen, but this was also true in the East. Unions of workers employed in manufacturing were not very numerous in the West, but, they were not very numerous in the East either, where employees of manufacturing firms were often unorganized. Actually, metal working establishments (and their unions) developed fairly rapidly in the West, promoted there (as in the East) especially by railroad needs. In sum, the industrial distribution of unions in the West was not strikingly different from that of the East, except in the incidence of unions of miners and fishermen — and this does not appear by itself to provide a sufficient explanation for the vigor of western unionism. To find what was significantly different about the West, it seems necessary to look in other directions, such as the scale and capitalist acquisitiveness of employing firms, still uncommon in the East, and a ubiquity of company towns — railroad towns and mining towns — never approached in the East.

TABLE I: COMPARATIVE DISTRIBUTION, POPULATION AND UNION LOCALS, WESTERN CANADA AND ALL CANADA, 1891-1921

Date		Canada	Prairies		British Columbia		Western Canada	
			Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1891	Population	4,833,239	251,473	5.2	98,173	2.0	349,646	7.2
	Union locals formed before 1891*	192 locals	10 locals	5.0	20 locals	10.1	30 locals	15.1
1901	Population	5,371,315	419,512	7.8	178,657	3.3	598,169	11.1
	Union locals formed before 1901*	582 locals	34 locals	5.8	96 locals	16.5	130 locals	22.3
1911	Population	7,206,643	1,328,121	18.5	392,480	5.5	1,720,601	23.9
	Union locals reported at May, 1911	1750 locals	311 locals	17.8	255 locals	12.9	536 locals	30.6
1921	Population	8,787,949	1,956,082	22.3	524,582	6.0	2,480,664	28.2
	Union locals at end 1920	2714 locals	513 locals	18.9	232 locals	8.5#	745 locals	27.4

* Shows the number of union locals formed before 1891 and 1901, respectively, of which the existence and date of formation was reported by locals that existed and replied to a *Labour Gazette* survey in July, 1902.

\# The sharp decline in British Columbia's share of Union locals dated mostly from 1919. It reflected some drop in western local unions but was brought about primarily by a sharp increase in 1918 and 1919 or locals in eastern Canada.

All percentages shown are percentages of the total for Canada.

TABLE II: GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF UNION LOCALS IN CANADA, 1902-1921

	1902 Logan	July 1903 L.G.	End 1903	End 1904	End 1905	End 1906	June 1907 L.G.	End 1907	End 1908	End 1909	End 1910	End 1911
Maritimes	138	163	130	134	140	133	199	148	182	198	207	213
Quebec	151	202	172	195	195	213	256	253	265	271	265	256
Ontario	547	853	590	587	570	583	752	644	654	669	648	680
Prairies	81	122	115	133	150	186	204	217	247	261	298	341
B.C.	161	216	148	150	146	154	175	170	191	199	207	227
TOTALS	1078	1556	1155	1199	1196	1274	1586	1432	1539	1618	1625	1717
% of total represented by four Western Provinces	22.5	21.7	22.8	23.6	24.7	26.7	24.0	27.0	28.5	29.7	31.1	33.1

	June 1912 L.G.	1912 Logan	End 1912	End 1913	End 1914	End 1915	End 1916	End 1917	End 1918	End 1919	End 1920	End 1921
Maritimes	218	228	221	219	229	204	188	205	225	289	318	286
Quebec	205	245	264	287	301	302	306	309	366	428	437	372
Ontario	700	756	743	807	805	757	753	803	926	1201	1215	1095
Prairies	355	404	399	437	427	400	393	430	492	511	513	507
B.C.	234	249	248	259	235	216	202	221	252	234	232	227
TOTALS	1712	1882	1875	2017	2003	1883	1842	1974	2274	2663	2714	2487
% of total represented by four Western Provinces	34.4	34.7	34.5	34.6	33.2	34.6	32.3	33.1	34.2	28.0	27.4	29.5

Sources: *Labour Gazette* various issues; Department of Labour, Report on Labour Organization in Canada, various issues; H.A. Logan, *The History of Trade-Union Organization in Canada,* Chicago: 1928, p. 124.

Editor's Note: Table II as in the original of Prof. Pentland's manuscript. Any apparent discrepancies of column tabulations are probably due to double-reporting by Union Locals.

TABLE III
ABSOLUTE GAIN IN LOCAL UNIONS

	Four Western Provinces	Eastern Canada
1904	20	24
1905	13	-11
1906	44	29
1907	47	111
1908	51	56
1909	42	39
1910	25	-20
1911	63	29
1912	79	79
1913	49	85
1914	-34	22
1915	-46	-72
1916	-21	-16
1917	56	70
1918	93	200
1919	1	401
1920	12	68
1921	-11	-216
1922	-6	-100
1923	-3	-21
1924	2	-57
1925	42	11

TABLE IV: GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF REPORTED UNION MEMBERSHIPS IN CANADA, 1911-1926
Members — Union memberships as reported by local unions
Locals — Numbers of locals reporting their memberships, compared with total active locals as determined by Labour Dept.

		1911	1912	1913	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918	1919	1920	1921	1926
MARITIMES	Members	11,713	12,182	9,597	9,342	9,409	13,491	13,139	26,278	32,883	29,132	17,811	20,866
	Locals	118/226	111/228	124/219	97/229	113/204	118/188	105/205	167/225	206/289	204/319	151/288	177/249
QUEBEC	Members	13,868	23,442	25,427	14,959	17,059	26,907	28,005	48,570	61,097	58,947	44,057	52,690
	Locals	125/228	133/245	151/287	116/301	99/302	190/306	171/309	201/336	277/428	266/442	223/377	319/459
ONTARIO	Members	34,530	41,371	45,261	38,235	34,856	41,654	52,478	62,605	87,105	89,954	66,771	59,539
	Locals	419/702	427/756	470/807	396/805	427/757	524/753	550/803	670/926	821/1201	812/1221	735/1099	740/992
PRAIRIES	Members	19,974	25,806	27,005	22,906	18,912	22,232	27,184	35,659	32,724	33,439	30,786	34,789
	Locals	233/353	236/404	262/437	249/427	239/400	270/393	321/430	373/492	346/511	361/522	344/514	432/566
BRITISH	Members	22,599	18,936	21,363	13,117	10,757	11,600	21,201	27,216	21,006	18,583	16,899	21,117
COLUMBIA	Locals	162/231	144/249	157/259	122/235	120/216	143/202	165/221	182/252	156/234	170/240	159/236	192/249
CANADA 9	Members	102,684	121,737	128,652	98,559	90,993	115,884	142,007	200,328	234,815	230,055	176,324	189,001
(PROVS)	Locals	1057/1740	1051/1883	1164/2009	980/1997	988/1879	1245/1842	1313/1968	1593/2261	1806/2663	1813/2744	1612/2514	1860/2515
FOUR	% Reported												
WESTERN	Members	41.6	36.8	37.6	36.6	32.3	29.2	34.1	31.4	22.9	22.6	27.0	29.6
PROVS.	% Known Locals	33.1	34.7	34.6	33.2	34.6	32.3	33.1	34.2	28.0	27.4	29.5	32.4
Members per reporting western local (East in Brackets)		90(108)	118(115)	115(108)	97(103)	83(96)	82(99)	99(113)	113(132)	107(139)	98(139)	95(116)	90(108)

