

A COMMUNIST LIFE



**JACK SCOTT
AND THE
CANADIAN WORKERS MOVEMENT,
1927-1985**

EDITED BY BRYAN D. PALMER

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Hardial Bains, Charles Boylan, Dorothy-Jean O'Donnell and Brian Sproule object to certain passages relating to them in the published oral recollections of Jack Scott (*A Communist Life: Jack Scott and the Canadian Workers Movement 1927-1985*) as being derogatory of them and false.

The Committee on Canadian Labour History, as publisher of the work, wishes to emphasize that any such passages must be understood in the context of political and social partisanship and opinion in which they appear, and accordingly should not be taken literally in any sense which is personally derogatory of Mr. Bains, Mr. Boylan, Ms. O'Donnell or Mr. Sproule. The Committee regrets any offence which such passages may have caused these persons. The passages in question will not be included in any further editions of the work.

The Committee on Canadian Labour History

A COMMUNIST LIFE:

JACK SCOTT AND THE CANADIAN WORKERS MOVEMENT,
1927-1985

Edited and Introduced
by
Bryan D. Palmer

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INTRODUCTION

Jack Scott and I have been arguing about politics since the day we first met in Vancouver more than five years ago. We have very different perspectives on the world and markedly divergent views on what is required to change it. On much, of course, we agree. Not the least, we share the increasingly rare position that hard-headed argument is part of what being a leftist is all about. But where it counts, I think, Jack and I would both acknowledge that our disagreements are more significant than what we share.

We knew each other only a matter of months when we argued forcefully over the nature of the Polish Solidarity movement in the fall of 1981. Jack was behind it, expressing his rage at the way in which the bureaucratic apparatus of the state was containing the working-class rebellion, arguing that the lid was about to blow off and that the Soviet tanks would be rolling into Warsaw before Christmas. After all, he had seen it before. I was less enamoured of *Solidarnosc*, pointing to its clerical nationalism and its program, which I argued contained troublesome doses of capitalist restorationism. While no enthusiastic supporter of the Soviet bureaucracy, I was behind its efforts to suppress the leadership of Solidarity, a leadership that Ronald Reagan had taken to praising and that George Bush now endorses. I doubted whether the Soviet authorities would need to invade Poland to resecure their grip on Eastern Europe. Jack and I made a bet, he wagering an invasion would take place, me gambling on the equilibrium being restored in Poland without armed intervention. Not long after the Christmas deadline passed, Jack delivered a bottle of bourbon to me. I like a person who pays up.

Throughout this book there are countless points — international events, the nature of the Soviet Union, understanding of how a communist should function under democratic-centralist discipline, the relationship of party and class, or the national question, to name but a few — where Jack and I would be in profound disagreement, as we were about *Solidarnosc*. The differences relate to fundamental positions that can be ascribed, in my case, to orthodox Trotskyism — quite different than the political formations Jack routinely refers to as Trotskyist/ite, in my view — and, in the example of Jack himself, as ambiguously anti-Stalinist, neo-Maoist, and left nationalist (not necessarily a characterization Jack would agree with). Discerning readers will pick up on some interesting areas where these positions seem to converge, especially in terms of popular frontism and soft-peddling a revolutionary political program, but in reality the divide between them is formidable.¹

¹Jack Scott's reference point for Trotskyism in Canada is usually the now-defunct League

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But this book is not the place for an elaboration of those differences. It is Jack's book, his attempt to chart the contours of his life as a communist.

Communist recollections are now appearing with considerable regularity in Canada. There have always been the official biographies and memoirs of Party figureheads and loyalists, published by the Party's press with the transparent purpose of perpetuating the mythology of the C.P. as the heroic vanguard of the Canadian working class.² Unreflective and uncritical of the Party's experience, these personal histories dodge the hard questions that develop clearly out of the record of communism in Canada and layer the Party past in platitudes and lies. Ironically, the personality most embellished in this process and associated intimately with the rise of the Communist Party in Canada, Tim Buck, has been the controversial centerpiece highlighting the ways in which the Party history has been fabricated and falsified. Ian Angus has shown how Buck himself refashioned the history of the early years of the Canadian Communist Party to consolidate his own degenerate leadership.³ And Buck's deathbed reminiscences, *Yours in the Struggle*, ended up causing a storm within Party circles because they were not sufficiently laundered. There was nothing very substantial in the way of criticism or confession in the 'unofficial' Buck volume, but it nevertheless was not published by the Party and those C.P.ers involved in its production were disciplined, some to the point of suspension or expulsion.⁴ Buck, past master of the

for Socialist Action, or L.S.A. For a scholastic and offensive treatment of this ostensibly Trotskyist tendency see Roger O'Toole, *The Precipitous Path: Studies in Political Sects* (Toronto: Peter Martin, 1977), 12-32. My own political positions can be located in issues of 1917: *Journal of the Bolshevik Tendency*. On popular frontism, revolutionary program, and the neo-Maoist milieu see "The Myth of the 'Third Period': M.L.P.'s Stalinist Pyrite," 1917, 3 (Spring 1987).

²See the following, Oscar Ryan, *Tim Buck: A Conscience for Canada* (1975); Louise Watson, *She Never Was Afraid, The Biography of Annie Buller* (1976); Catharine Vance, *Not by Gods But by People: The Story of Bella Hall Gauld* (1968); Rev. A.E. Smith, *All My Life: An Autobiography* (1949); Tom McEwen, *The Forge Glows Red: From Blacksmith to Revolutionary* (1974); and the Party's official history, *Canada's Party of Socialism: History of the Communist Party of Canada, 1921-1976* (1982), all of the above published in Toronto by the C.P. press, Progress Books. Gregory S. Kealey provides an account of the Canadian Party's leading intellectual figure, Stanley B. Ryerson, that is only rarely critical and overly sympathetic. See Kealey, "Stanley Bréhaut Ryerson: Canadian Revolutionary Intellectual," *Studies in Political Economy*, 9 (Fall 1982), 103-131; "Stanley Bréhaut Ryerson: Marxist Historian," *ibid.*, 133-171. Brian McDougall, "Stanley Ryerson and the Materialist Conception of History: A Study in the Stalinist Distortion of Marxism," (M.A. thesis, Carleton University, 1981) is an attack on Ryerson and Kealey's reading of his importance.

³Ian Angus, *Canadian Bolsheviks: The Early Years of the Communist Party of Canada* (Montreal: Vanguard, 1981).

⁴Phyllis Clarke and William Beeching, ed., *Yours in the Struggle: Reminiscences of Tim Buck* (Toronto: N.C. Press, 1977).

Stalinist school of falsification, proved incapable of carrying on the tradition he helped to found in Canada with a zeal sufficient to satisfy his heirs.

Buck's *Reminiscences* are not the only recollections to appear outside of the confines of Party publications. More recently other oral biographies have been launched by small regional publishers. While all contain important material, they are also restricted.

George MacEachern testifies to the existence of a particular kind of Cape Breton communist, rooted in the proletarian community of a region too often written off as deindustrialized and intuitively conservative. Insightful in its contribution to our understanding of how steelworkers were organized in Cape Breton, the MacEachern account nevertheless seldom reaches beyond the experiences of one locale and never interrogates the history of the Communist Party critically. Less bound by allegiances to the Party are two other oral remembrances. Gérard Fortin, who played a significant role in the Communist Party in Quebec in the 1950s, has unfortunately been served poorly by his journalistic collaborator, Boyce Richardson, who was apparently more interested in cashing in on Fortin's sexual adventures than he was in exploring his political history. Studded with titillating tales of sexual escapades, the Fortin volume reads a bit like a locker-room account of the virile radical. (Jack Scott is perhaps more typical of older communists in his reluctance to discuss matters of a personal/sexual nature. I found him very closed-mouthed in this area.) Bill White provides an equally racy story of communists and trade unionists in the shipyards of British Columbia in the 1940s and 1950s without having to garnish his recollections with erotic encounters that, in their telling, convey a one-sided and routinized notion of sexuality. In a lively, if self-centered account, White details the costs extracted from unionists by the Cold War and points to the drift of trade unionism in the post-World War II years toward a legalistic resolution of the class struggle. Neither Fortin nor White, for all of their openness concerning their break from the Party, have MacEachern's political steadfastness or longevity, however, Fortin ending his days as a real estate huckster and advocate of René Levesque and White's knowledge of and experience in the C.P. being quite limited.⁵

Scott's recollections are of a different sort. It is their range and their longstanding insistence on the primacy of revolutionary politics that are most impressive. Never the Party apologist, Jack has always been something of a dissident. Even as he proved useful to the Party leadership as an organizer, hired business agent, or middle cadre responsible for recruitment and education, Jack was more often than not a thorn in the side of the *apparachiks*. No

⁵David Frank and Donald MacGillivray, ed., *George MacEachern: An Autobiography* (Sydney, Nova Scotia: University College of Cape Breton, 1987); Fortin and Richardson, *Life of the Party* (Montreal: Vehicule Press, 1984); Howard White, ed., *A Hard Man to Beat: The Story of Bill White, Labour Leader, Historian, Shipyard Worker, Raconteur — an Oral History* (Vancouver: Pulp Press, 1983).

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doubt Jack's recollections of his days in the Party are coloured by his eventual break from the C.P., but having spent thirty years as a Communist he speaks with authority of the missed opportunities and political blunders that punctuate persistently, indeed programmatically, the history of the Communist Parties throughout the world.⁶

His account opens out into an appreciation of how the Canadian Party functioned, where it imposed its authority most rigidly and where it was necessarily less decisive in structuring the actions of people like Scott.⁷ Even after his exit from the Party, Jack refused to throw in the towel, and in the 1960s he was involved in an attempt to build a communist organization that could lead the struggle for socialism in Canada. By the 1970s, in spite of his quasi-retirement from direct involvement in the organizations of the left, he was well-placed to observe and evaluate the rise and fall of the neo-Maoist milieu. Those, like myself, who were won to working-class politics in these years will recognize much of the context he describes as familiar.⁸

With his world view formed by an Irish childhood and a life of wage labour Jack came to his politics almost naturally, but he kept himself informed by reading, arguing, and keeping abreast of international developments, China being a particular preoccupation in the last twenty years. Within Canada, he has worked and been politically active in Quebec, Ontario, British Columbia, and the far North, while his speaking tours and contacts have taken him to most of the other provinces. A self-taught, working-class intellectual, Jack managed to research and write a number of labour histories, political pamphlets, and reviews without the benefit of formal education or the largesse of University appointments and state grants, most of his labour history writing being accomplished as he approached 65 years of age.

Of course, looking back on his life Jack has a tendency to place himself in the right and to read his experiences in the most favourable lights. There are, understandably, more remembrances of when he was 'correct' than confessions of how often he was wrong. He appears in the guise of an anti-dogmatist in the final chapters of this book, but there are those that remember his own sharp interventions in the politics of the 1970s. If their memories are at all correct Jack had his axes to grind, and he ground them as hard and as uncompromisingly as he knew. This text is not, therefore, an oral 'history', in as much as it is a highly partisan, personally selective recounting of his-

⁶For a suggestive discussion of the British context see Sam Bornstein and Al Richardson, *Two Steps Back: Communists and the Wider Labour Movement, 1935-1945 — A Study in the Relations Between Vanguard and Class* (London: Socialist Platform, 1982).

⁷On another context and another kind of Communist Party figure see E.P. Thompson, "Homage to Thomas McGrath," in *The Heavy Dancers* (London: Merlin, 1985), 279-333.

⁸On the Bainesites, or C.P.C.M.L., see O'Toole, *Precipitous Path*, 33-56; and on Progressive Labor Party, *Revolution Today: U.S.A. — A look at the Progressive Labor Movement and the Progressive Labor Party* (New York: Exposition Press, 1970).

torical experience. Others will challenge many of Jack's views and no doubt offer alternative readings of personalities, political arguments, and events. But as a man whose allegiance to the working class was and remains unmistakable, Jack Scott, for all the differences it is possible to have with him, has lived a life worth knowing about. This book represents a beginning effort in that direction.

Jack's life as a communist speaks to a recent debate that has developed about the nature of the Communist Party in the United States. An older scholarship, consolidated around the works of Theodore Draper, and revived recently with Harvey Klehr's discussion of the American C.P. in the 1930s, stresses the extent to which the Communist Party marched to the tune of Soviet influence. Here history is reduced to the twists and turns in political line, and the origins of these zigs and zags in orders coming down from Moscow.⁹ A contingent of younger historians, concerned with local experiences and middle-layer cadre, have seen American communism differently. Attracted to the political, social, and cultural contribution of Party activists in years that they judge to be periods of heroic struggle, this new generation has produced a number of texts that explore aspects of the history of American communism in the twentieth century. Many of these new accounts are reminiscent treatments and oral biographies. Virtually all of them downplay the influence of the Comintern and pay only scant attention to the ways in which the Party made its various turns in political direction, stressing instead the Americanization of the Party.¹⁰ Eventually the camps have

⁹Theodore Draper, *The Roots of American Communism* (New York: Viking, 1957); Draper, *American Communism and Soviet Russia* (New York: Viking, 1960); Harvey Klehr, *The Heyday of American Communism: The Depression Decade* (New York: Basic Books, 1984).

¹⁰See, among others, Steve Nelson, James Barrett, and Rob Ruck, *Steve Nelson: American Radical* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1981); Nell Painter, *The Narrative of Hosea Hudson* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979); Mark Naison, *Communists in Harlem During the Depression* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983); Roy Rosenzweig, "Oral History and the Old Left," *International Labor and Working Class History*, 24 (Fall 1983), 27-28; Paul Buhle, "Historians and American Communism: An Agenda," *ibid.*, 20 (Fall 1981), 38-45. The most extreme statement, amounting to a defence of the liquidationist class collaborationism of Browder's popular frontism is Maurice Isserman, *Which Side Were You On? The American Communist Party During the Second World War* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1982). Isserman should be read alongside of an interesting, if problematic, source: Philip J. Jaffe, *The Rise and Fall of American Communism* (New York: Horizon, 1975). For the sake of argument, Tom McGrath is worth quoting: "In the '20s the Left had many of its origins further west than New York, and out there some of us had been living with the dark side of American experience for a long time. In the late '30s and even more in the '40s the Left got corralled in the Eastern cities. And I think some of the writers were unprepared for the late '40s and '50s because they had taken in too much of the Popular Front and watered down their radicalism. ... It led people into an optimistic notion of what was going to happen, although after 1946 it should have been perfectly plain what was going to happen. Perhaps it was some sense of this that made

come to blows. Advocates of the old political-science-type histories, with their emphasis on the institutional, narrowly political, and Soviet-dominated character of American communism, are now pitted resolutely against the new champions of the social history of the C.P.¹¹

Scott's life is relevant to this clash of emphasis and interpretation precisely because it reveals the limitations of lining up on one side or another of this debate. The older scholarship slipped too easily into a dismissal of the Communist Party as an imposition on American conditions and experience. Regarded as a foreign import destined to be rejected by the American working class, the C.P. is written off as a simple case of mechanical political knee-jerks ever ready to adapt to Stalinist directives. Permeated with the anti-communism of the Cold War that spawned it, this history was never a satisfactory account of American communism. But the newer writings, for all of their capacity to make the case that the C.P. was about much more than this, have never addressed seriously the Stalinist stranglehold within which rank-and-file communists necessarily had to function, and which so many histories and recollections understate or deny. They suffer from a romanticization of the Stalinist character of the C.P. as debilitating as the dismissive anti-communism of earlier texts. The historical tragedies at the very centre of the C.P.'s history get short shrift in these new readings of the 'richness' of American communism.¹²

To read Scott's remembrances of his life as a communist is to appreciate that the Party described by Draper and Company, whatever the sordid ideological direction of this history, was indeed a historical reality. There *was* a Party ruled by the bureaucratic sycophants of Stalin, a Party intent on following the kinds of orders that would shore up the caste sitting atop the degenerated Soviet workers state, a Party always willing, within its upper echelons, to accommodate the counter-revolutionary program of 'socialism

mé, if not prepared for the long night, at least unsurprised." Quoted in Thompson, "McGrath," 320. As the reader will no doubt appreciate, Scott's post-World War II experiences and confrontations with the leadership of the Canadian Party bear some relationship to this kind of position, as does his description of the changing class composition of the Party in this period. Cf., Mike Davis, *Prisoners of the American Dream: Politics and Economy in the History of the U.S. Working Class* (London: Verso, 1986), 72; Nathan Glazer, *The Social Basis of American Communism* (New York, 1961), 114-116.

¹¹For the battle see Draper, "American Communism Revisited," *New York Review of Books* (9 May 1985), 32-37; Draper, "The Popular Front Revisited," *New York Review of Books* (30 May 1985), 44-50; Gary Gerstle, "Mission from Moscow: American Communism in the 1930s," *Reviews in American History* 12 (December 1984), 559-566.

¹²As a corrective, although not one that goes as far as I might argue it needs to, see Michael Goldfield, "Recent Historiography of the Communist Party, U.S.A.," in Mike Davis, Fred Pfeil, and Michael Sprinker, ed., *The Year Left: An American Socialist Yearbook, 1985* (London: Verso, 1985), 315-356. Yet to be appreciated is Bert Cochran, *Labor and Communism: The Conflict that Shaped American Unions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977).

in one country.' Equally apparent from Scott's account, however, is a Party that people joined the better to intervene in the class struggles of the twentieth century. It is this two-sided appreciation of the Communist Party that is both essential and quite rare.

Ultimately, in my view, it is Draper's Party that prevails, since we can not deny the vital importance of a leadership that directed the Party in certain ways and toward specific ends. But in the long history of Communist Party activity in North America that other Party of rank-and-file communists is also worth understanding, if only to appreciate the ways in which Stalinism squandered so much human material, subverted the course of revolutionary communism, and provided the formative political experience for so many class conscious workers who managed to find their way out of the trap that the C.P. had become.¹³

I have no idea whether Jack Scott sees this as I do. Probably not quite. (When he read this introduction he refused, graciously, to let me know of his disagreements, writing to me that, "it is your opinion and you are entitled to express it without interference or censorship on my part." He added modestly — or perhaps menacingly — that, there were "a couple of points" he would enjoy discussing with me "under different circumstances.") But his words will have to speak for themselves. For the most part what follows is Jack's own account. The interviews that form the text of this book were conducted mainly during two extended sessions in the summer of 1985, lasting about ten days each, when I would tape Jack for approximately 90 minutes at each sitting. These sessions were followed by another encounter early in 1987, when I recorded Jack's reflections on British Columbia's Solidarity and attempted to check with him the spellings of individual names and places. Over thirty hours of taped conversation resulted. On rare issues this material was supplemented by written letters of communication and documents that Jack provided.

All told, these transcribed tapes and other materials translated into approximately 750 pages of text. I then proceeded to edit that text, imposing some coherence on it, organizing the material into chapters, cutting extraneous passages, and weeding out those recollections that were repetitive.

¹³I am obviously calling for a two-sided appreciation of the Communist experience, attentive to Stalinism's capacity to structure thought and action in deforming ways and appreciative of the limited possibilities for political activity open to people like Scott. My view is that this kind of history can only be written by those who take international developments and the importance of leadership seriously and, in addition, are sensitive to the possibilities that a social history of communism holds. This social history has yet to be probed seriously in Canada. The most recent treatment of Canadian communism, Norman Penner's *Canadian Communism: The Stalin Years and Beyond* (Toronto: Methuen, 1988) presents a thoroughly routinized and at times banal discussion of the obvious development of Party positions. At best it is half-sided in its accomplishments.

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In the process I rewrote some introductory paragraphs, tightened up some other material, and provided conclusions that linked the chapters to each other. When I did this I tried to use the kind of language Jack himself commonly employed. After listening to him for so long I found I had some sensitivity to his speech patterns and vocabulary. Purists may quibble with how all of this was done, but it seems an appropriate and standard procedure and the product is as true to Jack's own rendition as I think it is possible to imagine. I would estimate that 95 per cent of the text appears in words that Jack himself spoke. At any rate, the final say was Jack's alone and he was sent the manuscript to read and endorse in its entirety.¹⁴

One area where I was particularly troubled involved the identification of leftists who were members of specific political groups. Jack's taped recollections are notable for their candour and he does not hesitate to associate people and particular parties and political tendencies. As the text reveals this is not a matter that some take lightly, and there has always been an argument within the left that the identities of its ranks should not be revealed to the forces of repression and reaction. Jack, always one to insist on taking a stand, never treated this matter of identification too seriously. Eventually I came to the conclusion that those identified here, most of whom were associated with allegiances and events long ago, would suffer no risk because of Jack's candour. All, in any case, were well-known for their political beliefs and allegiances, and it therefore seemed an unnecessary act of obfuscation to alter Jack's recollections with some kind of code that would mask basic and public political alignments.

A communist life is not an easy life to have lived in twentieth-century Canada. There were always other paths to follow. The course was riddled with setbacks, defeats, and many disappointments. To read about how Jack perceives the life he has led — however much one disagrees with his account — is to be reminded of all of the men and women who have resisted the easy roads to live lives of opposition and challenge. Without them, without the Jack Scotts, our past would be poorer and our future even more murky than it appears destined to be in the dark political times of the 1980s.

¹⁴Note the statement on how the MacEachern autobiography was produced in *MacEachern*, viii-x. While some may want to sanitize oral testimony by correcting grammatical slips I have, for the most part, refrained from such rewriting of Jack's language.

1. IRISH CHILDHOOD

I was born in Belfast, Ireland in 1910 — Northern Ireland since partition — and grew up in a working-class family. My father was a highly skilled cabinet-maker. He died while I was quite young. I never really knew him that well and can't even remember him.