Western Radicalism and Militancy

This brings us to the qualitative differences of western from eastern Canadian unionism. Far more than the East, the West was a great nursery of self-taught but keen and eloquent labour philosophers. These were complemented by union memberships responsive both to appeals to their reason as the ills of society were analyzed, and appeals to their feelings and imaginations as the better society of the future was projected. The observation and analysis of this labour movement led to an almost universal conviction that unions should be reconstructed on the more "scientific" (*i.e.* effective) basis of industrial unionism. This view was anathema, of course, to the American Federation of Labor craft unionists who controlled Canada's Trades and Labour Congress from 1902 onwards; but for a long time these were regarded by the westerners as backward men to be educated rather than as enemies to be fought. Western experience and cogitation also produced a widespread belief that labour should supplement its economic action by political support of labour and socialist candidates — another opinion opposed by most AFL unionists. This was so even though the political activity of western labour was typically of a pragmatic, pro-union type, for Samuel Gompers had become a fierce enemy of any kind of independent political action by labour.[5] Moreover, western experience did foster a significant spread of syndicalist ideas: that legislatures were tools and snares of capitalism; that only an overthrow of capitalism would produce any permanent improvement in the lot of workers; that direct action was the best and indispensable tactic; and that collective agreements for any fixed term should therefore be avoided. Those who held these views systematically were only a fringe of the western labour movement, less numerous and influential than their counterparts in the western United States. Yet the spread of syndicalist sentiments, by rhetoric and by frustrating experiences, gave western unionism a radical appearance that distinguished it sharply from the cautious eastern variety.

The predominant industrial relations system of eastern Canada derived from the commercial capitalist economy of the eighteenth century and the small-scale industrial enterprises that developed in the second half of the nineteenth. The orientation of this system was frequently paternal, and it was both morally correct and good business for an employer to display a consideration for employees which he would have resisted yielding by contract. Room had been carved out in the system for collective bargaining with units of well-behaved craftsmen. Unskilled employees typically exhibited that cheerful, unimaginative, rather childlike accommodation which seems to have been produced by the stable, heavily rural, society of eastern Canada, and to a surprising extent can still be found there. When ruthless new-style employers abused the faith of workers trained in the paternal system, new relationships would have to appear;

but it is remarkable how long and patiently, with what ingrained reverence for employers and consciousness of their own duty of obedient silence, workers put up with this treatment. The system frequently allowed employers to pay rather lower wages than competitive forces would dictate, but they were supposed to make this up by various forms of benevolence. The system rested, among other things, on the rarity of specialized qualifications and professional consciousness except among craftsmen. It rested, too, on the fact — or, at least, the belief — that employers were distinctly more fit to rule than those over whom they ruled. It was this background that dictated the conservatism of eastern Canadian unionism, accommodating it to the attitudes of the American Federation of Labor, but hindering real rapport with the workers of western Canada.[6]

To an extent the eastern system settled in the Canadian West along with eastern people — particularly in Manitoba. However, the great lesson, if it needs repetition, is that new circumstances alter men and systems. The people who went to the West, including most of those who came from eastern Canada, displayed little of that amiable submissiveness that pervaded the East. By self-selection they were hustlers — ambitious, daring, driving, relatively hard people made harder by their experiences. Until Clifford Sifton began to empty central Europe into the Prairies, the level of education, adaptability, and awareness was also very high — quite possibly the highest anywhere in the world. These people had come to improve their lot, they were willing to endure much to do so, and were not to be put off easily.

Employers in the West also had a ruthless quality, whether aggressive railway corporations, American mining operators, or the strange feudal Dunsmuir coal interests. The West was supposed to return them fortunes, and quick ones. Newness and a prevailing mobility promoted an extreme impersonality of relationships. This was heightened by a large scale of many operations, and by a good deal of absentee ownership.

These hard, sharp patterns were bound to produce a good deal of friction even between employers and craft unions. The tight labour markets and rising prices that prevailed after 1898 also made for restless movements and clashes of interest. Unlike the East, there was no tariff issue tending to unite employers and employed, while a common front of westerners against the East was made difficult by many things, including the eastern residence and connections of many employers. What really distinguished the western labour scene, however, was that here a real possibility existed of organizing non-craft workers into viable unions, The workers were alert, hardy, somewhat reckless, and certainly not overawed. Conditions of employment often built up solidarity among them, while isolating them from other society. The frequent shortage of labour made unionism of the unskilled and semiskilled much more practicable than it

was in areas overflowing with cheap and timid labour. The conditions invited an industrial form of unionism, by which the bargaining power of skilled workers lent strength to the whole, instead of hindering others. Hence, from the Knights of Labor to the One Big Union, an ardent industrial unionism characterized the West.

Employers, on the other hand, shared the general hostility of employers everywhere to unionism, and especially to the upstart unionism of non-craft workers. Much that employers did in the West seems a reflection of the campaigns against non-craft unionism that were being carried on at the same time in Britain and the United States: there was, for instance, a great flourishing of labour injunctions. As elsewhere, the intensity of employer feeling was certainly raised by the socialist proclivities of the unions involved. In addition to this, there was a special ruthlessness of western employers, perhaps appropriate to stark relationships in a land without traditions. Underlying it all was a failure of employers to command respect: an indisposition of a labour force that contained many talented persons to concede that their employers were fitted by superior capacity to exercise unquestioned authority. In many cases, the employers were not. The narrowing of the differential levels of capacity as between employer and employed which was occurring everywhere in this period reached its narrowest in the West.