My mother worked pretty well all her life, and was the mainstay of the family for most of the years that I spent there. She spent a total of thirty-three years in Gallagher's Tobacco Factory in Belfast. Of course after the death of my father it was to support myself and my three sisters. So we had a pretty tough life. We had to get out and hack it for a living pretty early. One of my sisters went to school half the day and went to work the other half of the day. I worked on the docks in Belfast before I was fourteen. I tried to hack out a living there as much as possible at that age.

Those were very troubled times in Ireland. Right up pretty well until the time that I left for Canada. Years of civil war ended in the summer of 1926 and I was in Canada by the early part of May 1927. So I spent practically all of my Irish childhood in the midst of a sea of troubles, you might say, actually dodging bullets in the streets of Belfast. And, of course, this kind of thing does influence one's political outlook.

Life was confrontational. I don't mean simply between Protestants and Catholics. Matters were more political than religious although religion historically in Ireland is obviously not an unimportant factor. But it too is based on certain economic and political backgrounds. The Catholics themselves were fighting one another. During the civil war the Catholic community was divided between the treatyites and the anti-treatyites. The treatyites were in favour of the division of Ireland, and stood behind the partition. The anti-treatyites were opposed to it. Some of the Catholic element even agreed with the Protestant position because they were for the independence of Ulster.

Few realize how complex the situation was. There was always a group, for instance, which encompassed both Catholics and Protestants, a liberal faction. They were not liberal in the sense of Liberal party or generally in terms of liberalism as you know it in North America. They were people who sort of took a position of a pox on both your houses. They were opposed to the bigotry of the Orangemen and they were opposed, equally, to the bigotry of the Catholic Church, particularly the bishops of Maynooth who were probably the most bigoted in the world with the possible exception of Poland. They screwed in between. They were an important element in my young days, and my mother was definitely with them; I couldn't tell you if my father adopted this stance, but I assume he did. They are almost totally lost now. The last of the breed pretty well. Two women from this lot won the Nobel Prize for Peace as a result of their position in Northern Ireland. One of them, incidentally, later committed suicide. She could no longer stand the pressure. This is just the type of people I'm talking about. They weren't neutral people. Some think

they were neutral. Not at all. They were in the fight, but they were in a very bad position in the fight because both sides were shooting at them.

Essentially, I was brought up in a Protestant household. But even that has to be conditional because I also have a cousin who is a priest. A lot of my friends were Catholic. I went with a Catholic girl for more than a year before I left Ireland.

So this is the kind of environment that I grew up in and it gave me a particular perspective. This milieu of confrontation was in the air, but it had very little to do with socialism. In spite of the fact that I worked under fairly trying conditions, and that my father was a lifelong trade unionist, I wasn't that much acquainted with working-class politics. With the overwhelming influence of the national question in Ireland, politics and socialist politics didn't enter the situation that much. There was a fair amount of it around Belfast where there was a tradition where Connolly had organized the unions of Belfast and they tended to be in the direction of socialism but there were some serious shortcomings because they were always affected by the national struggle.

The one thing that I remember at that stage of my life was on the docks where there was an anarchist who worked in the same gang as I did. You used to come to work in a jacket, and when you went to work you took off your jacket. I still remember quite clearly the remark this anarchist made to me. "There will come a day," he said, "when the bosses are gonna have to take their coats off." This meant that the bosses were going to have to go to work. This was my only real experience with a person who was dedicated to some kind of a socialist outlook. He was a Protestant who was far more concerned with politics than, say, a Protestant should be. And it had little to do with religion. Of course, that is essentially my position. I want no part of any church. That's the kind of environment I grew up in in Belfast.

My outlook was mainly from the point of view of seeing some kind of settlement in Ireland on the basis of resolving the national question and many Irish Protestants in the 1920s shared this perspective. People get a very wrong idea about some of the Protestant outlook in Northern Ireland because the majority of the Protestants are just as indignant as the Catholics when they're referred to as English. That's carried over with me. I became quite upset when I ran into the same thing in Canada. I insisted that I wasn't an Anglo-Saxon. Our family is pretty well 100 per cent Celtic, but not entirely Irish. Scottish and Welsh and Irish are all included in there which is not unusual in the north-eastern part of Ireland, particularly in the two counties of Antrim and Down. I'm a Celt. That's it. That was my outlook. It was burned into me when I was a child. It was like kids were playing cowboys and Indians or cops and robbers, where youngsters emulated the fighting that went on. In Ireland we used to separate into two different groups and go out on a fight. Sometimes we would come back with some serious injuries. This was the kind of life that you lived as a youngster.

I'm not suggesting that being a part of the working class was inconsequential. You couldn't get away from it. After my father died the family moved in along with my grandfather, an aunt, and an aunt of my mother's. We all lived in the same house together. My grandfather was more or less the head of the house. I remember him mostly now as an old man. We didn't have a lot: no Christmas presents, for in-

stance. The only birthday present I can ever remember getting came from a man who had been engaged to an aunt of mine. He worked in the shipyards. He thought I was scheduled to follow in the footsteps of my father and become a cabinet-maker. He bought me a little carpenter set, a kid's carpenter set. The first thing I did was crawl under my grandfather's favourite chair and hammer a nail that went up all the way through. My grandfather proceeded to sit on it. End of my career as a cabinet-maker.

I guess I was destined for the docks. They were organized loosely, with a fairly strong syndicalist tradition. It is still quite prevalent in Northern Ireland: the syndicalist influence and attitude toward organization of workers. They wouldn't sign agreements. There are still unions in Northern Ireland that won't sign agreements with the boss. They will simply post the conditions and either the conditions are accepted by the boss or there is a strike and something is arranged. But no contract is signed. There's a logic to it. They figure, well, three months from now the conditions might change and we might be able to get more but if we've signed a contract we can't do anything about it. A week later, if they want to, they can go back. Some of them still won't sign an agreement. For two reasons. One is the tactical point of view. If you sign a contract, you're bound by the contract whatever its term is. Whereas if you don't have a contract you can live to fight again in a very short period of time. The other is, you never sign a truce with the boss: he's the permanent enemy and you don't sign truces with the enemy. You fight them. They have found that in the troubles of Ireland this outlook is quite prevalent yet. It has died out pretty well in the south where organization is much more developed. I never recall — and my term at the dock wasn't that long — but I never recall us ever signing an agreement.

Of course I was fairly young — sixteen — and not too involved in union affairs. My grandfather arranged the job for me and that's the way I ended up there. He worked for a company on the docks and so knew about how to get me in. But there weren't many other young people, and most of them around me were older. They were the ones who naturally took the lead. The older experienced hands were the fighters.

My job on the docks soon came to an end. After that I worked for a while in a small bakery delivering buns and what have you. I had no permanent work. I was in and out, too young to experience any real antipathy of a class nature.

2. LABOURING IN A NEW LAND

Staying in Ireland posed a simple problem of eating. My sisters and my mother had jobs in Gallagher's Tobacco Factory which was run by an old paternalistic figure, old Gallagher. It was not then part of Imperial Tobacco, which it would later become. It was almost impossible to get fired at the damn place. In many respects it was an undignified place to work. My mother and my sisters were in there for years and they were quite experienced hands. I had one sister who was a pretty good artist but she could never get any training. She was always an amateur. She's quite good. She was always quite fastidious in her person and quite ambitious. She taught herself shorthand. She never went to school to learn and she managed to pick up typing. She used to hate to come home with her hair smelling of tobacco. She was a very skilled machine-operator. They were using her and my older sister to train the workers. She wanted a job in the office. They wouldn't give her a job in the office. She kept pestering them and they kept making her promises that kept her in the plant because of her skill on the machine. They could pick up office workers, but they couldn't pick up skilled machinists. They only learned it from years of work.

Finally, she got just totally frustrated with the whole thing. Just after the war, she decided to come to Canada. She went in and told them she was leaving. They tried to talk her out of it. She said, "you wouldn't give me a job in the office. I'm gonna go to Canada and get a job in an office." They offered her all kinds of things. And they told her, "well, go on out to Canada for a year and when you find out you don't like it come on back. There will be a job for you." She landed in Toronto in the morning and she was working in the Borden ice cream plant in the office by the afternoon.

She never went back. She was like me. She was one of the travelling kind, which my mother never was. My mother figured that if she ever left Ireland she would step off the edge of the world. When they were bombing Belfast during the war my sisters were pleading with her to go to her sister in Detroit while the war was on. No way. There was a little space under the stairway. When the bombs would start coming over, Mom would get a chair and sit under the stairs. Wouldn't think of leaving the country. Not a chance. Couldn't get her on a boat and planes didn't exist. Unthought of. She lived there all her life. She was born there and lived there into her nineties. She never wanted to go anyplace else. This is your life. This is your home. There's no place else.

Naturally, when I left Ireland it was with no great feeling of joy. I had an uncle and two aunts in Canada, but I never went to them when I came. It was a question of somewhere to go. I had played with the idea of going to Australia. It was either Australia or Canada, because you get a good cabin on assisted passage. It didn't cost very much to go.

There was really nothing all that planned about anything in the future. I was going to some place where there was a chance to get a job. It was just a question

of which place and it had to be a place where I could get assisted passage because I didn't have much money. I had very little to go on. I had to get a job pretty quick when I got to wherever I was going. I finally decided on Canada. There was a sort of extreme urgency to make a living. I didn't want to live off my sisters and my mother. I wanted to make my own money and I wanted to live. I wanted to experience something. I couldn't do that in Ireland. If I could I would have stayed, and been involved in all the things that happened there. Because I couldn't find anything to do in Ireland I had to find a place to go. I could have gone to England. But England never appealed to me as a place to live. It's alright to go there and look around and go back home, but as a place to live it never seemed much to me. I still like to go particularly to London once in a while, but I never think of living there.

I came over on a Cunard liner, on the *Montcalm* in early May of 1927. I was seventeen years old on the twelfth of May, and arrived before my birthday. When I came there was no such thing as Canadian citizenship, and years later when I finally applied for my citizenship certificate remembering the ship and date of arrival was important. A British citizen arriving in Canada automatically became a citizen in six months. I didn't bother that much about it, but then in order to make it easier to get a passport I finally applied for the certificate. I didn't have to go through all the nonsense of swearing allegiance and all that. Some of my Irish friends went back home because they wouldn't take the oath of allegiance. I said it was stupid. If I was in that position I'd do it if I wanted Canadian citizenship. But I didn't have to do it. I could remember the month I arrived in Canada, the name of the ship I arrived on, and the port I landed at. This happened to be good enough. I had no precise date, but I just simply said that I landed in Quebec City in May of 1927 on the S.S. *Montcalm*. That was as far as I remember. But it was enough. They have it all on microfilm and they simply look it up.

They were all young people on the passage over. Facing Christ knows what in their future. They didn't know what they were coming to in this country. There was some Scottish on board. There was some English on board. Quite a few Irish. The ship came into Belfast. We had to go out on a smaller ship because it didn't come into port. There were a few hundred Irish on the ship. Exploring, thinking in terms of where you were going. Out into the unknown. It was neither an unhappy nor a happy occasion. It was that kind of thing. Something people felt was necessary to do so they did it with no great joy in doing it, but nevertheless no great unhappiness about doing it either. There was some kind of a tension. You didn't know what was out there. You were gonna go and find out what it was about. People talked about what they had done at home and what they expected to make up in Canada. I don't suppose any of them ever experienced what their expectations led them to think was going to happen.

You had to get a job..Mind you, things were cheap. But you had to get a job quickly in order to survive. I think, if I remember right, I had two pounds ten shillings when I landed, which at that time would have been equal to about ten dollars.

When we debarked at Quebec City snow was piled up on the dock. It had only snowed once in my life in Belfast, just once. It snowed a great thing, and we had

this big snowball fight. There was snow piled up about fifteen or twenty feet high at Quebec City when I got off the ship. I thought, "What the hell kind of country is this. Where have I come to?"

Well I didn't stay in Quebec City too long. It's not the best place in the world to get work, particularly when you're coming from a foreign country. I headed to Montreal and I got a bit of work there, but then I went outside the city. In 1927, you know, things weren't all that bright. I went out into the countryside. I remember particularly when it came fall and I worked on some of the farms. I lived for maybe a year and a half or two years at a place called Lacolle which is near the New York border, forty-five miles south of Montreal. Apparently it's quite a residential area now with people more or less middle class who work in Montreal and live out there and commute. It's on the Richelieu River. Actually where I lived was a place outside of Lacolle called Odelstown. There was an old church where one of the famous battles of the War of 1812 was fought. I stayed in a farmhouse a couple hundred yards from this old church. When the snow came I worked with another guy. We cut logs and hauled them to Champlain in New York state on sleighs with a team of horses. We'd cut the logs and load them one day and the next morning we'd start out very early in the morning, be gone the entire day, and get back very late at night. We did that and I cut ice in the Richelieu River. The farmers at that time had ice houses and the ice in there was all packed in sawdust. The dairy farms around there kept their milk cool with this ice during the summertime. In spring I made maple syrup, and ploughed. There was always more work. But you got almost nothing for it, your board and a little bit of money.

I did this for a couple of years, then headed back to Montreal where I bloody near starved to death to start with. Then I got a job first of all with McKenna the florist. He had a garden and green house on Cote de Neige on the side of Mount Royal. I worked there for a few months in the spring and then I got a job in construction at University Tower Building which stands at the corner of University and Cathcart streets in Montreal. Twenty-five cents an hour, thirteen hours a day, six days a week. I stood this for a time, but I don't have enough sense to keep my mouth shut. I started screaming loudly, complaining that there was no organization, no union. I was complaining bitterly, particularly about having to work six days a week and thirteen hours a day. You know, that's impossible.

Finally, the superintendent arrived. Long after I got the idea he was probably afraid of the job getting organized. He called me aside and very quietly, of course, he said, "Look Jack, you don't have to come in on Saturdays and you'll still get the money." I'm happy. A couple of weeks later some of the guys come and start complaining to me. "How come you can get Saturday off and we can't?" "Well," I said, "open your big fat mouth and complain and maybe you'll get the same as I got and you won't have to work on Saturday. Don't complain to me, complain to the boss." I was quite sure long afterwards that he didn't want to just fire me. I suppose he might have thought I'd have come back on the job anyhow and organized it and he obviously didn't want the job to go union. I think that was to sort of keep me quiet. I was the only squeaky wheel in the operation. So I got Saturdays off.

3. WELCOME TO THE PARTY

In Montreal in those early days of the depression there were demonstrations in Parc Lafontaine all the time, running battles with the police. There was many a fight as well, particularly with unemployment starting to grow, around City Hall in Montreal. Montreal cops are extremely vicious. Even worse, I think, than the Toronto cops. I was there until May or June 1931.

I remember Beatrice Ferneyhough from these demonstrations. She did her Ph.D. at University of British Columbia some years later. She was quite a character. Even after she got her master's degree, she was working as a swamper on a truck, out in agricultural work and one thing or another. She was just like a guy and she lived with a fellow called Bert Kenny. He used to run the Uptown Bookstore in Toronto. He was a great collector of books. I think his collection now is at the University of Toronto. Kenny and another guy — I'm not even gonna try to remember his name — they used to be in competition who could collect the greatest number of items. I think Kenny was the winner. He had an enormous collection of really valuable material. He and Beatrice were living together for a number of years. From the early days in Montreal, anyways, Beatrice Ferneyhough was one of the most obvious rabble-rousers. She had intellectual aspirations. Sort of half an idea of going after an academic career and another half idea that she was going to be with the battling proletariat. She used to be up there screaming her head off, running like hell from the cops when they would start charging the park.

The Communist Party appealed to me in two ways. First of all, as a bunch of oddballs. Also, however, people who were willing to get up a challenge to what was happening. I couldn't have defined the difference between communism and rheumatism at the time, you know. But I knew there was something bloody wrong. So this is what appealed to me. These people were willing. Like I said, on the job I screamed my head off because I thought I was being unfairly dealt with, unduly oppressed. Anybody who was willing to stand up and scream appealed to my sense of justice. That's the kind of thing that attracted me. I had no understanding of what Russia was all about. What was happening on the ground in Canada, specifically in Montreal at that particular time, that is what attracted my attention.

For a year and a half I just observed. I decided to get out of Montreal. It was a matter of looking for something to do. I rode the freight trains from coast to bloody coast, from place to place to place. I would join demonstrations and so on when I appeared on the scene. I lived in the jungles like thousands of others.

One time in the wintertime I was travelling along with a friend. It was terribly cold and we had been on the freights for about three or four days, maybe longer. The temperature was about five below zero. Cold, hungry, dirty, clothes were filthy. We wanted to get cleaned up. We hit Cayuga, Ontario. At that time Cayuga — now I think it's pretty well industrialized — was a centre of agriculture. I took it as very conservative, reserved. We piled up into it, having come up from Windsor on a train from Detroit to Buffalo. Mainly we wanted to get our clothes cleaned.

We were concerned about getting lousy which was very easy to do and we certainly didn't want to be ridden with lice. We planned on going to jail and washing our clothes in jail where it was warm and we could get water and we could get soap and so on and would be able to get the clothes dried. Of course, we would have jail clothes to wear while we were washing our clothes. We would wash everything: pants, jackets, what the hell.

So we found out where the magistrate lived and we went around to his house, rang his doorbell. The maid came out all dressed up like maids are in these fancy households. We asked to see the magistrate and eventually got ushered into his study. The magistrate asked us what we wanted. We said we wanted to go to jail. "You want to go to jail, what are you talking about," he roared. "We want to go to jail. We want a chance to get warm, get our clothes cleaned up." "I can't send you to jail," he replied. "Oh yes you can," we came back. "You can sentence us for vagrancy. It's happening all the time." "I've never heard of such a thing," he said. "Well, it happens. We're asking you to send us to jail." "How long to do you want to go to jail for?" he asked. "Ten days." "I can't give you ten days. I'll give you a week." So we settled for a week in jail. He made out the papers, and started telling us where to go to the County Jailhouse. We said, "We know it. We studied out the land. We know where it is." "Well, go up and ring the bell. When the warden comes to the door, give him those papers and he'll let you in." All of which happened. So we were in jail, happy with a little warmth and the opportunity to get a shower and start cleaning our clothes.

One of the funny things about this, a local drunk was brought in, somebody who was apparently in quite often, picked up regular. They just threw him in to sober up. They never charged him. His name was Johnny, apparently. So they brought him in, put him in the cell. Not being particularly concerned about him they hadn't pressed him to any extent. So he got in with a bottle of rubbing alcohol which he proceeded to demolish. He really got so bad that he was wetting his pants. One of the guards came in and saw. He said, "OK Johnny, give me the bottle, or I'll throw you out." Throw him out of jail! So, Johnny sheepishly handed him what was left of the bottle so he could stay in jail for the rest of the night at least. One of the sort of humorous events that happened. I suppose there's a certain amount of tragedy to it, but still it's laughable.

These were the kind of experiences you had. I was also going to the libraries. Doing a bit of reading, but not getting that much. It was mostly a struggle for survival.

About 1932, I think, I got more involved with the Communist Party. I wound up in Chatham, Ontario. A group of us got together and we rented a house on Skane Street in Chatham. You could rent a house then with three or four bedrooms for about ten dollars a month. There must have been about six or eight of us that managed to rent this old house. I begged, borrowed, and stole enough furniture and pots and pans to make it livable and we proceeded to try and live there. This was when I became active in the unemployed movement.

At that time the so-called system of relief had started. It was administered by middle class people as a sort of charity. They gave you whatever they felt like. It

would be scrip, you know, to go to a grocery store and buy things. You had to go every week to pick this up. Very degrading. So an unemployed movement developed and in time it involved quite a large number of people. I was the main organizer. Me and my bloody big mouth getting me into more trouble. I was the main organizer of the group, chairman of the association. We made a lot of waves and we won some concessions. We could get things. We secured quite a bit of part-time work from the municipality.

There was no Party organization in Chatham. It simply didn't exist. My ties were so loose. The closest was in Windsor. But the party, apparently, was observing the scene from a distance and decided to move in. A guy by the name of Fred Brimmacomb appeared on the scene. He became a very good friend of mine, was older than I was, and lived out here in B.C. for a time. He's dead now, I think. Anyway, Brimmacomb comes in, gets a few East Europeans together and sets up an opposing group that was going to do battle with us. They held a meeting one night — the Party was illegal at this time — and Fred was up there addressing some of the people as comrades and myself and some others as fellow workers. There was a distinction. And he went on for some time. And then questions from the floor. I got up in the meeting — it was quite a large meeting — to give him shit. I told him that there had been an unemployed operation in the city for some time and that it had been putting up a fight, being fairly effective. Then in comes some people from Windsor, who don't bother to come and talk to us, don't bother to come and discuss with us what you think is wrong, what might be right. They simply come and set up another organization. I really had him nailed. He had to get up on the platform and admit that this was true. It was shortly after that that the two organizations merged and finally Brimmacomb eventually brought up the point that he was in the Party and wanted me to join. And I did.

I knew Buck and the others were in prison. Some think there was a terrible depression in the country and the government was out searching for communists to throw in jail. It's not true. When it came to jail, those eight on the central committee plus Joe Derry, later from the Young Communist League who got sentenced to two years, virtually asked for it. It was totally unnecessary. With the exception of that there was no witchhunt on. The authorities knew what was happening and had pretty close tabs on things. They could have arrested lots more. Maybe they knew this would only help communist ideas to grow.