This cleavage between employer and employed and between East and West was the main feature of Canadian labour relations before 1920. It was not, however, the only feature. Employers did advance in sophistication, and various among them tried new approaches. It has to be said that employer enlightenment was a good deal more evident after a thorough scare by militant labour movements with revolutionary overtones (after 1903 and after 1918) that at any other times. No matter how offensive these movements were to employers, no matter how harshly and conclusively they were put down, they accomplished more than decades of quiet persuasion, and cannot be counted as failures.

The Similarities of Western Unionism in Canada and the United States

No less apparent than the divergences in outlook and behaviour of Canada's western unionism from an eastern pattern were its similarities to the unionism of the western United States. In the West of both countries, much more than in either East, there was a prominence of industrial unionism and belief in political action and socialism and syndicalism, militancy and solidarity and direct action. We are thus presented with comparative historical cases of similar and divergent labour movements from which we may hope to draw important observations.

However, the obviousness of this evidence, and the strong implication that it reflects common causes and effects, did not protect those who came with preconceptions and incomprehensions from misinterpretation. It flourished first and most in the United States, spread by intolerant craft unionists who set the style of the American Federation of Labor and by that pioneer generation of labour historians, headed by John R. Commons and Selig Perlman, who regarded AFL unionism as the American model, or at least norm, and anything else (therefore) as an aberration. They did not understand western unionism very well and, in the cases of Gompers and his confidants, one may wonder if they wanted to. For rather than searching out the logic of the unionism of the West, the subject was buried in a mythology of unreason and un-Americanism. Only recently has the evidence been re-examined by younger labour historians.[7] What, then, do they say?

First, the fact that in the period 1890-1917 a high proportion of wage-earners in the western United States believed in radical political action, and frequently in socialism, did not signify that these workers were unbalanced, or victims of propaganda, or foreigners who had slipped into a virginal anti-socialist America. In this Populist and Progressive era, on the contrary, western radicals — both wage-earners and farmers — were in step with an army of other American reformers seeking to check the monopolies that burgeoned in the United States after the Civil War. In this age, it was not only immigrant Germans and Jews who propagated socialism: there were hundreds of thousands of other supporters, and it was only after 1920 that a ferocious anti-Communism drove American socialism not only virtually out of existence, but out of memory as well. Neither was the radicalism of the workers of the western United States something brought in by immigrants; rather, as Dubofsky makes clear, the western labour force was almost pure Anglo-Saxon and mostly native American. By the same token, the common identification of radicalism with foreignness (in Canada, too) was founded much less in fact than in the prejudices of those who made the identification. Gompers, himself, was a prime example of the human capacity to delude oneself and others; he could not conceive how a socialist could support unions, at least craft unions (although thousands of them did), and categorized all socialists as his enemies. In defiance of the majority of his own federation, he worked to weaken the Populist movement, then to emasculate it by getting the socialist public ownership plank out of its platform, then to get the Populists defeated at the polls, in order to keep in step with the trusts whose ascendancy he viewed as inevitable, and to make his belief in the uselessness of party political action self-justifying.[8]

The hostilities displayed by Gompers and his supporters were no doubt strengthened by the fact that the responsiveness of western workers to industrial unionism and reformist political action had been nurtured in many

cases by the Knights of Labor. It was not only that many western workers had once belonged to the Knights, and imbibed their inclusive, uplift philosophy; besides that, assemblies of the Knights flourished in the western United States (as in Canada) long after the order was supposed to have been annihilated by the AFL.[9] That is, it was still the apolitical craft unionism of Gompers, not the broad reformist unionism of the West, that had the more questionable basis in American tradition: a sufficient reason in itself to rewrite history and picture western radicalism as an aberration.

Dubofsky rejects another attempted explanation of the violent labour conflict and presumed peculiarity of the American West: the chameleon influence of the "frontier". Turner's frontier thesis,[10] based on the steady advance of agricultural settlement westward across the United States, does seem to throw light on the kind of society that developed on the agricultural frontier, and perhaps provides that explanation of the strength and preservation of grass roots democracy that Turner attributed to it. On the other hand, there are awkward difficulties about applying the frontier thesis to areas of broken topography, such as Canada and the mountain states. If we can usefully conceive of a "mining frontier", it was a frontier that did not carry out its duty of maintaining democracy in the West for long after 1890. Neither can this frontier be blamed, as some have blamed it, for the barbarian ruthlessness that appeared in the western United States. The real and different sequence of causation is summarized by Dubofsky as follows:

> By 1893 the mining West ... had passed well beyond the frontier stage and the working class' emerging radicalism was hardly the response of pioneer individualists to frontier conditions. The W.F.M. (Western Federation of Miners) did not consist mostly of men who had been prospectors and frontiersmen; it was not 'permeated with the independent and often lawless spirit of the frontier'; nor did its radicalism result from a lack of respect for the social distinctions of a settled community, or a disregard by labour for the 'elementary amenities of civilized life', or the absence of farmers, a neutral middle class, and others who might keep matters within bounds. Perlman and Taft, and their disciples, have in fact reversed the dynamics of social change in the Mountain West. The violent conflicts which they so fully describe came, not on an undeveloped Western frontier but in a citadel of American industrialism and financial capitalism. Perlman and Taft's 'class war without a class ideology' resulted

from a process of social polarization not from an absence of middle groups, and consequently brought Marxian class consciousness. After 1910 farmers and others did not suddenly settle the area to blur sharp class distinctions and end the class war. The Ludlow Massacre occurred in 1914, Butte erupted into violent industrial warfare from 1914-17, and the bitter Colorado County coal wars developed still later — in the 1920's.

Violent conflict came not from the 'general characteristics of the frontier' or 'quick on the trigger' employers and employees but from the general nature of early industrialism. (It seems strange to seek to explain violent conflict in the Mountain West in Turnerian terms when at the same time in the 'settled, civilized' East, open warfare prevailed at Homestead, in Chicago during the Pullman Strike, and even later in Lawrence, Massachusetts and Paterson, New Jersey. It seems equally foolish to account for the creation (in the Mountain West) of private armies in frontier terms when Eastern employers and even workers did likewise. The coal and iron police appeared in Pennsylvania, not Montana; Colorado employers and workers may have utilized Western 'desperados' and gunmen but employers and workers in New York's garment industry made ample use of similar services provided by the metropolis' gun-slingers and club wielders. Such violence and conflict, wherever it erupted, seems more a characteristic of the early stages of industrialism than of any peculiar geographical environment. Western working-class history is the story not of the collapse of social polarization but of its creation. Prior to the triumph of corporate capitalism, Western workers retained numerous allies among local merchants, professionals, farmers, and party politicians. The interesting historical feature is the manner in which corporate executives separated labor from its quondam allies, and polarized society and politics to the disadvantage of the worker. The remainder of this paper will demonstrate that class war in the West created a class ideology, and that the ideology was Marxist because the Mountain West from 1890 to 1905 followed the classic Marxian pattern of development.[11]

Is Dubofsky's explanation of labour radicalism in the western United States also a correct and adequate explanation for the similar radicalism that appeared in western Canada? With some qualifications, I believe that it is. The question is complicated by the fact that the rival claims of craft and industrial unionism had a different significance in Canada from that in the United States (although it divided eastern from western labour in both countries), creating one qualification that is discussed separately. Another necessary qualification is that the institutions and attitudes of the Canadian west differed substantially from those of the American west, dictating for one thing that Canada's labour battles would be much the less spectacular in their violence; but this, also, is a topic for another section. However, I do not think that these qualifications destroy the thesis that western labour radicalism in Canada — as in the United States — was created not by the frontier, not by the foreignness or lack of civility of workers, but by the rapid rise and acquisitiveness of a large-scale corporate capitalism able to exert great influence on both markets and governments, and ready to use this power to keep "their" workers in subjection.

Even allowing that coal mining companies have scarcely ever been celebrated for their benevolence, the Dunsmuir coal empire (later Canadian Collieries) provided an "ideal-type" Canadian example of these tendencies. It would be difficult to find a firm anywhere that surpassed this one in its systematic exploitation of its employees, its implacable opposition to bargaining collectively with them, and its success in enlisting the authority and military resources of government on its side.[12] The attitude of the large railway corporations in the Canadian west, starting with the Canadian Pacific, were not much different. The railways were in frequent labour disputes because of their refusal to negotiate terms of employment with their employees, except craft unionists and craft-type running trades. There were recurrent disputes during railway construction, essentially because the employers wanted to reduce wages and conditions whenever market conditions, periodically manipulated by Oriental immigration, would allow it. The Trackmen's Strike of 1901, which launched Mackenzie King on his career as a conciliator and writer of labour legislation, was made unsolvable by the refusal of the C.P.R. to recognize non-craft unions. The large-scale disputes of 1903 between railroad companies and the United Brotherhood of Railway Employees were similarly turned into struggles to the death by the refusal of employers to deal with this industrial union which included non-craft workers.[13] Metal mining companies in Canada appear to have been generally smaller than those that were at the centre of conflict in the United States, but under the aegis of the C.P.R. a substantial consolidation was accomplished at and about Trail in 1906[14] — where a sliding scale of wages was thrust on the workers against their will in 1907.[15] Concentration in the salmon

fishing industry was brought to an advanced stage even before that.[16] On the Prairies the corporate capitalism of line elevator companies, banks, and mortgage companies was directed primarily to the exploitation of farmers; but railroads on a large scale and some manufacturers on a smaller one confronted Prairie wage-earners, too, with substantial capitalist power. Where firms were smaller the ubiquitous trade association — chiefly a device to fight unions — flourished in the early years of the twentieth century.[17] In short, in the West as in the East (but more so), in Canada as in the United States, the basic explanation of labour radicalism lies in the unrestrained aggressiveness of corporate capitalism. The significant differences of West from East are to be found, not in any substantial variation of capitalist power, but in the absence from the West of any moderating force of traditional paternalism or employer-union alliance to maintain tariff protection, and in the greater determination and capacity of western workers — aided by a more favourable balance of labour supply and demand — to resist employers.

The Differences of Western Unionism in Canada and the United States

The previous section has dwelt on the fact that, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the western labour movements of the United States and Canada had important features in common, including their marked differences from their respective Easts. It has been proposed that these similarities are attributable primarily to a single basic cause, the rapid rise of an aggressive corporate capitalism. Determined workers in any country were bound to resist it if they could.

It is important, however, in establishing that we are dealing with a logical system of social causes (anti-union employers) and social effects (radical sentiment and militant unionism) that we not fall into an opposite misconception: that the western labour movements of Canada and the United States were practically identical, or really one single movement spread across an "artifical" boundary. Writers who assume something of this sort are also apt to assume that the western Canadian labour movement was not an authentic Canadian product, but something made in the United States and exported to the passive and gullible Canadians; or, alternatively, brought into Canada by what was really an immigrant population of Americans. A certain picturesque verification of this thesis was supplied by the placer miners of the 1860's who, whatever their places of birth, displayed a common California culture and joined in advocating an American grass roots type of democracy. It was only the form of the Knights of Labor, not the membership, that Canadians imported from the United States in the 1880's; but the rapid expansion in Canada of the

Western Federation of Miners, 1895-1900, involved the introduction not only of an American union but of a large number of American miners already familiar with the union — not to mention immigrant American mining entrepreneurs who supplied the miners with reasons to organize.[18] In 1902-03 another radical American union, the United Brotherhood of Railway Employees, won the support of a large proportion of western Canada's railroad workers. A Royal Commission on Industrial Disputes in British Columbia, of which Mackenzie King was secretary, found that the W.F.M. and U.B.R.E. were not legitimate Canadian unions but (1) foreign and (2) revolutionary organizations which employers therefore had no obligation to recognize or deal with. A succession of scholars has declared these findings to be in defiance of the evidence before the commission,[19] but the commission's report certainly spread (as it reflected) the theory that radical unionism was a nasty foreign invention imposed on innocent Canadian workers by American troublemakers.