I spoke on the street corner of Chatham one time. They used to report everything I said in the Windsor *Border City Star*. Everything that I said was usually published the next day. If I wanted to know what I said I just had to go to this paper, the *Border City Star*, and read it. I spoke on the street corner, raising hell about this and that and if there was another war we were going to turn the guns on the capitalist class. The next day I pick up the *Border City Star* to see what I said. Nothing. Three days, nothing. Fourth day, there appeared some statements in really black type, really heavy type. I knew the guy that worked in the Chatham office and I went in and I said, "you never published what I said for three days and all of a sudden it appears. What gives?" "Oh," he said, "that material had to go to the RCMP to be checked." You know, this kind of thing. But they weren't chasing you down.

Not that you could escape all the time. You didn't. You got caught, but not for being a member of the Communist Party. Mind you, a lot of people would report you for being a communist, especially the British. And some people paid a terrible price. Tom Cacic, one of the eight arrested communists, got sentenced to two years plus deportation. He was being sent to a sure death in Yugoslavia. All of the others were supposed to be deported as well. But people that were born in Canada — Malcolm Bruce was born in Canada, so was Sam Carr — couldn't be deported anywhere.

Ironically it was often much easier to deport anybody born anywhere in the British Commonwealth or Empire than it was to deport Europeans, because Europeans could get British citizenship in Canada. The British had no escape. They had automatic citizenship, but it didn't give them anything insofar as that kind of protection is concerned. A number were deported. One German I remember was deported out of Windsor and he was deported when Hitler was already in power. He thought he was going to die, but he was still alive at the end of the war. He'd been in a concentration camp and he survived. There was a lot of that went on, but people going to jail wholesale it's not true.

I could have been in jail lots of time. Not because of the Communist Party and that, but because what I said obviously linked me to the position of the Communist Party. It didn't happen. I remember once in Chatham, we went on a demonstration at the home of a Mrs. Pigott who was the head of this welfare department. She was from one of the wealthiest families in Chatham at the time. A nice big home. We gathered up a demonstration and went there, Brimmacomb and myself. We went to the door, and the maid, a Czechoslovakian young woman, came to the door. "No, Mrs. Pigott wasn't in," she said. The crowd was raising hell but then eventually dispersed. Then Brimmacomb gets picked up, thrown in the slammer for congregating at this private home, and the Party sent Dave Croll's younger brother — I forgot his name now — up to defend Brimmacomb when he came to trial.

I was sitting in the court and this young maid was giving evidence before the magistrate. They were mouthing it off, asking her questions, interfering. I was sitting there. The maid gets told: "I want you to turn around and look out into the courtroom there. See that young man there with the wavy hair — did you see him on the demonstration." Oh my God, you know. Totally wrong, unacceptable. The magistrate says, "I know he's a communist, I saw him myself in the park on May Day and he was wearing a red handkerchief." Outrageous. Stupid.

Later I went to the Ontario Employment Service. "You got any jobs?" "Oh yes." "Where?" "Out at Cedar Springs." Well, Cedar Springs was one of these slave camps. I don't go out there for no job and I walked out. By this time Brimmacomb had been remanded so I organized bail for him. A couple of guys had a little bit of money stashed away so we went down to the police station. I walked into the station and a cop walks up to me. "You're Jack Scott?" I said, "Yes." "I have a warrant for your arrest, being a loose, idle, disorderly person and refusing to work." Bingo. I'm in jail with Brimmacomb. They never pressed the charges. I got out after a couple of days. For me joining the Communist Party was thus linked directly to the unemployed agitation. I soon left Chatham. I went to Windsor for a little

while. I stayed around East Windsor. I spoke at meetings there. I used to go across to Detroit. At that time there was literature coming into Detroit. There was a Party bookstore on Woodward Avenue. Things you couldn't buy in Canada. I used to get stuff there at the bookstore and I had a friend who worked on the railroad car ferry that ran across the Detroit River between Windsor and Detroit. I used to come back on the ferry with bags. If you came back the legal ways there were no customs searches although there were places where you'd be stopped.

I went through a Party school, eight weeks, I guess, in Toronto. Stewart Smith, who was then under the name George Pierce, was director of the school. He'd been brought back from the Moscow school. It was known. I wouldn't call him being in hiding, but he was never picked up.

4. WORKERS UNITY LEAGUE DAYS

It was after the school that they sent me to London, Ontario with credentials to organize the workers. I was supposed to play a double role. Organizing the Party and organizing the Workers Unity League. My credentials were signed by Joe Salsberg and Meyer Klig. Klig eventually went back to New York. They're the two guys that actually ran the Workers Unity League. Not Tom Ewen — he was in jail. They were running it and they gave me my credentials. I lost them somewhere along the way. I wish I still had them. They would have been sort of historic. I went along and I had a whole goddamn territory there. Up to Kitchener and Waterloo, on to Brantford, and down to Sarnia. All of that territory was mine, I was the tsar. I ran the show. I remember I used to go down to Sarnia once in awhile — a couple of contacts, no party group. I started the organization in the Holmes Foundry, during these years, where there would later be a major sit-down strike, in 1937.

My main work for the WUL was in London and Kitchener, largely in textiles and shoes. I was involved with shoe workers quite a bit. It was hard to say it was very effective. Fred Collins was involved in the Kitchener strike. There was great talk about the army and tanks coming in. There were no tanks. There were little armoured personnel carriers. That was quite an effective strike, even though as a strike itself it wasn't won.

There were things that were won and certainly stirred up the community. There was welfare work on the London and Port Stanley railway. You only got so many days per month to work there. You struggle, and they don't give a shit whether you work or not. They came along one day and said there was a 25 per cent reduction in wages. What can you do, strike? You could walk a pretty picket line for the rest of your life as far as they were concerned. So what the guys did was start cutting 25 per cent off their shovels: 25 per cent less pay, 25 per cent less work. That was the answer. You had to adopt various schemes and do the best you could in the circumstances.

Organizing then was different than today. You couldn't do like is done now. Big operation, go and pass out a leaflet and tell them they've got a right to join a union and to come to a meeting, then sign them up. Probably the best example was the group that my first wife, a Finnish Canadian woman, was a part of. Her name was Ann Walters, but she was born Irma Kuliiki Mantere. She worked around the textile plants, organizing, her and another Finn, Helen Coulson, who later wound up as a member of the Board of Control in Hamilton at the end of the war. Then there was Lily Himmelfarb, who was famous as Red Lily. They were a group of organizers in the textile plants. It was really horrible trying to get organized. So many stool pigeons. What they would do is stand outside the plant at quitting time. Each of them would follow somebody home. You'd look up in the street directory and find the names of the people who lived there and then go around and they knew their name and knew where they worked. They'd talk about conditions, about business. Each take one person. They maybe had to visit forty or fifty people before

they'd get one. Someone who would like to do something. Then they were inside the plant. You knew everything that was going on, all the grievances people had. And they'd start writing this up in leaflets. They'd go down and hand them out to workers as they went in to the plant. They handed them out to the workers going in to the plant, rather than coming out, which is the favourite way now. I don't know if it is too early to get up in the morning to get the workers going in to work. But it was the most effective way, because then it got talked about. Maybe quietly, but some way or another, it got talked about. They had the leaflets in their hands you know. They would talk among themselves during the working day, asking what about this and so on. Occasionally you'd lose a group because a stool pigeon would come in, or people would get fired. You had a right to belong to a union of course. But the boss had a right to fire you if he didn't want a union. He pulls one freedom against another and one of them was pretty well cancelled out.

I was involved in one particular struggle with the Dale Shoe Company in Toronto. I was still in London at the time. Charlie Dale decided to move his plant to St. Thomas, a quiet little conservative town, because his Toronto outfit was being struck. Thought he'd just set up in St. Thomas and be home free. There was a shoe factory there on Boston Street. Didn't pay its taxes. The city had acquired the plant and sold it to Charlie Dale. They were happy because they could recoup a few dollars. But St. Thomas was also the centre of the Talbot Shoe Plant, which belonged to the historical Talbot family, which had been set up in the district from the days of the War of 1812. And they weren't too happy to see another shoe plant come into their town, especially if it meant St. Thomas was going to be invaded by a bunch of agitators and strikers. And this is exactly what we did, organized an invasion. Charlie Sims, who had headed up the strike at Dale's in Toronto, got in touch with me and told me what had taken place: "Go to St. Thomas and rent a house. We're gonna move the strike along with the plant." So I went to St. Thomas and got a three-storey house for fifteen dollars a month. The strikers moved in with mattresses and what have you. Sims brought a few people from London and this made the Talbot family most unhappy, because immediately we started giving out leaflets at their factory as well, which, of course, had never been organized. As a matter of fact, I got right inside the plant giving out leaflets and got hustled out by the cops and hustled in to the local police station for questioning. They didn't bother me too much. They turned me loose again. It wasn't long before the City Council got the word from the Talbot family to get this guy Dale out of here. Besides having a strike on his hands, he was Jewish and Jews didn't fit very well with the local bigwigs in St. Thomas, who were anything but favourable to the Jews. So Dale was moved out, a little faster than he moved in. He had to move back to Toronto and he had to sign up with the union and settle with his workers.

London, which I worked out of during these years, was also damned conservative. It was the home of Arthur Meighen, but it was also one of the places where the Communist Party first got a solid group going. A bit of organizing went on, and a strike in one of the textile mills, for instance, won some concessions.

The leading figure in London was Gregoire Aristoff. He'd been there quite a while because he had left Russia a couple of steps ahead of the police in 1905,

during the 1905 Revolution. He was a railroad telegrapher in Russia, some place outside of Moscow. I don't think I ever knew where. While he was on the job in Russia, a telegram had come through to tell the police that a certain group of revolutionaries were on a train due in and he got the wire. So, when the train pulled in he went and showed it to the revolutionaries that were on the train and then he went and delivered it to the police. Of course, the revolutionaries got away, didn't get arrested. But there was a discrepancy between the time that he received the wire and the time that he delivered it so he was a bit exposed. He was advised to get out. He came to Canada and some way or other ended up in London as a railroad telegrapher. Of course, London was for very many years and still is to a large extent a railroad centre, a depot, watering stop. It is possible Aristoff came to Toronto and moved on to London. But in any event when I knew him he was in London and had been there for quite some time, some twenty-five years or so. Aristoff gathered some Russians around him, but surprisingly enough London was one of the few places in Canada where you could find what is fondly referred to as Anglo-Saxons in the party. Actually a couple of them were Irish and Scottish, not Anglo-Saxons. This was rather extraordinary because people from England and the British Isles generally were not that obvious in the party at that period of time. Even in the leadership in Toronto Anglo-Saxons were not that big because you had a fair number of Jewish people — like one of the leading figures, Spector, for example. They had the odd figurehead for a time, like Tim Buck. McDonald was there in the earlier days. I wouldn't call McDonald, nor Buck for that matter, outstanding Marxists but they were the kind of people that were useful and were pushed into the leadership. But for the most part, they were quite scarce in the party. Even when I came in they were notably at a premium. But in London it appeared to be quite different than most other parts of the country. You did find these kinds of people there. And there were a few still around there when I was active in the 1930s. Some had got out of the party for one reason or another and I did come in contact with a couple of them who had been expelled.

It was in London that I first saw Sam Scarlett. He had contacted the Party around the time of the Estevan strike, which he was mixed up in. Sam was from Kilmarnock, Scotland, and a damned fine soccer player. He had been enticed to Chicago to work part-time and be a part-time soccer player for some Chicago company. But he wasn't long in Chicago before he got mixed up with the Industrial Workers of the World, the IWW. He was one of the people in the great roundup of the IWW, and got sentenced to a total of thirty-three years in jail in Leavenworth. He got out after something like three years, maybe less. He knew the daughter of a Senator, I can't remember his name, from around the Chicago area, who took a liking to Sam and went to bat and got her father working on it. Sam got out. He was deported to Scotland, and then returned to Canada.

He was a fantastic speaker. He could speak for hours. He used to be a thorn in the side of the Party because when it set up on one street corner Sam, if he was around, would set up opposite them. Pretty soon he got the crowd, and the Party had nobody. He finally wound up with the Party, though. I was in London at the time he came back from a tour of the Soviet Union. He came down to speak. We

arranged a couple of meetings for him. One afternoon meeting began at one o'clock on a Sunday. It was in the Beck High School auditorium. Sam spoke till five o'clock. Three and a half hours. The platform was about, I figure about thirty feet long, maybe a little bit more. Sam had a habit of walking up and down and shaking his finger with his eyes closed. He'd walk forward the full length of the platform and he wouldn't turn around to walk back. He'd walk backwards with the finger going and his eyes shut. I was sitting there, chairman of the meeting, waiting for him to walk off that bloody platform. But he always just stopped short and went back the other way. He talked the whole afternoon.

We went and had something to eat. We arranged another meeting to start at seven o'clock at the Workers' Centre. He talked until ten o'clock. Then we adjourned over a bottle of whisky, probably a couple of bottles, to the home of a young Scottish carpenter who had come from the Hebrides. Sam spoke for the rest of the night until dawn. One of the most moving things, one of the wonders of the Soviet Union for Sam, was that for one dollar you could buy enough whisky to set old Scotland drunk. One of the great things.

Later on when I was in Toronto during a municipal election campaign, when I was out in charge of Wards One and Eight east of the Don, Sam was nominated as the Party candidate to run for alderman in Ward Two which was just across the Don from Ward One. I used to jump around to headquarters once in a while to have a talk to Sam. He was a real interesting old character with all the background he had. Bill Denison was the CCF candidate and later became mayor of Toronto for a couple of terms. Leaflets started coming out of Bill's headquarters. Sam would be mentioned maybe as many as a dozen times in a leaflet and every time he would be called Sam Scarletti, instead of Sam Scarlett. Sam said, "maybe I'd better go around and have a talk to Bill." So he went around and talked to Bill. "Why do you want to have people think that I'm an Italian. You know that I'm Scottish." And Bill says, "well, you're a Communist and I know that you being a Communist you wouldn't mind if people thought you were an Italian." It was deliberately done from the point of view of trying to whip up prejudice. Ward Two was largely low income, and it included Cabbagetown. Quite a depressed area. Still it was very Anglo-Saxon and there was plenty of prejudice even amongst the poor. Denison was thinking of a few left wing votes straying to Sam Scarlett and he was going to bring them back to his camp by having them think that Sam was an Italian.

London was also a centre of the Ontario Labour Party. Arthur Mould was a chairman of the Ontario Labour Party for a number of years, an old English guy. He thought a great deal of himself. He lived there. There was big noise made about him when he joined the Communist Party. That was when the Ontario Labour Party was automatically defeated. It was Arthur Mould and that was about it. There was a big gesture made about the time Buck came out of jail and a big meeting was held in Maple Leaf Gardens. The leader of the Ontario Labour Party was now declared of the Communist Party. There was those kind of people around London. Some very interesting people. Scottish and English artisans and so on and they had radical backgrounds of one kind or another.

Then there was a fairly large Russian group around Aristoff, as well as some

Ukrainians. Aristoff was a true working-class intellectual. Of course, he had a certain amount of education, obviously, in Russia. He wouldn't be a railroad telegrapher without some kind of education. He had a head start over most Russian workers who were illiterate at his time. Being committed to the Party as deeply as he was, especially to take a chance on landing up in Siberia for the rest of his life, he obviously was interested enough to read. And he was the most knowledgeable person around there that I knew. It was strange that he had never got really involved in any way in the upper leadership of the Party. I don't really understand why not, because he was obviously dedicated to the Party, generally, to the objectives of the Party. But, certainly he was head and shoulders above anybody as far as knowledge of Marxist theories was concerned. Nobody was anywhere near him. He did some educational work among young Russians and young Ukrainians who were around London. Some of them came up fairly knowledgeable people, though I don't know of any of them that really got any positions in the Party. It was strange because even for local leadership the party always sent people in to London for some reason or another. Aristoff was skillful enough in the English language. He lived a number of years in Canada and apparently knew a bit of English before he ever came to the country. It didn't occur to me at the time as being strange, but later on I often wondered why some of them didn't move up in the Party and why they didn't have a local leadership.

Of course the Party did many strange things. Sending people around hither and yon. Sometimes just to get them out from under their feet, as a matter of fact, not because they had any ability. Maybe that's the reason they moved me around once in awhile. As I mentioned, we had a place in London that was called the Workers' Centre where we used to put on concerts and lectures. Then as the unemployed movement grew, the unemployed used to meet there. And many of the people, you know, were into the culture business. I went for awhile when I was there in London. That was before I was married to my first wife. I went around with a young Russian-Ukrainian girl who was a marvelous violin player. She was trained in the Russian style. She was extremely good. There were others who were good singers and good musicians. There was quite a bit of culture, but it was very much confined to particular ethnic groups, except when the unemployed movement started going and then they became involved in that and put on more kinds of public concerts and so on to raise money to help to carry on the fight.

It was at this point that I met my first wife. I was going back between Toronto and London and Windsor. She had just come back from the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute where she had spent two years. She went there when she was sixteen. There was another young woman. I don't remember her Finnish name. She was married to a guy called Jim Davies. Actually, Davies wasn't his name. He was part of a famous Winnipeg family. She was Taime Davies and Ann Walters and her had been to the Institute in the Soviet Union. They were scheduled for a year and they asked for another year and got it. They were there in 1930-1931, about the same time that Harvey Murphy and Hladun — who wrote the article "They Taught Me Treason" — were there.

Ann's father and mother both were Red Finns. You know the first wave of Finns

that came to the country were Red Finns. The second wave which came during and after the Second World War were White Finns. There was dreadful enmity between the two. The Red Finns were quite solid. They had a workers' restaurant and gymnasium on Spadina Avenue, and a hall on Broadview just east of the Don. They were quite a big group at one time. They were originally a temperance organization. The Finnish Organization in Canada was their name but they were a temperance organization. Most of them were anything but temperate.

Some of these women were quite famous, like Lily Himmelfarb, who was known as Red Lily in Toronto back in the early and mid thirties. She was a real rabble-rouser. Little Jewish girl. She was just fantastic. She would battle with police until they had her in jail. Really out there. There was no question of filling a woman's role as opposed to a man's role. You were part of the army and you went out and fought and took your licks, same as anybody else. There were quite a number of them and they had an influence in party circles.

Along in the later 1930s there was a women's commission set up in the Party. It seemed to come up from noplance. One of the leaders of it sat on the central committee. This was to deal with women's questions. I don't know that there was all that much attention paid to it as separate question. But after that we used to get reports. There was a Council of Canadian Women which came after the Second World War. My second wife was chairperson of the British Columbia chapter of the Canadian Council of Women which lasted for a few years. The Housewives' Association, which had a great deal to do with organizing assistance for the relief camp workers when they went on strike, was also started out west. It was generally involved in all kinds of things: relief struggles, demonstrations, and so on and would, like I say, help out on things like gathering up food for the relief camp strikers. Do all these kinds of things. Something happened between them and the Party and the Party set out and apparently deliberately wrecked the outfit, which got to be out of control.

This was out west, however, and I had no direct experience with it. In Ontario women involved themselves mainly in organizing textile workers, particularly around Hamilton and Toronto. They did a lot of work on that. Mostly young women because it was young women who worked in the textile plants. It seemed logical to put them there, give them the job of getting textile workers together. Didn't bear much fruit in their time. Later when the CIO came up the groups that they had established in the plants, more often than not, became the core of CIO organizing drives. This was when organizing work started to pay off. It was a kind of drudgery. You didn't see immediate results. One group didn't know who was in another group, or even if another group existed. You had to keep plugging from day to day. You had to put up with all kinds of defeats. You had to see people getting exposed by stool pigeons and fired. You'd have to start all over again. It was heart-breaking work. It really took a pretty dedicated person to stick to it, to keep trying to do the job.

Some struggles did make a big splash, however. The Stratford strike of furniture workers and chicken pluckers was a big thing in spite of the fact that nothing got established permanently. Nevertheless it paid off in many ways. We certainly

made a big noise anyhow. The chicken pluckers wanted two cents an hour, boy. I wasn't directly involved in the Stratford thing, but I knew the people who were and I knew what was going on. Izzy Minster was actually the formal leader of that. To look on him, Izzy was the most unlikely person to lead any kind of battle. He was a little, short, emaciated, Jewish guy with glasses, very thick glasses. But, mind you he'd get up and talk. He was a real rabble-rouser. Then, of course, Fred Collins was in there as sort of an assistant. Fred was quite a character in his own right. He could do a good job. They were the people at the top of that. Izzy was arrested. I forget whether Fred was or not. Fred was from working-class Glasgow. He drove a tram-car in Glasgow. He served in the First World War. Drove a tram-car after the war in Glasgow. Came out to Canada. Solid working-class background. A good speaker. Very friendly type. A good person. Could get along very well with people.

Of course the Workers Unity League didn't last forever. The decision was made in the Communist International to get back to the so-called mainstream of labour. This was the American Federation of Labor. That decision was dutifully carried out by the Party in Canada, and the WUL was disbanded. It was just a matter of telling the workers. But sometimes this is easier said than done.

There was a plant in Toronto, a four-storey building on College Street near Markham. It was owned by a guy named Pike. The manager was his brother, also Pike. I remember sitting and telling this story to a young woman working at Simon Fraser University at the time. I told the story and she said, "You're talking about my father." Cathy Pike. "That's my father you're talking about." Well, Pike was a Party member. So, of course, two really right-wing characters on the Toronto Labour Council, leaders of the AFL Needle Trades Union, came around to the plant to see Pike and get an agreement signed after they got wind of the WUL windup. The union belonged to us now, was their attitude. Well, Pike threw them out of the plant. He said he wasn't going to sign any agreement with any goddamn reactionary American Federation of Labor Union. Out.... So they had to send Joe Salsberg around to see him and explain the facts of life to him, wanting him to sign up. It shows you, you know, an illustration of just how the decision was applied. There was no vote of workers to do this or that. The decision was made, this was the policy to pursue, and the workers had to go along.