The truth lies elsewhere, nevertheless: the unionism of the Canadian west was distinct from that of the American west in a number of important respects, perhaps most obviously in its being more united and powerful.

In tracing the differences, we may start with geography. "By the American West," says Dubofsky, "I mean the metal-mining areas stretching from the northern Rockies to the Mexican border, and particularly the states of Colorado, Idaho, and Montana".[20] It happens that this mountain region relevant to metal-mining stretches much farther eastward in the United States than it does in Canada. On the other hand, Canada's mountain region, essentially British Columbia, is more variegated than Colorado, Idaho, and Montana. British Columbia is more comparable to Dubofsky's American west, not only in its metals but in its labour militancy, than other parts of Canada. Nevertheless, the West that is significant for Canadian labour history in the early twentieth century stretched from the Pacific, and not just to Lethbridge, or even across the Prairies to Winnipeg, but eastward for several hundred more miles to somewhere around North Bay. Has Dubofsky's definition, then, confined the American (labour)West too much: should it similarly include the lively labour movements of Chicago and some other prairie cities of the United States? A difficult question for which there is no indisputable answer. Yet one may suspect that Dubofsky is right in his division of the United States; that in labour matters the American midwest had more in common with the American east (or southern Ontario, for that matter), with which it had innumerable uninterrupted links, than with the mountain states. Canadians have been right, however, in defining their West differently. Canada's prairie region *was* far more definitely separated from its East — geographically and ideologically — than its American counterpart. At the same time, it was more securely attached to its mountain region to form a single Canadian (labour)West. An

obvious reason for this difference is that the Canadian Prairies (and even northern Ontario) — unlike neighboring sections of the United States — was cut off from its East by hundreds of miles of rock and bush. A wider regional unity and self-consciousness in Canada was probably also aided by the fact that metal mining did not have the same relative importance in Canada or spawn the large mining and smelting cities that served to isolate as well as to unite the workers of the western states. The effect of this geographic difference was a wider and more uniform labour radicalism, so that every centre west of Toronto displayed a strength and solidarity of labour scarcely matched even in the mountain region of the United States, and the centre of militancy in Canada in 1919 was at Winnipeg on the eastern Prairies.

Next, consider the people. Notwithstanding the celebrated "Mingling of the Canadian and American Peoples",[21] Canadians were different from Americans. They were different, for one thing, in that British immigrants played a more prominent part in many employments, and in the labour movement particularly, where they imposed a distinctly British aura of reformist fervor balanced by pragmatic caution. They were the more able to do so because native-born Canadians usually saw themselves as British, and shared many British attitudes, including a readier acceptance than Americans of labour political action.

No less important is a profound (although sometimes overlooked) difference between Canada and the United States in ideology, especially concerning the respective claims and duties of individuals, governments, and "society".

The predominant ideology of the United States has put a great emphasis on individual liberty and self-reliance, and has viewed society merely as an aggregation of individuals. This doctrine hardened after the Civil War into a "Social Darwinism" which perceived the survival of the fittest (usually identified with the rich and powerful) and the distress of the unfit (the poor and weak) as a natural law — both evident fact and harsh but necessary objective. This *laissez-faire* ideology, by holding that welfare is maximized by market and social competition, freed men from any moral obligation to restrain their demands in the interest of "society". Similarly, it called for governments of divided powers to enforce a minimum of intervention. However, this did not hinder an exploitation of governments for land grants, franchises, or other benefits, as of other market opportunities. Hence, there was a long record of governmental corruption and partisanship, not the least in the crushing of strikes and unions. No unionists had more reason than those of the West to conclude that existing governments were agents of employers and should be replaced by workers' governments. Craft unions, likewise, were taught by a long record of government partisanship against labour to be deeply suspicious of government intervention in collective bargaining. However, the craft

unionists were little disposed to join with other workers to promote more equitable government. Rather, in keeping with the prevailing ideology, they defended their own particular interests in the jungle wars but perceived no obligation to support unions of less-skilled workers — the more so as Gompers believed he could establish an accommodation with the trusts, but for craft unions only.[22] Industrial unionists, eastern and western, were the immediate victims of this policy, but it is arguable that all labour was harmed by it in the end.

The Canadian tradition and ethic has been very different. As Horowitz has put it, Canada inherited from Europe not only an ideology of "rational-egalitarian" liberalism (as the United States did), but also one of "corporate, organic, collectivist" toryism (as the United States did not), so providing for a British-type sense of responsibility for the national welfare and a readiness to accept labour political activity and socialism.[23] Canada also inherited a parliamentary form of government with a constitutionally unlimited right and obligation to maintain the general welfare. Rather than being fearful of state action, Canadians have believed firmly in the "father state" that will make all things right in the end. In Canada, similarly, order and justice have been seen to flow from the presence, not the absence, of state intervention. Reinforcing these attitudes has been a consciousness that Canada is exposed to powerful outside forces and that its economy cannot be relied upon to work and develop satisfactorily by itself. So protected, belief in intervention has generally survived, not least in Canada's labour circles, despite a substantial (but, evidently, not fatal) number of cases of gross anti-labour partiality on the part of governments and judges. Hence the remarkable orderliness of the Winnipeg General Strike; the fact that the state, although intensely hostile, refrained for several weeks from using force against it; the fact that the eventual intervention of government against labour has been the only really massive one in Canadian history; the fact that the arrested strike leaders appealed passionately at their trials to the rights of British subjects under a British constitution; and the fact that some of these men thus won acquittal, notwithstanding the extreme prejudice of the judges and prosecutors. The history of the United States leaves the greatest doubt that any of these things could have happened there.

Canada's different record and tradition also suggest that the desperate syndicalism forced on the workers of the mountain states was not a major ingredient in the labour radicalism of western Canada. That radicalism, some revolutionary resolutions of the 1919 Calgary Convention notwithstanding, rested ideologically on a British conception of social protest in the cause of social justice. It was supported by a broader labour movement than the one that supported radicalism in the United States; not the least because most Canadian unionists, although chronic division between craft and industrial unionism and

between East and West was forced on them from 1902, continued to believe in a unified labour movement and a general welfare.