Nothing was discussed with anybody. I was involved in the Workers Unity League. I didn't know the goddamn thing until it happened. I didn't know I was representing an organization that didn't exist, until after it was gone. There was quite a bit of resistance to the thing particularly in the needle trades, which, after all, were the founding stone of the Workers Unity League. The AFL garment workers' unions were terrible and these people who belonged to the Workers Unity League wanted no part of this totally undemocratic set up. Up until this time they had enjoyed a fair amount of democracy. It all went out the window when this decision was made. The very same thing happened in the Fur and Leather Workers' Union. When the Fur and Leather Workers' Union was established, it had to be set up in defence of all kinds of gangsters. People who had laid their lives on the line to get that union all clean, a democratic union, all of those people had to get out

because they were all Reds and the union could only get in if they agreed to resign their positions. The whole thing was total nonsense.

Mind you, the Workers Unity League wasn't that huge an organization, but it had potential. It could have gone somewhere, particularly in the period after the CIO came in. This was a period when Lewis was already battling with the American Federation of Labor for a policy of real industrial unionism, and wasn't getting anywhere. This was where the Workers Unity League belonged, if it belonged anywhere, taking advantage of all of that sentiment for organization that grew at that time. It could have grown as a pretty powerful Canadian union movement with very close relations with the parallel movement that was developing in the States. The whole thing was truly a tragic bit of nonsense that was done in response to a decision made by people that didn't know a goddamn thing about conditions in Canada or anywhere in North America. It was just seen as a tactic that was necessary from the point of view of the Soviet Union. They needed it, so it had to happen and so everybody had to follow suit, so we followed suit. All our work went to somebody else. A lot of people were really angry. If there had been a vote of the workers in the Workers Unity League, I'm pretty sure it would have been turned down by a massive majority.

5. ONTARIO'S ON-TO-OTTAWA TREK AND OTHER UNEMPLOYED STRUGGLES

Organizing industrial workers for the Workers Unity League tends to obscure the character of this period, however. Unemployment was still the big thing, and the unemployed, of course, had no unions to rejoin. They were wandering from pillar to post. They had nothing. By 1934 it had gotten a little better for work, largely because there was a beginning preparation for war. Mitch Hepburn left his seat in Ottawa and took over the leadership of the Ontario Liberal Party. In the middle of the year he routed the long-entrenched Tories in Ontario and got himself installed for a couple of elections anyhow. His campaign manner was to smother the unemployed with kindness; later he was to smother them with anything but kindness.

Almost immediately after the WUL closed up shop, the On-to-Ottawa Trek was mobilized, making headlines across the country in June of 1935. People across the country were ready to join in until the trek was broken up in Regina. The Communist Party was supposed to have plotted all this, making embarrassment for the government, but this isn't true. The political bureau of the Party's central committee opposed it. Slim Evans, the leader of the trek, was actually in defiance of the Party position. It wasn't strange that Evans, who came from British Columbia, should prove a thorn in the side of the Party leadership. BC was always being criticized for being leftist and too militant and not properly analyzing the situation.

Whether the Party liked it or not, however, the On-to-Ottawa Trek was big news and the only thing to do once it got off the ground was get behind it. In Ontario the Party played the key role in getting an Ontario Trek going, a march which a lot of people don't know about. It was started to draw some of the fire away from the people in the west, but it was also meant to be a part of a national trek that would converge on Ottawa. I walked every damn step of the way from Windsor to Ottawa and half of the way back from Ottawa.

We held meetings in every centre that we hit. We'd raise money that way. People would form committees in various places, particularly in Toronto. Food was gathered from grocery stores and individuals brought it out to us on the road in trucks and we didn't eat that bad. We had to sleep out all of the time, or most of the time. I think there was once or twice we got into a schoolhouse to sleep if it was a little bit damp outside. Most of the time we slept outside. We had a commissary truck and a first aid truck, barely able to run. The commissary truck used to go out early in the morning and set up about five or six miles away and make breakfast so we could do something like six miles before we had breakfast. Then, they'd go ahead and prepare dinner at some cool spot at a distance that we could make and the same thing for supper in the evening. And they had an old stove, old wood-burning stove, pots and pans and so on — that kind of equipment that they needed to throw a meal together. Old Mary Flannigan — Ma Flannigan, we used to call her — was chief cook and bottle-washer, a long-time Party member. She had a

woman from Hamilton who was next in command to her and a couple of young women also helped.

There was a lot of support for the movement, which was not just a Party thing. There was a lot of unemployment. It was already at a period when people were beginning to push change, lightening up the political oppression which had been a part of the previous period. We always had enough to eat and we raised quite a bit of money along the way, particularly from Windsor to Toronto. I was treasurer of our tour, stopping cars, getting money from people driving past in cars.

It was still too radical for most of the AFL types. They were opposed to unemployment insurance, figuring if the government was going to get into pensions and unemployment insurance and things like this — this was always Gompers's policy — it would undermine the trade union movement which was supposed to look after these kinds of things.

The CCF was involved to one extent or another. Groups of them. Graham Spry, when he was in Ontario would be involved. There was a minister in Ontario, Ben Spence of the United Church, who was also head of the Temperance League of Canada, and he was active too. He, in fact, became annual chairman for a number of years, of the Toronto May Day Committee with Norman Freed, member of the central committee of the Party, as secretary. At one point — I guess it would have been about '35 or '36 — the CCF made a decision they were not going to have anything to do with this business of the May Day, in association with the reds. So they ordered Spence to leave the committee and Spence refused to go. So they expelled him and somebody from the *Toronto Star* interviewed Spence about being thrown out of the CCF. Remember, I told you he was a member of the Temperance League. He said, "Well, I've been thrown out of better saloons than that." It didn't bother him that much. So you had that kind of support from people in the CCF. The general policy, however, was no.

We got some unexpected aid from Mitch Hepburn. His whole approach, before the Oshawa Strike of 1937, was that he was not going to be part of any attack. After the western trek was broken up some of the trekkers continued on to Ottawa, bussing it part of the way, and making it into Northern Ontario. They got stalled in Kenora, where they were pretty well bushed with nothing to eat and the federal police, the RCMP, hounding them. Hepburn came to their aid: he was not about to let them cross his province to Ottawa, but he helped them back to Winnipeg. This Hepburn attitude showed up in terms of our Ontario trek as well, and we were never really bothered by the Ontario Provincial Police.

We finally arrived in Ottawa and camped at a place called Plouffe Park for about ten days. It was a big empty lot by the railroad tracks. There were about ten or twelve women with us, Lily Himmelfarb and Ann Walters being two of them. We put a big tent up for the women to sleep in but they weren't about to accept special treatment, sleeping outside in the wind and rain.

Of course it didn't get anywhere. R.B. Bennett was still in power and the On-to-Ottawa Trek delegation from the west had already seen him and been insulted and the trek smashed up in Regina.

So there wasn't much for us to do but start back again. We decided that first we

were going to ride the freights back to Toronto. We loaded all the women up on the truck and sent them back to Toronto. In this we weren't up against the Ontario government and the Ontario Provincial Police. We were up against the federal government, the RCMP, and the railroad cops who weren't about to let us ride the freights back. So, we started walking. On the way we decided to make a nuisance of ourselves. We would snake walk, you know, across one side of the highway to the other. The provincial police had been riding motorcycles along side of us. But once we began to snake walk they couldn't ride their motorcycles. So they were ordered off their motorcycles and marched beside us and tried to keep us on one side of the road. All these poor bastards. They're totally out of shape. Riding motorcycles for years. What the hell. No exercise. We were all in top shape. We had walked hundreds of miles. We were tough as bloody nails. So we played a trick. We started very very slow for about five minutes and then all of a sudden we'd speed up and march like hell. And this is deadly. The guys were crying for mercy. When we'd stop to rest they would just flop right on the side of the road. They were certainly in no condition to push us around or beat us up. We had them.

We walked to Brockville. At Brockville they put us up at the hockey arena and gave us coffee and sandwiches. We were not being mistreated. Our only complaint was that they wouldn't let us ride the freights. But in the arena that night there was a meeting of the leading Party group. The decision was made to break out with the group, hit the railroad, get the freights and make that break. Fred Collins was detailed to get a group together that would get out of the arena at midnight or after midnight, go to the railroad, and get on the freight. I was one of the first that Fred picked. Fred and I were old fighting buddies together in the Windsor, Chatham, and London area. The only other one I remember in a group of about fifteen — certainly not more than twenty — was Bobby Jackson who was on the original trek and got through alone and joined us in Ottawa. He was one of the group that headed back on the plane to Ottawa just recently. He was in that group.

I remember him quite distinctly now because he had got through, but also when it was dark, Collins assigned Jackson and myself to go out and find a trail. There was scrub brush and so on out where the cops were. We figured there were cops around there somewhere. We didn't see any but we strongly suspected that they were there. One of the things that I remember was we were down in a ravine — the arena was down in a very deep ravine — and a roadway ran across a bridge over the ravine. I remember a couple — a man and wife — came walking across the bridge and were quarrelling. They got to about the middle of the bridge and the guy grabbed the woman and was going to throw her over the bridge. About half way over. Hell. She was going to come down and she'd be dead. If there was cops around there, none of them yelled, none of them made a move. Fortunately for the woman whoever was reporting for the Party came driving up in a car. Probably suspected something was wrong and slowed down and yelled, "Something wrong? Can we help you?" He dragged her back. "Oh no, nothing's wrong." So, he didn't kill her that time.

We came back and we reported to Collins and in the middle of the night we headed out to the railroad track with Collins. Of course, there's enough of us in the

Party that are old hands at catching freights. There's a good grade that comes up out of the marshland area in Brockville. And of course that's the best place to catch a freight — so we camped out at the top of the grade. We don't know when the train is coming. Come daylight we took up an old tin or an old pail which was usually in the jungles anyhow and took some small potatoes out of the farmers' fields, got some water, got some corn which wasn't really fully ripe yet, field corn, not sweet corn, and we built a fire and we boiled the potatoes and we took the corn with the husks still on them — an old trick in the jungle — and we just threw them in the fire. By the time the husks are nearly burnt through the corn is roasted. It's very good. We were eating on this and the freight starts coming up, so we dropped our pail of spuds and our corn and get ready to catch the train.

Unknown to us, very early that morning — I suppose through the Hepburn government some kind of negotiations had gone on — there was an agreement that the guys can ride the freights. We don't know this. We're up there waiting to grab a freight illegally, while the rest of the marchers have been allowed to get on the freight down at the yards, to climb in boxcars and ride. We don't know anything about this. The freight comes up and we run for the boxcars with the doors open. A guy appears at the door. He was one of the group leaders. His name was Lawrence Mullins from Niagara Falls, better known as Moon Mullins. He later went to Spain and he deserted and he came back and he blasted everything that was happening in Spain. He was the darling of the right-wing newspapers for a few weeks after he came back. "You guys can't come on here," he yells. "We've got permission to ride, you haven't." "Fuck you," we said, and hauled ourselves up on top of the car. That's the way we rode into Toronto.

Later in 1936, I'm again back in London, sort of keeping contact with Windsor, which as far as I was concerned was closer and more friendly than the Party headquarters in Toronto, and a Hunger March starts and I go down to get things organized in London, get a group that's going to join. Picked up people in Chatham and got into London. I had a bit of a hassle, not very important, down in London, with the local people. They argued against the march. Collins and I went and had negotiations with the City Council. They finally agreed to arrange with a couple of restaurants to give the Hunger Marchers a meal. Didn't cost them very much. But they decided I couldn't have the meal because I was a resident of London, so I couldn't have a free meal. All the ones from outside London could; they got a meal and they went on. The Provincial Police were there, but very cooperative. Always coming and discussing with Collins, who led the group on the way from Windsor right into Toronto.

We had the Ontario Federation of the Unemployed at this time, which was led by Harvey Murphy and George Harris. Harvey was president and George Harris was secretary. This was before the war when Murphy was sent west and became involved in Mine-Mill. Harris is dead now. He was a member of the RCMP and was expelled for getting married without permission, which is no big deal. Like everybody else he was stuck with unemployment and he had a hell of a time getting into the Party because he had been RCMP. He finally ended up a member of the politbureau and was involved in the United Electrical Workers with Jackson. It

was the Ontario Federation of the Unemployed which had this march going and it was going to end in a big conference of the unemployed in Toronto. So we had to make Toronto by a certain date. We were on the march and having a great old time, the Provincial Police being very friendly and cooperative and so on. They were very protective of us as a matter of fact. We got into New Toronto and of course with all the walking we had done that was only a hop, skip, and a jump, you know, to get into Toronto. We were going to stay there overnight and make it into Toronto the next morning. There was a Ukrainian restaurant there, an old house on one of the side streets which was turned into a sort of co-op restaurant. They had arranged to give breakfast to all of the marchers. It was so small, you had to eat in shifts. In the morning, Collins was going into Toronto to arrange for the route of the march in Toronto — who was going to go where and so on — and discuss this and so on with the Provincial Police. There weren't many of them, just the numbers to be there in authority and they took Collins into Toronto in a police car.

I arranged that after breakfast we would go to the Tilly Williams shoe factory on a solidarity picket line. A strike had been dragging on there forever. There wasn't even really a picket line there; the place had been dead for about a year. As each shift left the restaurant after eating they would head down to the shoe factory and we'd finally all end up there together. Things had been so easy and friendly that I wasn't expecting any kind of trouble. I wasn't in the first group and it turned out that as each group appeared at the plant gates local police were there to drive them out of the municipality.

When I arrived on the scene there was a group being driven off. There was a little wall there about two feet high. I jumped up on it and yelled to everybody to sit down. I was off the wall in about thirty seconds flat. The favourite way of doing things was for a ring of cops to get around you, keeping the photographers out, and two would be inside the ring beating the hell out of you. I took a beating. Really all bruised around the back. There was a photograph of me in the *Toronto Star* being treated by one of the women in charge of first aid on the march.

Of course, this was on the radio, all over the place. Pretty soon, Collins is back out with this captain, I think, of the Ontario Provincial Police that had been with us all the way from Windsor where nothing had happened. Oh, he was really annoyed. For a couple of hundred miles, nothing happened; very cooperative. We were collecting money from cars and they were slowing down traffic in order to make sure that nobody got hurt, get the traffic behind us by. There was only narrow highways then, so we were able to raise all kind of money from cars. He's really disturbed. Very solicitous about my wounds and so on. He said, "Well, Mr. Collins, what do you want to do?" Collins said, "There's a park in New Toronto on the waterfront where we planned to go start the march from into Toronto. That's what we're still going to do." "Very well, Mr. Collins." He got in his car and he got up in front of the group and we all — under the leadership of the Provincial Police — we went back into New Toronto and lined up where we had planned to march into Toronto.

Hepburn and his government were upset. Of course, with all the blasting around us, the local council police were really under the gun. The council announces that

there is going to be an investigation. A day or two later, I was sitting in the convention of the unemployed and a guy walks up to me and shoves a *Toronto Star* under my nose. "Investigation has been held." The report was out. It was an Alderman Dempsey, I think his name was, was behind it. He obviously asked the Chief of Police to give him a report and the investigation claimed that Scott had been heard at breakfast that morning making plans to break into the Tilly Williams Shoe Factory and smash all the machinery. I said, "Well, it's news to me." If I had thought of it I might have proposed it, but unfortunately I didn't think of it. This was the whole of the investigation. I discovered that I had planned on going back into the era of the Luddites, I guess you can say, into machine-breaking. There was nothing to it.

After the convention was over a lot of people had to disperse and that included some people from Port Arthur and Ottawa. Hepburn, still pursuing his plan of smother them with kindness, assigns highway trucks to take everybody back, which took in some cases a couple of days. To take them back on highway trucks so they wouldn't have to walk.

Locally things could get a little more unpleasant. By 1937 I had been moved to Toronto as a Party organizer. I had been brought in from London and I was organizing in east Toronto. Everything east of the Don was my territory, another huge territory encompassing Ward One, Ward Eight, East York, Scarborough. I was out there in East Toronto as a Party organizer with a group around me, a pretty lively little group. Anglo-Saxons. At the time I am talking about this was territory where artisans from the British Isles had come out and settled — mainly Scots, Welsh, Irish. This was the kind of territory that I had. Now there are a hell of a lot of Germans, Greeks, Italians there, but not then. At that period we spoke on street corners. It was mostly illegal but we did anyhow. So you were always looking for some place that was a good spot to speak to get a crowd. You went where the crowds were. So I was looking around for some likely spots. I was out at the end of Scarborough Beach Boulevard which was just behind the old racetrack there. People walk along the lake and along the boardwalk in the summertime. I was wandering there one Sunday night and I saw a little religious group with banjos, guitars, what have you, thumping out hymns, slamming on the Bible. So I thought this was a likely spot here. If they could do it we could do it. So that week I got some of our people together, talked about it. "Let's go down there and have a meeting." "A good idea." Well, what do we do by way of tactics? We get somebody to speak in front of us, and we take over afterwards.

So we went and we conned a guy by the name of Honeycutt. Sort of a lay preacher who was connected with the Fred Victor Mission in Toronto, giving soup to the unemployed around there. We sent a couple out there to talk to him about coming down and speaking on the beach about unemployment. Terrible situation. He agrees. He came there about seven o'clock. And the cars there on a Sunday evening in the summertime were parked literally bumper-to-bumper. You couldn't move out of the lineup. He stood up on the bumpers of two cars and he spoke. Quite a crowd gathered around.

A Party member, a carpenter by the name of Joe Smith, had made a little col-

lapsible stand you could stand up there, and it raised you so high from the ground. It only reached so high but enough. We arranged that I would be in the chair, which meant that I would have to draw the crowd. This was always the task of the chairman in a street corner meeting, to draw the crowd. Then the speaker would take over. You know, you just got up there and yelled any goddamn thing you could think of. The idea was to get a crowd together. That's all. I was to do that. There was a guy by the name of Fred Hackett who was to do the speaking. I would introduce him to the crowd. I was told: "The police will come. Of that there was no doubt. Do not get off the stand unless they say they're going to arrest you. Stay there." So we did that. Honeycutt does his thing without knowing what was going to happen. We set up the stand and I get up to start the thing. Pretty soon we have a crowd of four or five thousand in no time. I get up and introduce Hackett and he starts speaking. A cop moves in. I don't know where the hell he came from. One lone cop. "I want to speak to you." And then, in spite of all the regulations we laid down, Hackett jumps off the bloody stand. I think he still had one foot there when I got up. The cop says to me. "I want to speak to you." I said, "Do you want to arrest me?" "Oh no, I don't want to arrest anybody." I said, "Then go away and quit annoying me, I got work to do here." He tried it a couple of times and finally he gave up and went off. He showed up again along with another cop and the inspector of the division, which was the Main Street division.

Inspector Greenwood came all dressed up and wearing a white Panama hat. He must have been dragged away from some summer evening party. He was a big guy. He had a rear end that must have been nearly a meter across. So help me, it was fantastic. So he comes amongst the crowd and taps me on the shoulder. "I want to speak to you Scott." "You gonna arrest me?" "No I don't want to arrest anybody, I just want to speak to you." I said, "Look none of this nonsense of resisting arrest. If you want to arrest me, I'll get down and I'll go with you. But if you don't want to arrest me, I've got work to do. This is my job. Go away and quit annoying me." And I turned back to the crowd. "Look, Scott, I really would like to speak to you." I said, "Look, don't annoy me. Bug off." He said, "Alright Scott, I'm gonna arrest you." "OK." I got down. "Let's go." Right away Joe Smith rushes in, grabs the platform and he runs off. He was going to save his bloody platform that he made. To hell with anything that happens to anybody else. He's off with it.

I had to walk up to Main Street which was a mile or so, and then a cop takes me to the police station. I'm there till after midnight. The crowd follows me. There must have been about two thousand people up at the police station. There I am waiting in the office for hours. Finally Greenwood showed up. I only got afterwards all the details of what happened. When he got me out of there, all kinds of people started jumping up. One of them was David Archer who became head of the Ontario Federation of Labour. He was in the CCF, and was a left-winger. I knew him quite well. They were jumping up on benches and starting to speak one-by-one. A cop would have to rush over and drag one down. But as soon as he dragged him down, they'd have to let him go and go and drag somebody else down. One of the Party members, Barber Smith, got up on the bench and yelled, "Comrades and fellow workers." He ran a barber shop on Danforth Avenue near East Lynn, and had

three daughters, was an old English guy. He told me that a policeman had dragged him down and it was a bloody good thing he did because he didn't know what to say next. It ended up that I was the only one picked up. They brought them up to the station, but they let everybody else go.

In the process this Greenwood was in the middle of the crowd, they're around him, they're pushing and shoving. And some youngster climbed up one of the Party member's backs. Some kid, you know. Got up on his back, up to his shoulders and reached over and knocked the beautiful Panama hat off Greenwood's head. Of course it was the immediate reflex to bend down and save the Panama hat. Somebody let him have it. I think it was someone with a pointy shoe. He was red in the face when he finally got to the police station. "Scott," he said, "that was a terrible exhibition." He says, "You know I got the most ungodly kick in the arse." I sat and laughed. I didn't know then what had happened. I said, "Well, what am I charged with." He said, "I'm not gonna charge you. You can go, just don't hold any more meetings there unless you get a permit." I said, "You know as well as I do that I can't get a permit to speak there. They'd give me a permit for some godforsaken spot that no one knows exists." "Well," he said, "no permit, no meeting." I said, "Well, next Sunday, rain or shine there will be a meeting in that spot." He said, "We were not ready for you, but we'll be ready next time." I said, "That's fine, we'll be ready too." He said, "I'm warning you, no meeting without a permit."

I gave him shit for not lodging a charge again. Then I walked out into the main part of the station and there was a guy waiting there named Charlie Routcliffe, who had bailed Buck out. He was arrested and waiting there. Charlie says, "What's the bail?" I said, "No bail, the son of a bitch won't lay any charge." So we walked out. We got out to the steps up from Main Street up to the station, about ten feet above the sidewalk. It was one o'clock in the morning. There wasn't much to do when you were unemployed. A couple of thousand people were there. So I got up on the top step and had a meeting at one o'clock in the morning. By the next week this was all big news. The Party leadership hadn't been part of this at all; it was only a local East Toronto activity. So I went to talk with Stewart Smith, who was an alderman then. I told him we were gonna have a meeting on Sunday night. I asked him to come out and be a speaker which he agreed to.

The next Sunday, I started for Scarborough Beach early. I was living on Walpole Avenue at the time which was a couple of blocks from Queen Street. I was almost on top of the old car barns on Connaught Street. I lived right across the street from Fred Dowling who was one time head of the food workers packers' union. Anyhow, I got to Queen Street and good Christ almighty, they were coming on horseback, they were coming in special little vans that would carry a platoon of troops, they were on motorcycles, they were on bicycles. They were coming in every goddamn way. Cops. Eight hundred of them according to the newspaper reports. There were a thousand police in Toronto at that time. Eight hundred of them were on the eastern beaches that night, 80 per cent. Robbers should have had a glorious time that night. But also people who had got the word about the previous Sunday and knew there was going to be another one. They came with box lunches

during the day. Thousands of them. All over the place. We were going to have one hell of a time.

Stewart Smith was there. I went to him and said, "It's OK. We set up the stand. We'll open up. I'll introduce you. I'm the one that's going to be up front there and get a bloody good beating." Smith, who was the Party secretary in Toronto then said, "People come down here to enjoy themselves. It's a nice summer night. They don't want to be annoyed by this kind of thing." I said, "For Christ's sake Stewart, there's fifteen thousand people here who came because we're going to hold a meeting." "No," he said, "I don't think we should disturb the pier. There are a lot of fancy apartments down there." As a matter of fact, there was one guy there who owned an apartment — at that time it would have been worth a quarter of a million dollars — and he was a Party sympathizer, wasn't a member. I used to get money off him for the Party. He always looked like a bum. He was out on his own front lawn and when the scuffle started the police came and told him to move along. He said, "What the hell are you talking about. I own the goddamn place." The cop wasn't about to believe him really.

The police moved in quickly and pushed people around. The big headline in the *Globe* the next morning read: "Twenty thousand reds battle police in East Toronto." I was depressed.

There *were* about twenty thousand people out there. There might have been more. An awful mob. But there wasn't much of a battle. I would calculate that at least two-thirds of them came there ready to fight. It would have been a melee, if I had got up as Smith had agreed. I don't think he would ever have got to the stand anyhow. Really, from a personal point of view, if he used his bloody noodle, he had nothing to be concerned about. The cops weren't about to let me go ahead and start up a crowd. As soon as I opened my mouth I was going to be out of there. I was all ready to go. I don't mind a cell. It didn't get going. But I was ready to take my licks.

We outnumbered the police by about two thousand to one in the first go-around at the Scarborough beaches, but on this second occasion the odds were really against us. Greenwood was certainly laying for me. He wanted to get his hands on me. I guess I can thank Stewart Smith for not giving him a chance. But he got his opportunity later. It came around the eviction of a woman, Mrs. Patterson.

She was the sister of Tom Bell, and was an old original with the Party. Bell himself had been the Party organizer in Manitoba about 1923 or 1924, and before that had been in the Socialist Party of North America. He was a Scottish guy, came out here and got involved in the socialist movement. He spoke several languages. He ended up in the Comintern and worked in Moscow for several years. I don't know what happened to him. He probably drank himself to death. He was a terrible boozer.

This was his sister. Not that it made any difference. Anybody would have been evicted the same. We went up there intending to do the usual thing: pile on the furniture, block the eviction, win Mrs. Patterson the right to stay in her home. There was only a few of us because it was a quick thing. We heard about it and we got into it, wanting to stop the eviction. There was a lot of that kind of thing in the 1930s. As a matter of fact, Phil Hughes, who ran a little house painting operation

with his son, left his son in charge of a job that they were doing and came down. Bill Smith shut his barber shop and came down and eventually there was ten of us got arrested. One guy passing on the street jumped into it, got trotted down to the slammer, and was then let loose when the cops figured out he was just swept up in the emotion of the thing. We later recruited him to the Party.

I was the first guy they got. They dragged me out of there and had me in a patrol car and down to jail in no time. And then the others started drifting in. Hughes covered with blood. He'd been beaten up a bit. So was Barber Smith. We were all charged, of course. We all got to court. Trial. The eviction was carried out. We appear in court charged with resisting the police and so on and so forth. We're all getting up in the stand and speaking for ourselves. Each one got up, handed the Bible, took the oath. I'm the ninth one. And for no particular reason I took the stand, they shoved the Bible up and I said, "No, I don't swear on the Bible." The magistrate — a real stupid character — I forget his name, he said, "Well, you have to take the oath." "No I don't. I know what I can do. I've been here before." Well, he dragged out a bunch of law books. Three or four huge law books. Held up all the proceedings, must have been for about twenty minutes or so, looking through these law books. Finally he looked up at the bailiff and he says, "He's right. He can affirm." And he turns to me and he says, "But it won't do you any good." I didn't do it for any political reason. This was my position regardless of politics. I don't swear on the Bible. That's it. It never occurred to me that this bastard on the bench was so stupid as to make a federal case out of it.

Guy by the name of Pratt, who unfortunately committed suicide about three or four years later, was next. So Pratt, of course, getting up, he figures he has to be in solidarity with me, so he won't swear on the Bible. So, we're all found guilty. Standing in the line. Ten days, ten days, ten days. He gets to me. Remanded ten days for sentence; Pratt, remanded ten days for sentence. We all go off to the Don Jail. We do ten days. Everyone gets out except Pratt and me. We go back to court. The magistrate is very fair. He's not going to allow all of this nonsense with the Bible to be heavy on us. He just gives us the same ten days he gave everyone else. The only thing is we had already done ten days.

The Don Jail had been condemned for fifty years then and you're in the cell block with eight cells, in the middle was toilets, toilet bowl, wash bowl, four cells on each side, one person to a cell. Something that would not have been out of place in the Spanish Inquisition. Huge, vaulted, stone chambers. Roof about twenty feet up with an electric bulb stuck in it. You were in the cell twelve hours out of every twenty-four. Six o'clock at night, you were in. The gate was locked. Six o'clock in the morning you got out. At supper, the last meal, we used to get ordinary dried bread, some slices of onion, some salt and pepper that we used to take to our cell to eat after — about nine or ten o'clock at night. We had a big half-pint tin mug that we got water in. The signal of being locked up, the warden would come to the end of the big cell block and he would yell, get your water. Everybody would dash to the toilet and fill the mug with water and get back to your cell. All you had all night to look after your bodily needs was a little tin potty, and fervently hoping that you didn't have to do anything more than piss during the night. Well, Hughes got

constipated. He went to the doctor. The doctor gave him two big pink pills. He was going to take these pills to bed. I told him not to take both of them, to take one and take it well into the night. "Oh no," he said, "I'm terribly constipated. I'm going to take both of them." They wouldn't drag you out of this goddamn place unless you were dying. They might take you out for a medical examination. They won't let him just go to the toilet. In the morning when he brings his potty out to the toilet, everyone is giving him way first.

Even in jail you could see the impact of unemployment. I was always looking for someone sympathetic. After about three days a little guy came in, a little short guy. As soon as he opened his mouth I knew that he was born so close to the bells of Mary Le Beau that it must have nearly driven him deaf before he got out of London. Cockney. Thorough-going cockney. I went up to speak to him, find out about him. I should say that at that time the relief offices, come spring, if you were single or if you had your wife and no children, they'd simply tell you well, you can get out of town and look for a job. It was of no moment to them that there were tens of thousands on the roads and not getting jobs. You could get out of town and look for a job. They wouldn't even give you your relief for the coming week. No warning. Cut off. Well this guy, I asked him what he was in for? He had gone down to pick up his relief. He got there and they told him to get out of town and look for a job. He got mad and kicked in the relief office window. So, I started giving him the line. No more than a couple minutes and he was on to me: "Oh, just a minute, you're one of those terrible communists trying to do away with our king and queen." The warden came. "Come on Scott, come on out of there before you get yourself in trouble." He moved me to another cell block.

Tens of thousands of demonstrators, militant as hell, ready to fight the cops, and some thought they must all be rip-roaring, raging Bolsheviks. Many of the kind of people that get mad at the way they were being treated were so goddamn far from being communists. Often these were the kind of people, not quite his kind that was worried about the demotion of the king and queen, but not too far off it, who became members of the Communist Party. This was indicative of the kind of party that the Communist Party became in the 1930s. These were the kind of people who came in there.

After the Party was legal, it was easier to recruit than when it was illegal. You had to be very careful who you contacted when the Party was illegal. You'd have to work over a period of time in order to get to know them. But when the Party was legal, you'd speak at meetings on the street corner, sometimes in halls and church basements. Unemployed marches. You'd always have your eye out for the likely people that you could recruit. People would come and ask you about the Party. Some people would come and ask you and sort of thrust themselves upon you. Some were sometimes for strange reasons quite militant and quite for the Party, but were not keen on joining. One who I thought was real good material for the Party — when I asked him to join, he said, "We don't need a party. All we need is for Tim Buck to tell us what to do and then go out and do it."

Another guy I thought was maybe a candidate for the Party, but I never got the chance to work on him. He was a United Church minister. This was a time when

we were spending a few months organizing an unemployed rally. We were going to march in from various sections into the centre of the city. It ended up a monster rally. We were looking for places to hold meetings where we had never held them before. One of the places we went to see about was Glebeholm United Church on Gerrard Street East, Toronto. We went in there and talked to the minister. His name was Reverend Corry Almack. We put the proposition to him. He said, "Well, I'll have to take it up with my church board. Come back and see me." So the next day we went back to see him and he said, "Well, my board has agreed, but they laid down a condition that I have to open the meeting with prayer and close the meeting with prayer." "Well," I said, "as long as you let us hold our meeting between prayers, it's fine with us." So, we had the meeting. Of course, he attends the meetings. There are three or four meetings a week for a total of maybe about three weeks. And he's at these meetings getting the propaganda without even saying a word.

The day we line up in our district to start the march, here's Almack. Out on the march. Gerrard Street East was a fairly neat, middle class district. We got out to City Hall. A battle had started with the police. I thought I was going to get my brains knocked out. It was a time when there was a big stink in the police department. Police on night beats had set up a gang and were robbing all kinds of stores. They were caught by a Jewish guy who got fed up with the police not catching anybody and he stayed in his store for about five or six consecutive nights with a baseball bat. He finally caught one of the guys that had been breaking in and it was a policeman. They got dubbed the 100 per cent gang. In other words there was no danger of them getting caught, supposedly. I said to one of these cops who was flourishing the baton around there, "Are you a member of the 100 per cent gang?" I thought he was going to go completely out of his mind. I looked around and who did I see squaring off in front of a cop, but the Reverend Corry Almack. The guy wore glasses, was tall and thin. I never got a chance to see if he would join the Party or not because the church moved him the hell out somewhere north of Toronto, about a hundred miles or so from the Party altogether.

There were organizations to work with and in as well. The East York Workers' was quite a large association. Essentially it was an unemployed organization although there were workers that belonged to it. And it was, in a rather loose sense, affiliated to the CCF, but there were Communist Party members who belonged to it. Most of the Party members in East York were in the East York Workers' Association, so it was fairly wide open. I'm not talking about Party members who secretly joined, but members who were open about their Party affiliation, like my friend Jerry Flanagan. He was a leading figure in the EYWA, and even though there were right-wing CCF elements who were always assailing the Communists within the Association, they couldn't get rid of them.

The EYWA was a fairly effective organization at the time, and led demonstrations, protected people from eviction, and held forums and discussion groups. Next door, in Ward Eight, we had a Workers' Association as well, but it was run by the Party. We had big meetings, fairly effective meetings. We had a hall above a theatre that we met in regularly, ran dances, and one thing and another, raising a bit of money to carry the struggle on.

There were always opportunities to do something, unemployment was such an issue. When the Bennett election campaign was on in 1935, the time he was defeated by the Liberals, Bennett was campaigning across the country. Every place he went he was heckled. Really quite bad. When he came to true-blue Tory Toronto nothing like this was supposed to happen. There was a big meeting scheduled for Maple Leaf Gardens. Admission was by ticket. People were thoroughly screened and so on. A secret Party member had some contacts and he used them to get tickets and give them out. Nothing organized, you understand, and the tickets were scattered around to a few individuals. Jerry Flanagan and I got a pair and off we went to Maple Leaf Gardens. We got in the end two seats in a row of maybe a dozen seats, right up against a cement abutment. Everything went quite well, and Bennett was paraded in by a piper to open the meeting. There were speakers before him, and the chairman made an address, and nobody said a word. Bennett was introduced and got up to the lectern. "Ladies and gentlemen," he started, and somebody let him have it. He stopped. "They're here, they're everywhere," he screamed.

Jerry and I got into it as soon as we heard. There were Tories all around us. We were boxed in our seats and to get out would have had to come past all the people sitting between us and the steps down. They were really pissed off. Finally at the end of the meeting Jerry and I stood up to go out and just at that point they decided to play "God Save the King." Jerry, a respectable Newfoundland Irishman, put his hat on and sat down. I didn't have a hat but I sat down. Boy, we were being assailed. A cop came and he called us out, took us downstairs. The meeting was breaking up by this time and I said to the cop, "How about taking us down to the station? I'm tired of standing around here." He said, "I'm not taking you to the station. I didn't take you out of here to arrest you. I took you out to save your life. And you're gonna stay here until the crowd disappears." When it was finally all over he said, "OK., you can go."

Like Bennett said, "We were everywhere."

6. INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZING

All of my time wasn't spent on unemployed organizing in the late 1930s, though a good part of it went into that movement. When I was based in East Toronto I stayed at the home of a Party member and they paid my board to start with. I'd get very little beyond that, mostly I was pretty well starved to death. There wasn't much in terms of industry there east of the Don. A certain amount of light industry and so on. There's been some changes made in the past years, but it was largely a residential area then. In Ward Eight in particular there were many British artisans who had come out in the years previous — carpenters, plumbers, electricians, what have you — and settled there. This was the kind of people that were there.

The CCF was relatively strong out there, and there was often not much love lost between the CCFers and the Party. Bill Smith that I've mentioned several times — the barber — was an indication of this. He had three daughters and his wife had been dead for some years. He had raised them himself. Three really fine looking daughters, really good looking girls. One of them started going with Dave Archer. At that time Archer was parading around as a great left-wing CCFer. Of course, left-wing CCF or not, Bill was really put out. He told his daughter, if you're going to go with that goddamn social democrat, get out of the house. And she did leave the house. She went to stay with Dave's people and they got married shortly after that. Bill remained bitter all his life. When I was in Toronto in 1963 over a quarter of a century later, I went down to the Danforth terminal and the little barber shop was still there. I went in and there's Bill still running the clippers and scissors. There was none of his daughters at home by then. Do you know, he wouldn't mention the name of the daughter who married Archer. I didn't bring up the subject, he brought it up. The way he brought it up, he said, "Do you know that Dave Archer can afford to buy his wife mink coats." She later died of cancer, I guess about seven or eight years ago. Old Barber Smith was very rigid to say the least.

There wasn't much industrial organizing to do in East Toronto, but it was about this time, in 1937, that a major struggle broke out in my old district, near Sarnia.

I began the original group at the Holmes Foundry in Sarnia during my WUL days. It was a secret group. I had the contacts and it developed. At first, it seemed to me that the plant belonged with the United Auto Workers because they made blocks for motors. So I went across to Port Huron to try to talk to some UAW people. I got the ferry and was on my way. I went through immigration. They don't ask me my name but come out quick, "Just where do you think you are going?" "Oh, I'm just going over to town," I said. "Going to have a drink, go to a show, come back in a couple of hours." The guard just laughed. "Scott," he said, "you aren't going to any goddamned show or to have a drink. You better just turn around and go back." He put me back on the ferry and so it was a return trip to Sarnia. It was then that I appealed to the Steelworkers, which was run by the Party then, for some help. So that involved them and got Milt Montgomery into the act. I first heard of the fight going on at the Holmes Foundry in Toronto at a meeting, a Party meeting. I

forget what the hell it was about. Joe Salsberg came in and he called me aside. He said, "You'd better get back to your territory. Get to Sarnia, all hell has broken loose. There's been a sitdown strike." So, I'm out and there's no travelling on planes or anything like that. I was on the bloody road with my thumb out. I rode part of the way on a freight train. I put my old freighting experience to work and I got to Sarnia. The committee had gone and talked to the manager about some grievances. He told them to get the hell out; they were all fired. They walked back out into the plant and they pulled the main switches and they told everybody to sit down. A sit-down strike.

For a couple of days, the employers went to work and they got young guys off the farms for miles around. They had them all whipped up against communists. They had them out in the Blue Water Inn along the Blue Water highway. They gave them drinks. Most of them had never had a bloody drink in their life. They brought them in to recapture this plant from the reds. Some of them got up on the roofs. They had fifty-pound ingots of steel to throw down on the demonstrators through the glass. They backed a truck into the door and pulled the bloody door off. Pulled it right off. There was a guy with two broken legs, a guy with a fractured skull. I remember a black guy there carried an IWW card. He bloody near got himself killed. He went over the fence and he got his jacket hung up on the fence. He had to struggle out of his jacket and run like hell. They were after him. A guy by the name of Nichols who was recognized as a leader of the union had his legs terribly battered up. They were all black. He got hit with a couple of these ingots. Had to be carried out on a stretcher. When he was being carried out, one of these goddamn scabs had an iron bar in his hand and he raised it above his head and sliced him across the mouth.

The plant was in Point Edwards really. It's not in Sarnia. Sarnia was just across the street, right on the border. The scabs and security guards from the plant were hauling strikers across the street and handing them over to the Sarnia cops to have them thrown in jail. Nobody would do anything. Montgomery came in at the time. He got there ahead of me. He only had to go from Hamilton and got there sooner. He was in there and some vigilantes got him, took him up the highway and beat the shit out of him and told him not to come back. He struggled back to his feet and hitch-hiked into Sarnia. The whole scene was out of control. We began to survey the wreckage. Vigilantes were terrorizing the whole community. They were breaking in to the company shacks, stealing little bits of money the workers had, beating them up. The cops would do nothing.

One funny thing happened. The top mandarin in the Ministry of Labour, which was then the Hepburn government, was Croll and Croll and Hepburn dispatched this top-flight guy of theirs to make an investigation of what was going on in Sarnia. So he comes to Sarnia and he goes up to a filling station to fill up with gas. When he's getting his fillup he starts asking the owner questions about the plant. The station owner wasn't very cooperative and calls the cops and says, "this guy is getting really nosy about what's going on." So the cops stop his car, want to know what his name is. He says, "none of your goddamn business." "What are you doing in Sarnia?" "It's none of your business." He ends up in jail. He won't tell them any-

thing. One of their top-flight people is in the bloody cooler overnight. Phone finally rings: "Get him out." Really quite funny.

We had over two hundred guys arrested. Montgomery brings in a labour lawyer, J.L. Cohen. He discusses things with him and so on. We arrange one guy will be tried. The decision will hold for everyone. I left. I met Montgomery later and he said, "Jack, is there any way you can raise one hundred dollars in a hurry. Cohen won't go in to court until we give him a hundred bucks." I had a bloody time with a few business men in the community and I picked up a hundred dollars and handed it to Cohen. This is the great labour lawyer. Anyway, we got that all finally settled. The guy was found guilty, which we knew was going to happen.

This was in the winter. A lot of these guys that worked at Holmes didn't have permanent year round jobs. A number of them also worked on the docks in Sarnia. A fair amount worked there. That spring it happened there was to be a big dock strike in Ontario on the Great Lakes. I'm centred in London. It was about two or three months since we took this fucking beating. No point in going out. They're not going to touch this thing with a forty-foot pole. So I don't bother. Then I get a telegram from Sania asking me to come down. So I went down with my thumb out on the road and they're out on strike. Got a goddamn picket line five miles long. They have a little shack there near the picket line. I went in and they said, "We wanted you to come down and give us a hand to organize and help us keep this thing going." There was only one condition. "If anyone gets hurt, it's going to be scabs, it's not going to be us." I had no argument. It was fine with me.

There used to be young lovers would go down to the park, down to the dock. You could look over Lake Huron. There were busses down there, there were government laboratories down there, their railroad tracks stopped there: we shut it all down. I went and told the bus company to stop going through the picket line. The bus company said, if you find any scabs on our busses you can throw the goddamn busses in the ditch if you want. There aren't any scabs riding the bus. All these young lovers going down there Saturday night, Sunday night, they got a bit hostile sometimes. We went and told the railroad unions that anybody going to work had to check in with us to go through the picket lines. They said, "That's fine. We have one guy that won't join the union. Can you do something about it?" "Sure." The next morning everybody comes down to get a union card. Finally, this one guy: "No, I don't belong to the union." "Sorry, you can't go through this picket line." So, he had to go join the union and get a card so he could go through the picket line and go to work.