Craft versus Industrial Unionism

The clash between eastern and western unionism, both in Canada and in the United States, was suffused by a rivalry between the craft and industrial forms of union. The rivalry, however, had a different basis and character in the two countries. It is therefore a complicated question which I have thought best to discuss separately.

In the United States, as in Britain, Canada, and (soon) some European countries, an industrial unionism of semi-skilled workers arose in about the 1880's to complement the already established craft unions. In every country but one this led, after an initial uneasiness of the aristocrats of labour, to an accommodation of craft and industrial unionists in a unified labour movement from which they expected mutual benefit. In the United States, however, the outcome was a fierce and perpetual opposition of the crafts to the existence of "dual" (which included industrial) unions. The arrogance of the Knights of Labor, who demanded in 1886 that craftsmen submerge their craft distinctions in this inclusive one-big-union and subordinate questions of wages to the naive goal of abolishing the wage system, provides a sufficient reason for the formation and initial hostility of the American Federation of Labor.[24] However, what explains the undiminished continuation of this intolerance of industrial unionism, decade after decade right into the middle of the twentieth century?

The answer, at any rate, is not the one by which Selig Perlman confused the issue. Perlman asserted, in the face of a mass of evidence to the contrary, that industrial unionism appealed only to semi-skilled and unskilled strata of labour, and that only the unskilled conceived of the industrial union as the "one big union."[25] The fact is, however, that the western miners who chose industrial unionism were highly-skilled men.[26] They preferred inclusive unions not only because their community of isolation encouraged this civility,[27] but because it was indispensable to their bargaining strength. The fact is, moreover, that the A.F.L. had already found it desirable, despite the suspicion of many craft unionists, to include in its ranks another industrial union built around skilled miners — the United Mine Workers.[28] The A.F.L. might have been content to continue indefinitely the brief, 1896, affiliation of the Western Federation of Miners if the W.F.M. had been willing to refrain from trying to set up a rival (industrial union) centre. How, then, did the respective claims of craft and industrial unionism become a central and permanent basis of labour division? The antagonisms aroused in 1886, the doctrine of narrow self-interest that permeated American society, the fact that usually only craft unions were

able to survive the opposition of employers in the East, the tendency of industrial unionism to become identified with a remote and radical West, all played some part. Yet all are not a sufficient reason, even in the United States (and much less in Canada) for the intense exclusiveness and periodic cannibalism of the A.F.L.

As far as Canada is concerned, there need not be much mystery about it: labour division and conflict were imported from the United States and forcibly imposed on Canada by the A.F.L. after its high-handed takeover of the Canadian Trades and Labour Congress in 1902. Canadian labour has typically been tolerant and inclusive, and its various types of unionism got along quite well with each other until 1902, and after that whenever the A.F.L. would let them. Industrial unionism was perhaps more prominent in Canada than in the United States, especially in the West where support for it was practically universal and the westerners did not hide their view that the whole labour movement should be reorganized on industrial lines. However, they never wished to separate from their eastern (or craft) brothers, only to convert them; and they set up the One Big Union only when those who ran the T.L.C. proved impervious to their frantic arguments for reorganization. Nor have Canada's craft unionists shown much disposition to make war on others, and have only been driven to it on a number of critical occasions by severe pressure from American headquarters. In short, while Canadian unionists — eastern and western, craft and industrial, French and English — often failed to see eye to eye, there is no native explanation for an intense craft hostility to industrial unionism and labour unity. For that explanation, we are driven straight back to the United States.

The basic reason for the extreme divisiveness of American labour, I suggest, has been the sharp and long-lasting ethnic divisions that have existed between the upper and lower strata of American wage-earners. It is hard to find anything that resembles this closely (until recently) in Europe. There are parallels in Canada where Irish labourers were treated as a subordinate caste in the nineteenth century, Orientals aroused intense antipathy among white workers in British Columbia, and immigrants from central Europe in the early twentieth century were viewed with a good deal of suspicion by the overwhelmingly Anglo-Saxon working class. Yet ethnic antagonisms have been kept reasonably subdued (or suppressed) in Canada, and a characteristic sentiment has been that "foreigners" should be welcomed into assimilation — for one thing, to establish greater labour strength by means of labour unity. In the United States, however, influxes of Irish, Chinese, Slavs, and so forth — who took low-paying jobs, drove native Americans out of them, then took aim at the superior jobs — seem to have had more traumatic effects than the analogous immigrations into Canada, and became a reason, not to strive for labour unity, but to close ethnic ranks. A rationalization of this hostility was a

frequent — although inaccurate, identification among foreigners, low skills, socialism, and industrial unionism. This phenomenon was not invariable. Where (when) low-status immigrants were a small percentage of population, as in the mountain states (and western Canada, and the United States generally in the 1830's and maybe 1870's), a homogeneous northern European labour force could readily accept institutions committed to the general welfare, such as industrial unionism and socialism. The presence in the West of a minority of socially-untouchable Orientals only consolidated other workers the more. Where (when) conditions were less favourable, however, as they frequently were in the eastern United States, the tendency (instead) was for workers to retreat into their ethnic-status shells. The interest of high-status workmen in the general rights of labour became overshadowed, in proportion to the inflow of low-status newcomers, by fear that the craftsmen's bargaining power would be expended on benefits for low-skilled foreigners. It was even more characteristic that the waves of new immigrants, faced by coldness and insecurity, should hive off in their own ethnic communities for a generation — a practice that, in turn, encouraged more favoured groups to look to their own particular advantage.

On the other hand, the division did not have to be final. As in Canada, ethnic divisions of labour were quickly marked out in the United States and — at some cost to the general welfare — the social and cultural unity *within* ethnic groups assisted the inhabitants to build tight unions within their ethnic-occupational jurisdictions. It is arguable that the Anglo-Saxon craftsmen of the A.F.L. were only doing the same sort of thing. Furthermore, the celebrated American melting-pot, after a generation of exposing newcomers to the public schools, did tend to produce a common Americanism. At this stage, should it not have been possible to bring together these various streams and their craft and industrial unions in a single American labour organization?

The essential reason why this accommodation has been interminably delayed, I think, is the deep, continued, divisiveness of a uniquely American condition: the presence of a large population of negroes in the labour force. Unlike a second or third generation of Irish or Italians, and notwithstanding some noble efforts to achieve racial harmony and labour unity, American negroes remained perpetually unacceptable to the upper strata of labour as equals, and, usually, as allies. Feared as slave labour before 1860, they were seen as a still more dangerously mobile threat to the maintenance of wage rates and working conditions after 1865. Employers often showed a similar aversion, reinforced by their reluctance to incur the enmity of their white employees. By general agreement, then, negroes were an alien element to be kept apart physically and in (inferior) employment status. It was the lowest strata of white workers who were seriously exposed to negro competition, but the craft unions

that were at the forefront in excluding negroes from their ranks. What that seems to indicate is, not that negroes threatened the jobs of craftsmen very much, but how totally the presence of an unassimilable group poisoned the atmosphere and promoted a narrow unionism dedicated to the particular rather than general welfare. Industrial unions to counter large, ruthless employers were needed (and sometimes formed) in the East as well as the West, but such unions often faced an awkward choice: to include inferior strata, even negroes; or to face the weakening effects of their exclusion. In these circumstances, craftsmen might calculate that, even if their craft union provided less bargaining power than an industrial union could have had, it offered a margin of benefit over the social price of consorting with outcasts. Conversely, the absence of a significant negro population in the mountain states — as in Canada — made it much easier for workers to favour the instruments of a united working class, industrial unionism and labour participation in politics.

The Final Conflict

The precocious growth and militancy of the western Canadian labour movement up until 1919 distinguished it from the unionism of eastern Canada while establishing striking parallels with the unionism of the western United States. Unlike their respective Easts, the western movements shared an addiction to industrial unionism, to socialist and syndicalist philosophy, and to direct labour participation in politics. It seems clear that the two western movements were being molded by similar forces: notably, a ruthless large-scale capitalism, and a greater capacity of labour to resist it in the West conferred by its relative scarcity and, hence, better bargaining position. It is no less important, however, to notice the differences between the two western movements. The Canadian one affected a relatively larger territory and membership, was less alienated from eastern unionists, and was the more cohesive and powerful — capable in 1919 of a spectacular challenge to the established order. The geographic separateness of western Canada and the strains imposed on this region by the First World War played roles in this, but perhaps more important was a Canadian tradition, quite unlike the American, of the social responsibility of the "father state" and of working-class political action to shape and enforce it. The effects of the differences were substantial. In the United States, the Industrial Workers of the World were harried almost out of existence towards the end of the First World War and the Seattle General Strike was an isolated phenomenon condemned to a quick and not very glorious end. In Canada, in contrast, the unity and militancy, power and sense of grievance of labour culminated in 1919 in the remarkable discipline of the Winnipeg General Strike, supported by sympathy strikes — many also

massive — in about 16 other Canadian cities; and in the formation of the One Big Union dedicated to reorganizing on an industrial basis the unions of Canada, the United States, and perhaps the world: a labour protest and crusade of truly heroic proportions.

Yet this spectacular denouement leaves some vexing questions. How was it that this formidable display of solidarity could not extract so reasonable a claim as the right to collective bargaining, and was already on the way to defeat when the Canadian government staged its melodramatic midnight arrests of a number of strike leaders and proceeded to create a show of violence as preludes to the calling-off of the strike? How was it that the One Big Union, although it enjoyed an early rush of affiliations, could be quickly reduced to insignificance after 1920 by the opposition of international unions and employers? Why, although western workers showed by their intensified support of labour political candidates after 1919 that their spirits had not been broken, nor their intelligences congealed, were they no longer able in Winnipeg and some other centres to maintain more than a cautious defensive unionism? In sum, how did so remarkable a labour movement arrive at so sickly an end?

What happened can only be understood, I think, against the background of a great shift of weight, or "climacteric", that affected the western Canadian labour movement about 1913. Until that time, a strong growth in demand for labour, along with the grievance of static real wages and employer resistance to their improvement, produced a vigorous rise in the numbers and aggressiveness of western unions. While western union growth was outstripped by population growth after 1901, it was distinctly more rapid than union growth in the East, even surpassing the East in absolute numbers of locals formed in half the years between 1904 and 1912. [29] No less impressive was the labour solidarity of the West, aided by a substantial ethnic unity of the labour force. the bonds of industrial unionism, and recurring upsurges of industrial conflict (1901, 1903, 1907, 1909, 1911) in which the West had a full share. When western unionists lectured their eastern colleagues, as they sometimes did in those years, they were conscious that they were leading from strength.

This situation changed dramatically after 1913. The depression that descended at that time was felt severely throughout Canada, but most, it would appear, in the West. The substantial unemployment that developed then and persisted until 1917 was probably an important factor in the high recruiting rates for military service that characterized the West. However, the really vital factor in the climacteric was a persistent weakness in demand for labour in the West even after 1917. In contrast, a vigorous growth of employment and unions occurred in the East, especially in Ontario, presumably stimulated by war contracts. Hence, eastern unionism far exceeded western in its growth in 1918 and, still more, in 1919, advancing in those two years to constitute three-

quarters rather than the previous two-thirds of Canada's union membership.

It follows that the increasingly shrill and radical tone of western union leaders towards the end of the war was a reflection, not of their old strength, but of their new weakness. They were searching for the means to recover their lost momentum, and leaning to more drastic solutions as their problem deepened. On the other hand, the labour spokesmen of eastern Canada could speak with a new authority conferred by expanding numbers. Their cold rejection of radical western proposals at the 1918 convention of the Trades and Labour Congress was made easy by a strategic position that was much the stronger and becoming more so.

That is, the abrupt decline of the great western labour movement was not just the work of eastern union leaders, or of the employers and politicians and A.F.L. roadmen who put their hearts into breaking the Winnipeg General Strike and the One Big Union: these had their importance, but they were more consequence than cause. Neither was it the fundamental cause of decline — although important — that the exceptional generation that had built the western labour movement had been decimated by war, exhausted by struggle, and diluted by barely literate immigrants from Europe, so that the gap in capacity between bosses and workers had widened again.