There was one way to get through the picket line, and all those scabs had to run the gauntlet. One of the bosses came down and tried to cut across an empty lot with a carful of scabs. They just moved in on him with rocks. They did seven hundred dollars damage in five minutes. That was a lot of damage in that period to a car. Sent three of the guys to hospital. That was the end. The next thing that happened was that they marched in a bunch of provincial police and they bring them down to the hockey arena which is right in the middle of the goddamn picket line. Marched right in. Well, this was provocation. Down to City Hall we go. "We're not gonna interfere with you," they say. "We got no place else in town to put them."

“You’re right in the middle of our fucking picket line,” we tell them. “That’s provocation. You got no right to be there.” “They will not interfere with you.” We said, “Well, any interference and there will be a battle.” Which they knew already.

They never did interfere. The company made a mistake. They had one of the big passenger ships on the lake called the *Noronic*. It burned after the war. A number of people died. They were going down river, beyond the picket line, picking up scabs, bringing them back down the river to work. They couldn’t do it every day. All the time they were on the job, they had to pay them. It cost them a mint of money, \$2000 every time they turned the goddamn ship around. We didn’t worry. We knew this kind of thing couldn’t keep up. There were scabs coming in thinking they could get a job. Provincial cops stopped them. “Where are you going?” “Well, we’re looking for a job.” “On the docks?” “Yes.” “Do not go through that picket line. Do not try it. We will not guarantee your life. If you want to get a job on the docks, you go down the river there where the *Noronic* is.” The company complained. They said, “Look you started the system of running that ship, that’s what’s going to happen now, that’s the way it’s going to stay.” Another day there was a conference in Toronto for all the various groups. Two guys went up to Toronto for this conference and they came back a couple of days later. They were as indignant as hell. They came to me saying, “You know what’s happening? There’s scabs going in and working on the dock in Toronto and nobody is doing anything about it. All you do is kick the shit out of them to stop them coming.”

I had to go up to London one day. I can place this fairly accurately too because something happened. Of course I had to hit the highway just out of town and try to catch a lift, putting my thumb out. A car comes along. It got a little closer and it was a police car. I pulled my thumb in but the guy stops anyhow. We start up the highway, got up the highway a piece, and the cop says, “I’m gonna go pretty fast. I’m gonna put the siren on. I hope you don’t mind.” He asked where I’m going. “Well, I’m going to London.” “Well you can just sit tight and you’ll get there pretty quick.” Finally he says, “General Motors just walked out on strike this morning. The police have been mobilized in case of trouble. That’s where I’m going. That’s why I’m in a hurry.” A week or so later we’re going in to one of our many conferences with the Mayor of Sarnia to iron out differences over the dock strike. I walked in there and there were all these police. And here’s the guy that give me a ride. He looked at me and sort of grinned and never said anything.

Three years later, after a time as Party organizer in East Toronto, and after war has been declared, I’m out of money. It was probably March of 1940 and they wouldn’t let me volunteer for the army because I was so scrawny. I had to go to work. It wasn’t that difficult to get a job. But organizing was difficult, especially if you were a communist. The Party was virtually driven underground and if you were caught fomenting trouble or agitating you could get tossed in an internment camp like Borden. Everybody kept kind of low as a consequence.

Still, things happened, often spontaneously, as my experience at one plant indicated. I ended up going to Campbell Soup in New Toronto. I got a job there and, as a matter of fact, I ended up as head shipper at Campbell Soup. I’m a junior man, but they know me. After I’d been in there, they know me. The head shipper quit to

go to Anaconda Copper down the street for maybe about 50 per cent more pay. The superintendent, who was a Pennsylvania Dutchman, was sent up from Campbell headquarters. At that time all the positions from superintendent up were manned by Americans and Canadians couldn't get any higher than foreman. This Pennsylvania Dutchman came and told me, "I want you to be head shipper."

We had a racket which required the head shipper to do the job. It was a bonus operation, paying bonus. You couldn't make bonus yourself. It couldn't be made. But we made twice as much bonus as we did wages. The thing was doctored. The company couldn't find out how. They kept sending out time study men, but the time study man — we worked in pairs — could only work one pair and they would work according to the rules, all of the rules. They never for a long time could figure it out. So when they came and asked me I turned it down. You know, I'm the junior man. Everybody in the department is senior to me. "Take one of them," I said. "No, we're offering the job to you. If you don't take it we're going to bring somebody in." "Well, give me time to talk it over with the guys in the department." "Okay, you can talk it over. Either you take it or we'll bring in a man." So, I called the guys together. "The stupid bastards want me to take this job." They said, "For Christ's sake, take the job. If we let them bring in somebody from outside, it will be their man. And that's the end for us." So I took it.

We were working nine hours a day. Conditions were not that good and the pay was not that good unless you could make bonus and you couldn't make bonus honestly. In the tomato season we made tomato soup and tomato paste and all that. Carloads of tomatoes were coming in from the fields. They had to keep running and conditions got worse and they'd bring in extra people, particularly some young people, you know, that were out of school for the summer and so on. A lot of young guys would be in there handling cans that were 140° degrees fahrenheit. They'd get burned and one thing or another. They began talking about going out on strike. Making demands, anyhow, for improvement. I heard about it and I told the guys in the shipping department: "If they go out on strike, I don't know about the rest of you are going to do, but I'll go out too." I said, "I'm not having anything to do with the organization, but I'll go out if they go out." And the rest of them said, "If you go, we go."

So we're working like hell in tomato season. We're sort of separated from the production part of the plant. Things are sort of closed off. Soup used to come down in elevators. Suddenly, I thought, Jesus Christ, things are awful quiet in this place. I went and they opened the door to the main part of the plant and here the women are all sitting at the machines with their arms folded. Nothing was happening. So, I went back into the department. I said, "Them guys walked out. I'm going." They were down in the cafeteria beefing about this and that. I went down and I got right to the back of the cafeteria. I told myself, I'm going along with the show, but I'm not doing anything. I'm not anxious to end up in Borden. I'm not going to open my mouth. I'm going to sit quiet. I don't care what happens. I'll go along with whatever I have to.

I'm sitting here in the back and everybody's beefing. About one thousand working in the plant at the time and there was just these young lads that were down there

at the time. Then they were joined by us in the shipping department. Finally, one of them said, "Well, the women should be here. Oh yeah, the women should be here. Send a delegation." This was in the cafeteria and on the company's property and they're doing all this. Two guys go back upstairs to talk to the women. In ten minutes they're back down. "The women say they'll come out if we ask for five cents an hour more for them." Unanimous agreement that it should be ten cents an hour more. The guys go back upstairs. Pretty soon the women come trooping in. The cafeteria's absolutely gagged. It's not made to hold that many people.

The only ones that didn't come out was the bastards that we had trouble with later on the blending platform. They put the ingredients together and ran them through the filling machines in what was called the coupling process. They were able to make bonus. They were completely out of their minds and, of course, got special treatment too because they were considered the key element in the whole affair. In tomato season the tomatoes come in and start moving through the pipes to the coupling process and from the coupling process to the filling. And you had to keep moving. If they stopped for five minutes, billions of bacteria would be built up. Everything moved until it was cleaned out at night before quitting time.

The young guys that started the trouble had it figured out really good. We were starting work at seven in the morning. They figured, we'll work until ten. By that time everything was jammed, about 500,000 gallons of soup was jammed in the system and there was no time to waste. Then they walked out. Cars are going to back up, carloads of tomatoes will be backing up in the heat of the August sun from the railroad and go rotten in virtually an hour for all of this. So there they are in the cafeteria and there I am and another guy who worked upstairs in the room where they made the stock. A Scottish guy. Red hair. Naturally he was called Red though he wasn't a Red. Sitting beside me. They had a committee set up and this committee was meeting with management and being screwed up something terrific. Some of them wanted to be screwed up. They don't want to be in this kind of a fight.

The company had some indications there was going to be a problem and when they saw the trouble brewing they sent a guy up from Camden, New Jersey, the headquarters of the company. The guy was wall-to-wall teeth. Always smiling. Beautiful set of dentures. The committee brought him in to talk to the workers in the cafeteria. It was just jam-packed. So, he's going on with the list. "We know that some things need to be improved. We're going to do this, we're gonna do that. Just go back to work. We'll look at all these things."

I'm sitting here in the back telling myself, don't get into this goddamn thing because you'll wind up in Borden for sure. Finally, I couldn't stand it any longer. I got up in the back and I let this guy have a real blast. In about two minutes he said, "You want me to leave, I'll leave." We're on his goddamn property, you know. "Move it." That's it. He got out.

We had a real set-to with the committee hammering to go back to work and the boss is gonna be nice and so on. There was finally a standing vote. Those opposed: Red, myself, and eight Ukrainian women. Ten of us against going back to work. Red leaned over to me. He said, "You know Jack, we might as well quit." He said,

“There’s no point in us going back to work.” I said, “Red, I don’t believe in quitting.” “What are we going to do?” “You and I are going out on strike.”

OK. We walked out. There was a Ukrainian hall about three or four blocks away. Service to the Ukrainians in the Lakeshore area. They knew me over there. They know me and the Communist Party for years. We go over to the Ukrainian hall. Ukrainian property hadn’t been seized yet for some reason or another. “We want the hall for a meeting tonight.” “Fine.” At quitting time, Red and I went back. You could only come out no more than two by two out of the plant. You had to punch a clock and there was a sidewalk you could take out to the parking lot. Red stood on one side of the walk and I stood on the other and yelled at everybody on the way out. This was how we advertised the meeting at the Ukrainian hall. Eight o’clock we had over eight hundred out. By midnight we had a picket line on the plant. Tied it up solid. Had it there for nine days.

The Ontario government — Peter Heenan, the old railroader from Port Arthur, he was the Minister of Labour in the Hepburn cabinet — got involved in it. While we were having the strike the most militant ones were these eight Ukrainian women. And there were two scabs, both Ukrainian. One woman and one man and they were both cleaning toilets for the goddamn plant. Well, a couple of days they stayed in, but the third night — very late at night — the Ukrainian guy made a blunder. I guess he wanted to go home and sleep with his wife. He came out. These Ukrainian women of course knew him. They knew where he lived, knew exactly which way he was going. He came out and started home. They peeled off the picket line and they took off. I didn’t know where they were going. They went around and they came down between houses in the dark and waited for him and kicked the shit out of him. Of course, he knew them all. They all got arrested, charged with assault, causing grievous bodily harm.

The strike went on. It had started out as a spontaneous affair, and there was no union in the plant. But then when the strike happened the Packing House Workers got involved and we became affiliated with them. Fred Dowling was involved for the Packing House Workers Union and he was a right-wing CCFer. Had to work with me and put up with me. It was funny. Finally we got an agreement on just about everything except that the company would not recognize the union.

So Dowling said, “Well, we’ve got to accept it even without getting union recognition.” I said, “Well, I guess you’re right. I’m not going to argue with you about it.” “OK,” he says, “we’ll have a meeting tonight. We’ll call a meeting and you recommend we go back to work.” I said, “Fuck you. You recommend.” He said, “Look Scott, for Christ’s sake. If I get up and recommend and you sit there and say nothing you know as well as I do nobody will go back to work.” He was right. There wasn’t anything else to do but accept so I said, “Well OK.”

We had the meeting and recommended to go back to work. Unanimous. We’re going to go back to work. There was a time clock. We had to wear white coats and one thing and another. This plant was very antiseptic. We had a dressing room there and so on and we came out of these dressing rooms and the time clocks are there and you punched in and then you went upstairs to go to work. Well, you know, just because I’m a stubborn bastard I’m gonna be the last goddamn one to punch the

clock, the very last. So I came out and I stood at the bottom of the stairs and everybody's punching and going to work and the forelady was standing down there. I wasn't paying any attention to her. Finally these eight women, all charged, all out on bail, punched the time board. "You people are all waiting trial," said the forelady. "You can't come to work until after the trial."

I just hoofed it upstairs and I grabbed this big Pennsylvania Dutchman superintendent, and I told him: "The forelady's down there and won't let them go to work. If they don't go to work, I don't go to work. If I don't go to work there will be a thousand people on the picket line within the hour." He came down the stairs and he balled the shit out of her in front of the women. He had her crying. I know goddamn well that she was told what to do. She would never have done that on her own. But the eight women punched the clock and when they punched the clock, I punched behind them. I was the last one, the very last to punch the time clock. I didn't expect anything to happen. It's just that I'm like that, you know. I'm not that fond of the deal, so I was the last bloody one to accept it. I was glad afterwards that I had that kind of a feeling.

We went back to work under this agreement and the company wants to be very democratic about everything. We set up a company union, going to have an election in the plant with each department electing their own representative. There were eleven departments and we had eleven members on the union executive so we decided to run for the company election. We won nine of the eleven positions. When they called their first meeting of the company's union committee and we went to the board room the first one walking in had eight union members right behind him.

What I did I did on my own. I would have been told not to do it had I asked any Party figures, that it was the wrong thing to do. So, I wasn't about to consult anybody. And there I'm in the position, things are growing up around me. What am I going to do? I could have kept my goddamn big mouth shut and not ended up in Borden which is a natural reaction. Go along with whatever happens. If they go on strike, you're on strike. If they accept the deal, accept the deal. It was a reasonable thing to do. But my big mouth keeps getting me in goddamn trouble. I couldn't stand this character and the guff he was handing out and the committee and all the nonsense. I just got up. I was the only one on the floor. The committee's recommendation was going to go over without a single voice of protest, no question about it. But I simply couldn't. I guess it's the natural rebel in me, you know, that doesn't pause to think about the consequences at a certain stage. Just do what you wanted to do. Of course the little red-haired Scottish guy, he felt just like me, but he thought, well, we'd walk out and quit. Still, he went along. Anyhow, I didn't stick around long. I went to the army.

7. UP AGAINST IT IN TORONTO

Working in a place like Sarnia was different than being a Party organizer in Toronto. If you were out in London or Windsor or when I was up in the Northwest Territories or in Trail later, I could make my own decisions within what I wanted to interpret was the general line of the Party. Not in Toronto. Toronto was always the leadership's turf.

I got a taste of this when I was picked to go to the Party School in Toronto. I began to read seriously when I was around the Chatham-Windsor area. I was always fond of history when I was a youngster and I read more of this than anything else. I had a great-aunt who used to chase me to the library. She was great on Dickens — things like *Bleak House* — and I was only seven years old and she had me reading this stuff. I didn't care that much for it. The only thing I liked of Dickens was *The Tale of Two Cities*, something with the smell of adventure. My aunt drove me to Dickens, and I drove myself away.

When I went to Toronto for the Party School it must have been 1934, and the Party was still underground. Stewart Smith was masquerading under the name of George Pierce, writing pamphlets under this pseudonym. He had been brought back from Moscow to take over the Party when Buck and the others were arrested, and he always felt this gave him the right to a certain stature in the Party. There were some other lecturers there as well, like Bill Rigby and Bill Sidney. Not many, but a few who originally gave talks in the Don Hall. The RCMP security started sniffing around and we had to move. We went to the Needle Trades' Office on Spadina Avenue and we were there for a while. We moved around a lot because of the illegality.

As I say, I was reading before this, but I didn't have that well-developed a sense of Marxist theory or even of what communism was. I was staying with Tommy Davitt, a descendant of the old Irish rebel, in Walkerville at the time I got notified to go to Toronto and take all my things with me, which wasn't very much. No money sent of course. So I walked up to the railroad and got on a bloody freight train, which took me as far as London. I tried to jump a passenger train out of London, ride between the engine and the baggage car, but I slipped and fell off the goddamn thing. I barely missed getting under the wheels. Then I managed to catch a freight, which a guy in the yard told me was headed for Hamilton. I got on it full of trust. It pulled onto the Wabash line and headed for Buffalo. I got back on another Wabash and rode it to Windsor and hiked back to Tommy Davitt's place. He says, "Where the hell have you been? The word is out, look for you. They figure you've been arrested or something. What happened?" I told him: "I got tired of the whole fucking operation and I came back." He said, "You'd better head out there."

I finally made it to Toronto. I thought it was something important. Maybe the revolution was going to start and they couldn't start it without me or something. I was told to go to a Party School.

Lenin's *What Is To Be Done?* was a great thing in the School. We went through

that almost word by word. With a lot of it I got slightly bored and I got into a few conversations about it with Johnny Weir, a Ukrainian. He's still around, been in Moscow more than he's been in Canada. There were a few things that I just couldn't cotton to and Johnny very carefully explained what they meant. Gave a thorough explanation. Some of it was extremely boring. At one point there was an educational group started and I was the Party cadre. I had to lead the group. I knew less than some of the students at the bloody thing. I had to do a lot of reading to prepare. You took Lenin as it was written and there was no necessity to figure out any application as far as Canada was concerned. It was there. It was a blueprint for Party organization and revolution. If you suggested any changes you were a revisionist and damned all over the place so you had to back away from that.

We're talking about a very dogmatic period of the Party, not that it wasn't dogmatic for most of its time in spite of the changes that took place here and there. It was a period of illegality in a period when, supposedly, the capitalist system was on its last legs. The Soviet Union was in the ascendancy and its very existence and the crisis of capitalism was proof that Lenin was right. All you had to do was read Lenin and the message was there and that was it, that was the approach. If Trotsky and Bukharin and some of the others were mentioned it was simply to condemn them as traitors to the cause. Difficulties that were inherent in the policies of the Soviet Union were never discussed.

The Soviet Union didn't actually become very much of a question mark until the outbreak of war. If there were questions there you didn't bother too much about them because you were in the fight in Canada, the day-to-day fight. The fight against fascism was reasonable. You'd fight to get support for Spain during the Spanish war, and to stop scrap iron from going to Japan when they were launching war against China. Looking at it now I would have been critical of the policies followed in Spain, but at the time they appeared alright to me.

I wanted to go to Spain, but the Party ran the Spanish show. In Ontario, Fred Collins was the one who organized the contingent to go and I went and told Fred I was going and he said, "No bloody way. The Party isn't going to let you. Sorry, that's it." So that was it; I didn't go. I would have loved to have gone to Spain. I helped some people who wanted to go. Like lots of others I was all wrapped up in it. Afterwards, long afterwards, I thought the policy was wrong. The Spanish people should have been assisted to make their own fight, and the Soviet Union wasn't sending any trained officers. Nobody but Hitler and Mussolini had real forces in there. Deadly for Spain. And mobilizing brigades of untrained volunteers, often led by people who were completely mad, wasn't right.

It was very easy to stir up the emotions of the people at that time. The best asset the Party had was a group of rabble-rousers. You didn't have to know too much, Party School or no Party School. You didn't have to be a high intellect to get things on the move. And over the long haul, the Party was not terribly stable in the sense of having a consistent political position. They really didn't have political positions. And the ranks had an emotional position, so they drifted in and they drifted out. They were not revolutionaries. There was not a revolutionary situation. And the Party can be criticized because they did not build a revolutionary party, did not

develop cadre. It was all the struggle of the moment. I brought anybody into the Party who wanted to come in. They were part of the struggle like anybody else. You don't see it until afterwards, but this is where the Party failed.

The leadership in Toronto hadn't a clue about this. Stewart Smith was one of the main figures, and the one I had the most contact with. For part of the time I was there in the mid-1930s he had sort of been demoted, but he was still a leading element in Toronto, especially given that Buck and the others were in jail. Stewart ran into his difficulty because he was off on a tangent that the bourgeois democratic revolution had not been completed in Canada and that the fight was for independence from Britain. This was in conflict with the line of the Comintern and consequently the line of the Canadian Party leadership. So Smith was moved down a peg or two for this deviation. He later clashed with Buck and after the Hungarian affair in 1956 he became embroiled and was ultimately out of the Party.

But after my stint at the Party School and some time in western Ontario I eventually ended up settled in East Toronto, and Stewart was Secretary of the Party's city committee. Every morning there was a meeting in the office, which was at 98 Church Street at the time. At nine o'clock every morning all of the district organizers in the Toronto area had to be at a meeting. A lot of the time there was no really good reason for having us there. I think they wanted to make sure that we were out of bed in the morning. That was about the size of it. Very often some of us didn't get to bed until morning. Yet we had to be there.

Stewart was always immaculately dressed. You know what Toronto summers can be like. Muggy. Your clothing would get soaking wet. You'd wear as little as the law would allow. Just enough to avoid being charged with obscene exposure. But Stewart could sit in that Church Street office in the muggiest day of a Toronto summer, dressed in a suit neatly pressed with a white shirt on and a tie. Not a bead of sweat on him. I'd come in from East Toronto, like other people, in a shirt that wasn't the best in the world, pants what have you. I got called in to Stewart's office after a meeting one morning. "Scott, I'd like to see you in my office." I went in. He gave me a lecture. "Scott, you know you represent the Party in East Toronto. You should dress better." To start with I didn't have any goddamn money to buy better clothes. It wouldn't have done me any goddamn good, because if I'd come all dressed up the people in East Toronto would have figured I was a bloody police agent. I wasn't getting any money to dress up.

A couple of weeks after that I had another go with him. I used to write the leaflets, such as they were. They weren't very well written. I would help to run them off on a beat-up old machine that we had and then I'd go out and help distribute them. After a meeting one morning, Smith said, "Will you come in Scott, I want to talk to you in my office." So, in I go. "Come on Scott, it's not your job to go out distributing leaflets door-to-door on the street. Your job is to think for the Party." I laughed. I said, "Stewart, you know if there's a bunch of leaflets to go out and I tell the guys in East Toronto, you guys go out and distribute the leaflets while I go home to think, they'd kick me in the ass." I said, "You know, they'd be right." This was his whole attitude. Sitting up there on a bloody pyramid somewhere looking down on the multitude.

This was an attitude that was quite widespread amongst the Party leaders. Tim Buck used to talk very often at meetings about the Jimmy Higginses in the Party. Upton Sinclair's books talk about Jimmy Higginses. Jimmy Higgins was the guy who set out chairs for a meeting, arranged them and put them away after the meeting, swept the floor, picked up the leaflets that had been discarded and kept them for distribution again at another meeting. He married a prostitute. This was Jimmy Higgins. Buck used to get up and talk about all the thousands of wonderful Jimmy Higginses we have in the Party. You're supposed to have a Party of people that can think things out, be able to give some leadership, and this is the kind of people you hold up in ranking. It showed a kind of contempt.

Mind you, Buck wasn't the worst by any means. Buck was a much better mixer than many of the Party leaders. Buck and Sam Carr was both real good mixers as far as the rank-and-file of the Party was concerned. Smith was not. Browder in the States was notoriously standoffish. He wouldn't talk to anybody at a Party convention. He would come in and give his report and bugger off. Buck never did. Buck mingled with people, talked to them. He was a great guy at a party and so on, but nevertheless there was this general attitude toward the Party rank-and-file. They were the ones that did the work, we were the guys who do the thinking. We were the ones that plot the course, we tell you what to do if you're the guys who do certain things. It was a hell of an attitude, one that galled me because I never thought of myself as having any high position in the Party. I was on the Ontario Political Bureau of the Party for awhile, but this didn't last long.

I was always glad to get away from Toronto, not only because I didn't like Toronto, but I didn't like to be under the shadow of Party headquarters which were always in Toronto. They were always breathing down your goddamn neck. I liked to get out someplace where I could free-wheel. If I got myself in trouble with them, I could say, well, that's the way I thought you meant things to be done. So you could get criticized and go away and do the same thing all over again. As long as you could withstand criticism, you could get away with it. But, when you were in Toronto, because they were on you every day, these meetings every morning, there was no escaping the decisions of the Party. If you were going to do something that wasn't just in line, you had to be prepared to make a fight of it. Not that it didn't happen. I had plenty of run-ins but I felt more able to do things elsewhere. As a matter of fact, you could do better work.

Around the end of 1938 I stopped doing Party work. Still in the Party, but I stopped doing Party work. I went out, partly on a wander. I couldn't have any home life. You didn't know what you were doing from one week to the next. I had to go: there was no Party money coming in. I had to earn some money, which I tried to do. I moved out of East Toronto as a matter of fact. I was organizing for awhile in West Toronto, around Ward Six, where there was a big Ukrainian group. From there I decided to take off and do some work. I got a bit of shit for it, but I'd had enough and I was going the rounds of harvests in Ontario, making money, picking fruit, topping sugar beets, and husking corn, this kind of thing.

I finally wound up in the tobacco fields at Delhi and at that time there used to be an influx of twenty to twenty-five thousand people, men, women, and children.

Whole families used to come in to Delhi to do the tobacco harvest which would last about six weeks. This was the last of the harvesting crops. People would follow the cycle around harvesting crops, making money, before going into town for the winter, hopefully with enough to squeeze through until spring. A lot of Hungarians came in. I'm there and another guy shows up: a Hungarian named Steve Hill, who was a Party member who had come out of the "Magyar Munkas" movement, the Hungarian Worker. The two of us are there and all the people. You gather in there and even if you had the money to rent a place you wouldn't have been able to get one. Delhi was a community of seven hundred people. So you'd live in the parks and the fields and when the crop was ready to go, the growers would start coming in and hiring you from the parks where you gathered. Then, of course, once you were hired you went out and you got a place to sleep and you got board, living at the place where the grower was.

When they came in to hire, it started off two dollars a day and board. You aren't going to make any money. There's no organization. How can you organize people who just flop in there and you've only got a six-week period, unless the crop was a little bit late besides. Everybody getting a bit short in the fields. So Steve and I decided this was not enough goddamn money. You can't make anything on this. We went around and held meetings in all of the places. We said, "Don't go to work for anything less than five dollars a day." Just the two of us. We were known as Party members.

Well, out of more than twenty thousand people there weren't a hundred that went to work. Gradually the growers, time had gone, a few days passed, began to get desperate. The leaves have got to be picked, you know. Finally, they were up to \$4.50 a day. They were hanging tough. I suspect that some Party member there must have gone in to Toronto to complain. Charlie Sims appeared on the scene. "What's the matter with you two stupid bastards? Everyone here is hungry. You two are just as hungry as everybody else. You've got them up to \$4.50 a day. Why don't you tell the people to go back to work, go to work." We started laughing. If he hadn't come out we were ready to stick it out and I think we would have got the whole \$5.00

We went around and told everybody to go to work for \$4.50 a day. So everybody started going to work. I remember, Steve and I both went to the same place. Worked for a guy called Hanselmann, who was also a chiropractor as well as being a tobacco grower. There was a Czechoslovakian gang working the fields next to us for another grower. A couple of them came over one night and told Steve and I that they had found a young woman crying. They found out that she was crying because the grower told her that if she didn't go to bed with him he would fire her. The gang went to the grower and put it on the line: "Do you want a woman to go to bed with you or do you want your tobacco picked? You have a choice." "I want my tobacco picked." "Well, lay off the woman or your tobacco will not be picked. It will rot in the bloody field." That settled that. He never bothered her after that.

Picking tobacco is an enormously different operation now than it was in the 1930s. Tobacco was cured in kilns over the course of a couple of days. The curer was an experienced man and he had to know what he was doing because he could

burn the tobacco instead of curing it. Sometime after midnight he opened the kiln up, put the fires out, and allowed the dew to get in there. We would have to get up at four in the morning and pull the kiln while the dew was still there because otherwise if the tobacco was too dry it would just all break up. So you'd get up and do that before breakfast, and then have breakfast and then go into the fields. Out in the fields the tobacco plants were way above your head, you know. The heavy dew would still be on them, and it was like rainfall. The only time I remember dew like that was when I was a youngster in Ireland. You could get up in the morning and see the streets wet like it had been raining and there hadn't been any rain. It was the dew. It was like that around Delhi. You could walk in the plants picking, start from the bottom of the plant and picking the bottom leaves first. You'd walk in there in the morning and you'd be soaking wet within five minutes. Soaked to the skin. The sun would come up and beat up the sand and you'd be blown dry within ten minutes. All burnt up.

Every year the Hungarian Mutual Benefit Association had a picnic. There would be thousands there. Most of the people working in the tobacco fields would be there. It was a traditional thing that people knew would happen from year to year and people who went there every year would know that. A great many of them would go. No work was done on Sunday. Everything stopped.

That year that I was there the picnic was held on the 3rd of September. It was 1939. It was always a joint Hungarian Association / Communist Party event, and the money that was raised went to both groups. The first thing that happened that Sunday was that someone went down to the picnic ground early, climbed a big elm tree, and tied a red flag up there. It was quite a scene. They had a Party speaker coming down, Tim Buck. He arrives on the scene and there are swarms of RCMP in and out of uniform. This was the 3rd of September. I'll never forget it. Big headlines in special editions of newspapers that came out of Toronto: "War Declared." One of the first sentences Buck spoke in the woods outside of Delhi was that, "This is our war." About a week later, it wasn't our war anymore. September 3rd it was our war, and then everything went off. Lots of ranting and raving. Talk about the anti-fascist struggle to defeat the Nazis and so on disappeared. Everything went off very quickly. It wasn't our war anymore.

There's a war going on which involves a war against a fascist state and the Party is basically saying, this is not our war. And it was because of the Nazi-Soviet Pact, of course, where Stalin and Hitler agreed to terms of so-called non-aggression. But this made life difficult as a Communist. Really quite difficult and a lot of people didn't go along. First of all, you have to remember there's a lot more known now about the Nazi-Soviet Pact than was known then because all that was known about the Pact publicly, even amongst high places in Britain, the United States and France and so on, was there was a non-aggression pact. It was a bit peculiar but you could sort of get around it by saying, well, the Soviet Union doesn't want to get into a war.

We didn't know what Stalin was doing and the consequences of what he was doing. We didn't know at that time, we didn't know until the war had ended and for a time after the end of the war, that in fact Stalin had signed a pact to divide up

Poland with the Nazis and the Soviet Union could have Lithuania and Latvia and so on, and that there was an agreement that Russia would supply Germany at all times with the necessary equipment to prepare for war. When the Nazi-Soviet Pact was signed — being the kind of pact we now know it was — it was *carte blanche* for Hitler to move into Poland, which in fact was short-sighted because Poland was also the short route into the Soviet Union as well. These are things we didn't know. We certainly said what we knew. "Well, that's fine for the Soviet Union if it wants to stay out of war to sign a non-aggression pact. They're not going to be part of it." Although if you went deeper than that you could also see that it was telling Germany, well go ahead and attack Britain and France if you want, we're not going to do anything about it. We didn't look too carefully at all these details. But there was some very strong opposition in the Party to the Party changing its policy because of what the Soviet Union had done.

I stayed in Delhi until the tobacco harvest was ended and then I headed for Toronto. It was about the 1st of October, and I went looking for Stewart Smith. I don't know why, but the police couldn't find Stewart Smith. I think maybe they could. I found him and I didn't have their resources. I went and told Stewart, "I don't want to argue about the policy at this point. I want to tell you that I'm going to join the army. There doesn't need to be a big argument about it. The Party is going to want people in the army. I'm just electing myself as one." And Smith didn't argue about it. He said, "for Christ's sake don't do that. We haven't got a Party. You know East Toronto. Go on out there and get a Party together and then we'll talk about it." I said, "OK; I'll give you a bit of time." I went out to East Toronto and I collected a group together.

Smith had already been out there and I heard second-hand that he told them it will be a good thing if Hitler won the war because that would mean the end of the British Empire. Now of course this relates to Stewart's whole position from practically the beginning of time. He tried to complete the bourgeois democratic revolution in Canada. That fight was to be the break from the British tie. If the British Empire went down the drain, Canada was to be free, which is a lot of bullshit, because the control, the economic control, had already passed by the end of the war to the United States.

Even if this wasn't official Party policy, Stewart's telling a bunch of Anglo-Saxon artisans that Hitler should win so the British Empire would fall didn't help me much in East Toronto. Nor did the Party's new illegal status and the threat of internment. But I got a group going, set up an illegal apparatus and started the distribution apparatus. Some of them weren't very smart. There was one guy who died very young of a heart attack. He was distributing the illegal paper and he would take it to the Guelph-Kitchener area, passing bundles out. One night in the winter he had to drive up into that area. With the cold and snow and one thing or another, he phoned up a friend to ask him to go with him. So the friend agreed and they both started out. They got out a mile or two past Roncesvalles Avenue, which was the western boundary of Toronto at the time. The Mounties stopped and searched the car. They were lucky. They only got six months in jail. Bloody lucky. They didn't even get sent to the Borden concentration camp. Just lucky.

The repression came down pretty heavy. The War Measures Act was imposed and the Party was outlawed, the Ukrainian organization was outlawed, the Yugoslav organization, the Russian organization — a whole number of organizations and associations were named and outlawed. If you were a member theoretically you could be interned and this embraced thousands of people.

Take the case of C.S. Jackson, who was a Party member involved in organizing the United Electrical Workers Union. Jackson was in Toledo when war was declared. He had gone and parked his car and got on an airplane to Ohio, some kind of conference that he was attending. The pressure wasn't really on just yet and he managed to phone through and ask if he should return to Canada or just sit tight where he was. And the Party told him to come on ahead. "We'll arrange people to meet you," they said. And they put Harvey Murphy in charge of organizing a delegation to greet Jackson at the airport. Murphy did a wonderful job. There were several hundred people out there, all over the parking lot. Then the Mounties appear. Everybody scatters and jumps in their cars and takes off. Jackson gets in his car, pumps the starter, and nothing happens. When everybody had cleared out a couple of Mounties walk over, lift the hood of his car, fiddle around a bit and say, "OK, Mr. Jackson, you can start your car and come with us."

Jackson was one of the first to go, to be interned. Others followed, people like Ben Swankey out in British Columbia. What is remarkable though is not the people who went in, but the large number of those who were not touched who could easily have been rounded up. They threw Party members in with Nazis, the view of the government being that they agreed with the Nazis at that particular time, so there was no point in putting them in separate places. The whole thing was pretty loose.

After my stint at Campbell Soup I had had enough. I said, "well, that's it. I'm on my way to volunteer." I weighed 114 pounds. I was a damn sight tougher than guys that they took that were 180 or 190 or whatever. But they were very choosy at this time. You had to weigh 140 pounds. I didn't come anywhere bloody close to it. So I got turned down at first. Later, when they needed you a little more, I got accepted.

8. WAR IS HELL

From 1939-1941, when the Party line was that this wasn't our war, the state had the means to clamp down on Communists, even though they didn't always use them. On the industrial front those Party members who would have their political reasons for organizing the workers to fight for better conditions and so on in the plants were really handicapped. If Party members were involved in this kind of activity they could be picked up easily enough, whereas social democrats and others had an easier time of it.

This changed in 1941, when Hitler invaded the Soviet Union, and the so-called non-aggression pact was blown to bits. And by this time there were calls for conscription, pressure being put on the Canadian state to deliver some manpower to the front. The Party was all of a sudden, now that this was a just war, behind the plebiscite for conscription that King introduced. There was a guy who came out of Oshawa, a pacifist and a lay preacher. He was up in Northern Ontario at the time of the conscription plebiscite and he opposed conscription outright. He got picked up. The CCF went to bat for him right away and defended his rights. As far as the Party was concerned, his place was in jail. The Party was all gung ho, and set up a special "Vote Yes" Plebiscite Committee, got right behind the conscription drive.

It was all bloody nonsense. The guys at the front didn't want conscripts. I never heard anybody at the front being all that fierce about guys who wouldn't volunteer. They used to make fun of themselves. I remember when they sent a psychologist around to interview those of us who were volunteering. We were all lined up and the question was, "Why are you joining the Army?" The answer was because, "I'm a patriot." The line I was in, some joker way up ahead of me — you usually find one in every bloody lineup — blurted out, "Temporary insanity." Everybody laughed. But nobody particularly objected to the people that did not want to go. They didn't want them with them. They didn't want conscripted men there. It was bad enough even if you wanted to be there. Plenty of them went to pieces at the front. So among the ranks of the army the Party's campaign was not greeted with any great amount of favour.

After I was in I went up at Niagara-on-the-Lake, under canvas, doing basic training for awhile. We were moved from there to Debert, Nova Scotia. That was a god-forsaken place. It was near Truro, but there wasn't much there. You could go to Halifax to get away for a bit, but you went from hotel to hotel and you couldn't get a room to stay in. I remember a whole gang of us sleeping in the lobby of a hotel there. It was the biggest hotel in Halifax at the time, might have been the Lord Nelson.

Eventually I got sent back from Debert to Long Branch, for training in small arms, the use of small arms. I could do anything with small arms, up to the Bren gun — anything from a pistol to a Bren gun. I passed with more than 90 per cent. I was sent back to Debert, made corporal, and put in a group that was training other groups. The shooting capacity of the Canadian army was atrocious. Twenty-five

per cent was average. Terrible. We had to train them to be able to shoot properly and so on. Then the war began heating up and more soldiers were needed.

I was unable to go over because I was a corporal in this training outfit. I organized my own platoon. We raised money. We bought a washing machine to do our washing. We bought a radio. We did various things. We started this. We had a bank account. They came and told me, "You can't do these kinds of things. There has to be an officer who is one of the signing group." We ended up with a Major Morgan, one of the Irish Morgans. I got along with them famously. A couple of nights before our last night, we drunk up the remainder of the money with a big party. We had Morgan there. We had a hell of a time.

Anyway, I was a corporal of this training party and I couldn't go overseas. I'm an NCO specialist in training. To hell with this. I'm not going to sit in Debert for the bloody war. So I simply got paraded to the colonel and handed him my rank, which he can't stop me from doing. They can't make you accept a posting above private. They can't refuse to accept your resignation. Once I gave up my corporal stripe I can't give training because I had no position of command. I went over with the rest of the guys on the *Queen Mary*.

The policy of the Party was that you were not to have any Party organization within the army, just the individuals. Actually, there was a couple of us used to get together overseas in the Fourth Brigade. Bill Walsh from Hamilton was one. He was with the Steelworkers or the Electrical Workers and was a research director, but he got out of there and started his own consulting firm. His brother Sam is a Party organizer. Then there was Johnny Lee. I was walking by camp one day. We were going to another camp somewhere in England, and he called me over. "You're Jack Scott." I said, "Sure, and you're Johnny Lee." "That's not my name." Like a lot in the Party he used another name. I never changed my name. I was born with it and was quite satisfied with it as far as it went and I kept it. That was all bullshit. Buck never changed his name incidentally. Wouldn't have done any good anyhow. We got together a couple of times and discussed some things. There were disagreements with various Party positions, especially around election campaigns and the Party supporting the Liberal-Labour coalition.

By this time, I'm in the Regimental Signals. We're at Aldershot in Britain. I wanted to do something else. I was going to go in training, take some special training for three-inch mortars, but there was no place for me. After I was in action how glad I was that there wasn't any room for me in three-inch mortars. Mad place to be. Only being in the tanks was madder. There wasn't any room. They said, "How about going out with the Lovett Scouts." It was a commando outfit and they sounded crazy as hell too, you know. "When something else comes up, we'll let you know." "OK." So, off I go with the Lovett Scouts. I was out with them for a few days and I began to like it. It was tough. I liked it. It was crazy.

One day I got a call to go back to camp. I was taken back to camp in a jeep. The officer said a major is over from Cove, which is the school of signalers, and they want people to go for training for regimental signalers. "You got to be out of your mind," I said. "That's deadly." When regimental signalers are out in the lines, the first thing the enemy tries to do is knock out their wireless set. The bloody

trouble is you're packing the wireless set on your back. It's nuts. "Well," he said, "look, I've got to have a certain number of bodies to be interviewed by this major. Why don't you go?" You know, there's always the old rule, never volunteer for anything. This old guy, this old major, is interviewing guys all the time. I go in and he said, "You're Private Scott." I said, "Yes, sir." "You don't want to be a signaler." "No sir." "Why not?" "Well," I said, "first thing, I'm getting too old to learn." "Oh," he said, "we give you a good course at Cove." "I'm afraid I couldn't keep up to it." He pushes a paper at me and tells me to read that paragraph. So I read it. And he shoved something at me and he said, "Write that out." So I wrote it out. He said, "That's fine."

I found a truck that was heading my way and toward the Lovett Scouts and I got on it and I'm taking off. Christ, I'm hardly out of the goddamn camp and the dispatch rider is coming up on his goddamn motor bike. "Scott, they want you back at camp. You're going to Cove." Off I go to Cove. They got me some classes. I don't want any part of it. There's a guy there from the Toronto Irish and he's like me. He doesn't want to be a signaler. He just got there to get out of the regiment for awhile. There was another guy who got a brother who was a sergeant in the Toronto Scottish who was a signal sergeant and he wanted to pass in the worst way so he could get claimed by his older brother so he could go and serve alongside of him. Two of us don't give a shit and the other pounding away, pounding his brains out. We didn't want to look like fools so in class we used to pay attention and learn things. These other guys, you know, were sitting there, going to the classrooms at night and working on the buzzer and memorizing the Morse Code, really driving themselves frantic. We just sit in there in the daytime with the rest of them and try to pick the thing up by sound. They were too bloody stupid to know that this is the real way to learn Morse Code. It's like learning music. You learn the rhythm. We were going along, just pissing about enjoying ourselves but it was the way to learn.

During the course of the thing army orders come out every day and you're supposed to read them; everyone from the lowly private up to the generals are supposed to read army orders. I never bothered. One day they made me a corporal while at Cove. It was posted in the orders. A sergeant-major — we used to call him Guts and Gaiters — he's about half a mile from me and he's got a voice that could roar like a bull. I hear him: "Corporal Scott. Come to your attention. Corporal Scott." About four times. Finally, "You are Corporal Scott." "My name is Scott, but I'm not a corporal." "Don't you read army orders?" I said, "Yes sir." He said, "As of this morning, you were posted as corporal. Now at the noon parade you have your corporal stripes on or I will charge you with being improperly dressed." So I had to put up as a corporal.

The Irish guy and myself comes to the examination which is going to determine whether or not you're going to be a regimental signaler, which we don't want to be. This poor character who wanted to get to the Toronto Scottish desperately, he was a total failure. He got no place. Here's the Irish guy and myself. We both passed over 90 per cent. Amazing. We cheated on one thing: reading a light signal. If you blink you can lose the signal. I was very good at not blinking, watching the

light. In that, one guy read and the other guy wrote. So I read both signals and he wrote them because he wasn't quite so good at it. That's the only cheating we did.

There was always beefs of some kind in the Army and there were ways in which people carried them on. Aldershot, for example, which is an army town and always was, was crawling with army officers all over the place. They were underfoot all the goddamn time and strictly according to the rules in the Canadian as well as in the British army, you were supposed to salute an officer if you met him on the street or anything. Well, as far as the Canadians were concerned, this was a bloody nuisance so you just didn't do it most of the time. After awhile one or two officers who were looking for the proper respect for the uniform would have you on orders and, of course, you'd end up maybe getting seven days confined to quarters or some bloody fatigued duty.

We decided to do something about this crap. There was really one main street in Aldershot that everybody walked along and we'd simply line ourselves up about ten feet or so apart along the main street, both sides, and every officer who came along, you saluted him. Well, he couldn't get his goddamn arm down because he had to return salutes. He couldn't get his arm down from one end of the bloody street to the other. So you do that a couple of nights and then you'd stop saluting. So, you were home-free for awhile.