There was a deeper cause: the rate of expansion of western Canada slowed down. Demand for labour became weaker whereas supply — an increasing proportion of it western-born —was abundant and not infrequently excessive relative to demand. Presumably connected with this change was a great shift of relative incomes from the West to Ontario in and about 1920. [30]

The West's share of Canadian unionism recovered a little in the 1920's — but that only spelled a slightly higher percentage of a movement that was moribund everywhere. Many western workers kept up their struggle by participation in labour politics; but this was neither new — western labour had always been politically active — nor very effective in a mindless era dominated by forces suspicious of unions and of government intervention. It cannot even be said that the industrial unonism demonstrated in the West had much to do with the revival of industrial unionism in the 1930's — the focus of that revival was in the East, *Sic transit gloria*. Yet it was a truly remarkable movement in its time.

Winnipeg
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Notes

1. See also the quantitative and qualitiative evidence of early union organization in British Columbia in Paul Phillips, *No Power Greater,* Vancouver: 1967.

2. Phillips, *No Power Greater*, 22.

3. Isabel Anderson, "Internal Migration in Canada, 1921-1961", ECC Staff Study No. 13 (1966), 10.

4. *Loc. cit.*

5. For an informative exploration of Gompers' relations with socialists, Populists, trusts, and American imperialism, see Philip S. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement in the United States,* Vol. 2, chs. 19 ff.

6. The paragraph above and several that follow are drawn almost verbatim from my "Background of the Canadian System of Industrial Relations", an unpublished study prepared for the Task Force on Labour Relations, 1968, 89-94.

7. See particularly Melvyn Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All: A History of the Industrial Workers of the World*, Chicago: 1969, and "The Origins of Working Class Radicalism, 1890-1905", *Labor History,* Spring, 1966, 131-154 which (article) is reprinted in David Brody, ed., *The American Labor Movement,* New York: 1971, in which collection see also articles by Laslett and Rogin. For a broader background see Foner, *History of Labor in the United States,* Vols. 2, 3, 4.

8. These and similar points are set out in detail in Foner, Vol. 2.

9. Dubofsky in Brody, *op. cit.*, 89; *We Shall Be All,* 58.

10. Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* New York: 1920, contains the original pathbreaking paper delivered in 1893, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History". For a Canadian application of the frontier thesis to non-agricultural activity see H.A. Innis, *Settlement and the Mining Frontier,* with A.R.M. Lower, *Settlement and the Forest Frontier,* Toronto: 1936.

11. Dubofsky, "The Origins of Western Working Class Radicalism" in Brody, *op. cit.*, 88-89. The section within brackets is a footnote in Dubofsky's text. The reference to Perlman and Taft is to Selig Perlman and Philip Taft, *History of Labor in the United States, 1896-1932,* New York: 1935.

12. Phillips, *op. cit.*, 6-8, 14, 23; Stuart M. Jamieson, *Times of Trouble: Labour Unrest and Industrial Conflict in Canada, 1900-66,* Task Force on Labour Relations, Study No. 22, Ottawa: 1971, 110-116 and *passim.*

13. Charles Lipton, *The Trade Union Movement of Canada, 1827-1959,* Montreal: 1966, 100-105; F.R. Anton, *The Role of Government in the Settlement of Industrial Disputes in Canada,* Toronto and Montreal: 1962, 66-68.

14. Margaret A. Ormsby, *British Columbia; A History,* 1958, 341.

15. *Labour Gazette,* Vol. 40, 959.

16. Ormsby, *op. cit.*, 338-339.

17. S.D. Clark, *The Canadian Manufacturers' Association,* Toronto: 1939, 41-42; *Labour Gazette,* Vol. 3, 913.

18. Themes of American immigration and Canadian susceptibility to American influence are emphasized in John T. Saywell, "Labour and Socialism in British Columbia: A Survey of Historical Development before 1903", *British Columbia Historical Quarterly,* July-Oct., 1951, 129-150. Saywell also stresses, however, that British numbers and influence much exceeded American in the early days (131-2). Margaret Ormsby, on the other hand, points to the importance of Canadian influences in the growth of western radical sentiment (*op. cit.,* 389, 396).

19. Saywell, *op. cit.,* 140; Jamieson, *op. cit.,* 112-121, an extensive discussion of this Commission, especially the pressures to relate Canadian labour disputes to "foreign agitators"; Phillips, *op. cit.* 41, Lipton, *op. cit.,* 103-105. Lipton, usually on the solemn side, recognizes this Royal Commission Report as the "the first elfin note of (King's) *Industry and Humanity.*"

20. Dubofsky in Brody, *op. cit.,* 84.

21. The title of an important study by M.L. Hansen and J.B. Brebner, New Haven: 1940.

22. Foner, *op. cit.,* Vol. 2, 369-387 (Ch. 24, "Labor and the Trusts").

23. Gad Horowitz, *Canadian Labour in Politics, Toronto:* 1967.

24. Gerald Grob, "The Knights of Labor and the Trade Unions, 1878-1886", *Journal of Economic History,* June, 1958, 176-192.

25. Selig Perlman, *History of Trade Unionism in the United States,* New York: 1929, 218-221.

26. Dubofsky, *We Shall Be All,* 24.

27. "Western mining centers shared with mining communities the world over the group solidarity and radicalism derived from the relative physical isolation and dangerous underground work." *Ibid.,* 26.

28. For the lack of pleasure of A.F.L. leaders at U.M.W. successes, see Foner, *op. cit.,* Vol. 2, 345-6. Yet the A.F.L. later received other industrial unions into affiliation, notably those of garment workers.

29. See Table III.

30. See Marvin McInnis, "The Trend of Regional Income Differentials in Canada", *Canadian Journal of Economics,* May, 1968, especially pp. 446-448 including Chart 2 and Table IV; also 472, a comment. The essence of McInnis' findings is that income per capita in British Columbia declined drastically from being about 85% above the Canadian average 1910-11 to a position 20-25% above by the 1920's and even below Ontario from about 1950. Similarly, prairie incomes declined from above 25% above the Canadian average in 1910-11 (and, like B.C., with a still greater differential previously), to a position about 10% above average in the 1920's and below or at the average subsequently. The beneficiary of this regional shift in Canadian incomes has been Ontario, barely above the Canadian average in 1910-11 but 20% above since the 1920's. Some scanty data on wage rates, showing the early superiority of the West and the subsequent decline (especially of Winnipeg) can be found in *Canadian Historical Statistics,* 86-7, 95.