Also, you used to have to keep your tunic buttoned up which was a goddamn nuisance, you know. So you go around with a couple of hooks on the top of your tunic jacket undone. You get hauled up on orders for that for awhile until it got too bloody much and then orders came out that all the ranks were allowed to keep their tunics open. Only officers were allowed to wear ties. Well, you start wearing a tie when you go out. You get up on orders for that until eventually they passed an order on that. Other ranks could wear black ties. Brown ties were reserved for officers. I don't remember anybody challenging that. We didn't give a shit. They provided black ties, as a matter of fact, so we didn't have to dye them.

We used to have to wear army boots all the time which was a goddamn nuisance, heavy especially when you're going out at night. We started wearing shoes. Only officers were allowed to wear shoes and this was posted. People got dragged in. Finally they posted an order that other ranks could wear black shoes and they issued the shoes. Then, another order came out on that. All the ranks could wear brown shoes if they bought them themselves.

I went through the school of signals for regimental signalers and we qualified on the code at fifteen words a minute. The brigade signals, which was the core of signals — they didn't come up to the lines like we did — had to qualify at thirty-five words a minute. They got trades pay. Anywhere from fifty to seventy-five cents a day. We didn't get any. So agitation started amongst the regimental signalers for trades pay and petitions circulated. They got turned down. If they gave it to the regimental signalers, they'd have to give it to every rifleman in the regiment, which we didn't give a shit about. If they wanted to give it to every rifleman that was fine for us. But the other side of it was that when you learn code at a certain rate it sounds like if you learn at thirty-five words a minute or if you do forty or fifty it would be quite easy to read fifteen. It isn't. It's quite difficult because you're used to a rhythm,

a certain rhythm. You read according to the rhythm. You don't have an opportunity to say to yourself, oh I da da, that means so on and so forth and you write it down. You read according to the rhythm and the rhythm was according to what you had been trained at. All of our communications were with brigades. We had to read code at their thirty-five words per minute. There's no goddamn way them bastards were going to slow down for us, even if they really got into the swing. We had to come up to their level. But we never got anywhere.

Then one time they took all the second division signalers out for a refresher course at the end of which we were all going to go through the test again. Every week there was a two-hour period, a session where you could say anything you wanted to. Anything you wanted to complain about, anything you wanted to take up, could be brought up at this session. Everything was very democratic. We're having this beefing session, all the second division signalers. Of course the big issue was trades pay. No way. Commanding officer said no way. I finally said, "We're here for a refresher course for a couple weeks. At the end of the course we're going to have a test. What if everybody fails the test?" "Don't do anything like that," I'm told. But they can't make you pass the test. No way. If we all fail, there's no signalers for the second division. About four or five days later an order came down. Regimental signalers hereafter will be paid twenty-five cents a day, trades pay. So there were various ways in which you could agitate and actually win things. And the guys were always prepared to do things. Beef about meals, raise hell about meals and so on.

In the signals, I remember when we worked in Horsham one time. We were there for a couple of months under tents. There was a big general inspection, which meant that you had to parade with the whole division which was a pain. We devised a plan, the signalers, to get back at the brass. We didn't have to do much. We pulled all the grounds on the telephones so the telephones started to screw up all over our brigade. People running around here and there carrying messages. Well, we were told to trace what was wrong and fix it. We knew what was wrong. We could fix it in five minutes. This kind of thing. There were various ways in which you could get back at the brass. You did it any way you could. Pulled little stunts.

When I went on leave I used to be able to get a few extra days because I went to Ireland on leave but you could only get to Ireland specially if you had relatives there. Of course, I had mother and sisters, aunts and uncles and cousins by the score. When you went on leave to Ireland you went from wherever your regiment was to London, to the Duke of York barracks in London. You had your pass from there and the Duke of York barracks would stamp your pass and you would leave from there. And that's when your leave started and your leave ended there. Sometimes the ferries wouldn't run when there was a submarine scare or something like that. You'd come back and you'd get to London and you'd bugger around London for a couple of days. You'd go to the Duke of York. The people at the Duke of York they're all English army people. They don't give a shit about Canadians. If their own people came back late they'd want a detailed explanation of why they were late. A Canadian would walk in and they'd simply stamp your pass and that's when your leave ended. From there you just had to be back in a reasonable time to your

unit, between that time and getting back. So Canadians that went to Ireland could always wrangle a couple of days extra on their leave without any problem. There were various ways like this that you could work things out. You couldn't really make it liveable, but you could make it a little more liveable.

All this, of course, was before I got involved in any actual fighting. It was all in England. Just after D-Day I went over. We were the second wave that landed at a place called Bernier-sur-mer, a port somewhere in Normandy.

If anybody imagined what war was really like they wouldn't go. At least for the most part they wouldn't. I imagine there'd be some stupid elephant that would still go. Mind you, of course, anyhow I had been under fire in Ireland during my young life, so I was sort of able to preserve myself. It's a nasty business. There's no other way to describe it. You start to see people you know getting shot. There's nothing that really prepares you for war. It doesn't matter how much training you get, how much they impress upon you it's necessary to dig yourself in when you're in battle, to dig yourself in and avoid getting wounded. You know they take you out on the bloody moors in England and you're digging into the soil that's more like goddamn cement and they get you digging holes there to get under cover, training and so on. What the fuck is the use of all this goddamn nonsense. When somebody starts shooting at you, it's entirely different. For very many people it's too late. I had it figured out afterwards that if you could survive for about three or four weeks you had a good chance of survival, because you began to do automatically the things that you needed to do. You get used to things.

I remember when we were still in England, a little before D-Day and the first German V-1s started coming over. We called them buzz bombs. They sounded like run-away sewing machines. They were only about five hundred to a thousand feet up. It was something new. It made a hell of a noise. We don't know what the hell was going on. We took to the bloody holes in the ground, you know, to cover up. After awhile, we learned that these goddamn things were set to run a certain distance in a certain direction. After they ran that far the fuel was all gone and the engine would simply stop and they would make sort of a semi-circle and drop. As long as you could hear them you had nothing to worry about. If they passed on over making a noise, OK. If they cut out over your head then you'd dive for cover. You became sort of content with the whole thing. The V-2s, when they came along — they didn't come along till we got into Europe — you didn't have to worry about them because when you heard them they were long gone. They were faster than sound. So, you got adapted to these kinds of things. In any event, the Germans were great for noise. They seemed to figure that in a way this was demoralizing. And for some people it was. But it was often self-defeating. You were given a warning of what was coming, what kind of flak was coming over. They had mortars — we called them moaning minnies — that made a hell of a noise when they started the goddamn apparatus up. We knew that it was coming across a good few seconds before anything would hit so you'd simply find a spot to dive to.

You had to get used to each kind of thing, know what was happening, and take off. New guys — they had the least chance of survival. I remember one time when we were in the line and we had some telephone lines out and it was a mess. Shrap-

nel — mortar shrapnel, shell shrapnel — broke the goddamn lines. Somebody would have to go out and check it. I went out to check the lines that had been broken one day. I was going across a field. I knew by this time what to do. All of a sudden mortar started crashing around the field. Two young guys had been sent out by their platoon to pick up rations and carry them back to their line. I don't know why the hell they were sent because they were two absolutely raw recruits and didn't know what the hell to do if anything happened. Well, the German mortar started an air raid. As soon as she started hitting the field I just dropped where I was. The urge is to run. That's deadly. You drop where you are. You might get deafened a bit if a mortar shell was too close to you. There I was. The shrapnel was flying all over. If you're standing up, that shrapnel that's moving out has a greater chance to hit you. If you're lying down and digging your bloody nails into the ground getting a bit of cover, you have a good chance it will pass over you. The most that would happen is that a bloody piece of shrapnel would lose its velocity above you and drop on you. It might give you a bad cut. Otherwise, a mortar shell, or any other kind of shell, would have to drop right on you to do damage. The thing to do is lie where you are until the thing is quiet and then run for cover. So that's what I did. I just dropped where I was. I wanted to run as bad as anybody else. I wanted to get the Christ out of that field. These two kids just dropped their rifles and started running. Both of them were killed. Both of them were killed right there because they didn't know that they needed to drop right where they were and stay put. It's awful hard to do. It's awful hard to lie there with that stuff breaking around you.

I hated to ride in vehicles. I always wanted my feet firmly on the ground. I couldn't understand guys that wanted to ride in jeeps and ride in tanks and be in the tank corps and that kind of thing. I wanted to be where if something was happening I had full control of my body and could take it out of trouble as quickly as possible. A lot of time I couldn't do that. When I started taking over control of the wireless set and was with the colonel all the time he used to ride in a personnel carrier. Of course he went up to the line and I had to be with him.

I remember one time I was in charge of the control wireless and you had to be in contact with the companies in case you need artillery fire or there is a report and you gotta get the message to them. If you're not paying attention to them and they're in trouble, you're responsible for them. I remember once when the companies were out in front and we drove up on a bit of a rise and the colonel took his batman and went looking for someplace to put the regimental headquarters with a little bit of cover. Left me perched up on top of the goddamn hill and I'm stuck there with the wireless and I can't move. I don't like it. The first thing I hear is a German 88 going by. Devastating thing, cut right through steel. I heard one going by me. That was enough. I started yelling: "Get me out of this fucking place." I was a sitting duck in the vehicle, but I had to stay with the set. I did throw myself over the edge of the carrier onto the ground and pulled the microphone and headset with me so I could still operate it.

Quite early on I had a close call not far from Caen, just a few miles in from the beach. We had relieved an English group, and didn't have much cover. If you were any length of time in a position, what started out to be a very modest slit trench

would become a rather elaborate underground residence because you kept adding to it and digging deeper the longer you were there. The English had dug in no more than waist-high and you had to lie down to have real cover. I started digging deeper, but didn't have too much time. There was a lot of commotion in the English troops leaving and us taking over and the thing was sighted by the Germans and they decided to do some firing. I was lying down in the slit trench. I was by myself. Nobody was with me. The company officer was just a few feet from me so I could call out messages to him without any trouble. I didn't have to go any distance to give him messages. The headset had the lines that ran from each ear-piece down onto your chin and then they were sort of woven together and ran down into a plug that plugged into the set. All of a sudden we're being mortared and shelled. A shell — it was obviously a mortar shell — burst on the side of the slit trench where I was. There was a big orange explosion and my set went dead. I couldn't hear anything. I thought, "The set's been hit and I can't do anything about it because it's dark, I can't see anything." Of course, I can't put on a light. To hell with it. Thought I'd lie down and have a bit of a snooze till dawn when I could see things. If I had seen things I wouldn't snooze till dawn because when dawn came and I woke up and took a look, I saw there was nothing wrong with the set. It was the goddamn connection from my headset to the set that had been cut off right under my chin with a piece of shrapnel. It would have simply sliced my throat right open and I would have been dead before anybody would have got me out of there. I wasn't particularly happy about the situation. I just dug in a little better after that.

That was when I was out with the company at the early stage after we landed in France. We were in that area for several weeks. There was a real good set of trenches for the colonels. We dug close to it so we could cut down the distances. Preserve your life as much as possible. There was a phone line ran out to the brigades and the phone would buzz. This stupid bloody colonel ordered us to move our trench. It was too close to him and the buzz from the phones was annoying him. He was a character. He wouldn't get out of his slit trench to have a piss or have a shit. You had to shit in a hurry and get back in. He wouldn't do it. He had a can he would piss or shit in and have his batman take it out and empty it for him. We had to move out of the goddamn place because of him. Finally, a call for him came in from a brigadier, telling him to attend an "O" group, that's an officers' group, an officers' meeting at the brigade. And the colonel said, "I can't leave here. They're shooting." What a fucking moron, that's supposed to be what's happening. The brigadier yells over the line, "You get out of that goddamn hole and get down here immediately." So he did. He never came back. When he left he had his batman drive the jeep up and turn it in the direction in which he was going to leave, keeping the motor running. As soon as it was ready he dashed out of his goddamn funkhole, jumped into the jeep and took off like a bat out of hell for the brigade. That's the last we saw of him.

Some of these officers were something to behold. We had a major that was temporarily placed in command. We didn't think he was a bad guy. A bit of a mad character in a way. After he came in I went out to one of the companies. After being in the position for a couple of weeks, maybe a little longer, there was word for us

to drop back. Another group was moving in to take over the line from us. The officer of the company had been killed. We're going past the regimental headquarters. This major who's commanding the regiment, as we were going by, asks what detachment we are. I said, "Company B." "Who's in charge?" I said, "I guess I am. I'm the only one with any rank." "Who are you?" "I'm Corporal Scott." "I guess I'd better come and show you the way, where we're going to."

So he comes and he's got the sergeant-major along. We're going down into one of these sunken roads with high banks. There are a lot of them, about ten to twelve feet high. Just as we're starting down the incline the sergeant-major said, "I think we're supposed to turn right here, sir." He said, "Oh no, it's further down." We got down right in the bottom of this goddamn pit and he decides he's wrong. And he said, "Well, just break off to the side of the road while I go back and reconnoitre." Like you were in England in training. And this is night-time too. We don't like it but we start back. And then the shooting started. Must have got wind of something going on. The artillery started. As usual we think they overshot us. This was just a feeling. Christ. First one shell. I remember the guy. He was right beside me. A coloured American actually, from New York who had come up to Canada and joined the army. Sonny Jones. A boxer. Sonny was right on the main and a shell went off. The second shell was a little bit closer. I said, "You know Sonny, those bastards know we're here." The next shell was a little closer. The next shell was a fucking barrage right on the goddamn road. Shrapnel everywhere. Sonny yelled at me, "Jack I'm hit. I'm hit." He was hit right from bloody head to foot. Riddled with shrapnel. His feet were right against my head. He was dead in minutes. Just enough strength to yell at me. There was nothing I could do for him. So, it lightened up a bit and I had a guy with me working on the wireless set. As soon as it was finished I told the guy with me, "Let's fuck off out of here. I'm not waiting around here." We took off and we found an old log bridge. We got under that. Real solid logs. Good protection across a creek that was dry. We stayed under that until dawn. Abandoned the bloody wireless set and went looking for the company in the morning. I found where they had been located. It was a total schmozzle.

The major had gone up the hill again so he didn't get hit. He came back down. Sonny wasn't even with our outfit, but was of another compnay. There would probably have been somewhere in the neighbourhood of about twenty men in the platoon that was there plus our headquarters which wouldn't have been at that time more than six men. There might have been thirty men in there. Probably half of them got killed or seriously wounded as a result of this schmozzle. A very bad mistake in judgement. It didn't show any great signs of capability of leadership. The sergeant-major had been right. He said we should turn right at the top of the hill. Nobody would have been killed, at least not at that time, if we had turned right instead of going on down.

I did wireless work for the major after that and he was finally wounded himself. As a matter of fact, he was wounded in his leg under fire. I dragged him into a ditch to get him out of the goddamn shell and mortar fire. He was out wounded for awhile. He came back.

I remember when we were at a place called Lalonde-Hult on the Seine River,

near a city called Elboeuf, there was a regiment that was in this goddamn place ahead of us which was virtually wiped out. The brigadier got nailed for this. He sent in a regiment of his own that got wiped out. Then we got word to go in. It was in between two railroad lines in a little waystation called Lalonde-Hult. We went down under an underpass on the railway and there was nothing happening until the whole company had come in under the underpass between the two railroads. But there were Germans there that were cut off and the brigadier said, "They're just a bunch of demoralized Germans. There'll be nothing to it. Just take them prisoner." If they were demoralized Germans I'd hate like hell to run into some with a very high morale. As soon as we got under the underpass, all of us, they opened fire. They knocked out a whole lot of our guys, who were totally unaware of what was happening. We thought we were walking into nothing. So we took to ground and tried to fight back. I'm packing the wireless, trying to keep communications with the battalion headquarters. This major was running me back and forward all over the place. I had no weapon by this time. I've lost my goddamn weapons. He's got a stupid revolver. We came across one of our guys who had been killed. He had a Bren gun. By that point, I told him: "You carry this goddamn wireless set and I'll carry the Bren gun. At least we'll have something to shoot back with." Snipers were just barely missing us. He's out running hither and yon trying to get his troops together. The bloody snipers are just missing us by inches. We finally pulled back onto a ridge.

Then we found out what we didn't know. The Fusiliers Montréal — a French-Canadian group — had been sent in there ahead of us. They were almost totally wiped out. So we both got together and held on. Eventually, a few days later, they sent in a couple of armoured cars into this place and cleaned the Germans out with no casualties at all. It should have been done in the first place. The brigadier was — I don't know what happened to him — pulled out and sent to England or something. He had some kind of discipline against him; another total schmozzle.

On the whole relations between officers and men were not bad. There was the odd officer that was a pain in the ass and one could suspect that some of them were occasionally shot by their own men when they got up in the lines. I got along well, alright. I got along particularly when I was in charge of the control wireless set with the major and later with the new colonel that came in. Because, quite frankly, I was a good operator. I very seldom lost contact with companies that were out front and that was what they were depending on. I remember the colonel that came in, taking the place of the one that had been hauled out. At one point when we went through our show, it was pretty nasty and I maintained communications except with one company I lost for a little while. I kept everybody else under the most difficult conditions. After the thing was over and we were in a rest area he made me a present of some special canned goods and fruit and so on and he told me that in his opinion I was the best signaler in the Canadian army.

I think he was exaggerating a bit, but I did do a good job. One reason why I did was because I didn't follow the rules. Strict rules were you got the set on net and you locked it there and you never touched it. My attitude was if you lost communications there's no point sitting there with your set locked, nothing happening.

I used to tell the guys out in the companies I was communicating with, "If you lose the net," I said, "do anything, do something. Even if you just kick the fucking set. Do it!" The result was that the guys would fiddle around, find themselves, and we kept communications quite well when we were going through any kind of show. Always kept communications.

It was still mostly chaos. As far as the Canadian army was concerned the officers, like the men, were all amateurs, all civilians. There were very few professionals. The professionals had been with the Princess Pats and the Van Doos from Quebec. They were spread out pretty thin once we started mobilizing for war. If you'd been a private in the regular army before the war, your chances of becoming an officer if you had anything on the ball were very very high because they had to use you. A lot of them didn't go overseas, however. They were used for training, either in Canada or in England. People were amateurs and they weren't a bit backward in admitting it. And they were learning it as it went along and the learning process was extremely goddamn costly. To officers as well as the men. A lot of officers were killed as well. Foolish things were done. There were two-inch mortars in the army which were carried by the infantry. They were no goddamn use at all.

Once when I was with one company, we had gone forward to take some position and we got pinned down. Our tanks were knocked out. Two big German Tiger tanks were roaming around and the Germans were well dug in. Of course, they were defending, and we're attacking. Our company finally ended up on a ridge with fifteen men. Probably we went up with somewhere close to a hundred. Clobbered. I end up the top ranking guy. You know, this is nonsense up there. I couldn't get in touch with anybody: shit beaten out of the wireless. So I asked one of the artillery officers to get word back to my battalion headquarters that we want to pull out of there. Tell them what the situation is and that we want to get out of there. So the word came through, "OK, pull back on your own, any way you can." We scrambled right away. We had a few weapons, including one of these stupid two-inch mortars. We dropped back and there was a bloody great big hole. We got into it and circled around in this hole. A bit of protection there. It came night-time. It was a moon-lit night. Quite clear. You could see for a long way. And an officer came up. A second lieutenant. We're supposed to have at least a captain in charge. He's just beginning to win his spurs and he comes in. We're keeping watch. There's a farmhouse not far away and obviously there were Germans holed up in it. And he thinks he sees something move: "Bring up the two-inch mortar." I said, "Leave that fucking thing alone. Don't fire that. It just draws flies." "Bring up the mortar," he orders, "I see something moving." They set up the mortar and direct it and take fire. You just drop the shell in, you know, and it takes off. Big flash, it goes off, but it probably wouldn't give you a sore toe. As soon as it happened, of course, they got a bearing on us. Boy did he ever get cursed out. I never saw a two-inch mortar fired again after that. That's the only time I saw one fired, other than at Long Branch in training. Nobody would use them.

Another run-in I had with an officer took place in Belgium. We had been up and down Belgium three times. I think it was partly a show to throw the Germans, who were holding Dunkirk, off track. We eventually dug in along the Leopold Canal

at Antwerp for four or five weeks. It was really great. You could walk back about three or four blocks and take a streetcar downtown, that is unless the buzz bombs and V-2s were hitting the port.

I never had to do much telephone work there because I did all the control wireless operation and so wasn't asked to do it when we were able to get somewhere where we had telephone lines. One night I picked up a bottle of Jan de Kuypers Holland's gin. I couldn't even stand the smell of the stuff, but I'd brought it into headquarters. The sergeant in charge there he liked the gin and wanted to have a drink. I said, "OK, you go and I'll look after the telephone." So off he went. The signals officer in charge there was a total drunk. Drunk all the time and he comes in and he is annoying me to no end. Absolutely polluted. I kept telling him to bug off. He keeps at it and gives me this, "Who's the officer here." I said, "You're the officer, but I'm in charge of the telephone apparatus." He says, "I'll decide who is in charge of what." This went on for awhile. Finally I threw the goddamn pad down which you take messages on and said, "Take it. I'm fucking off." I went a few blocks, got on the streetcar and went into Antwerp. Didn't come back until early next morning.

As soon as I got to headquarters I was told the commander wanted to see me in his office. I had left my post. I was going to be in deep trouble. He said, "Corporal Scott, I understand you were in charge of the telephone last night." "Yes, sir." He said, "You left." "I did, sir." And he said, "You know that is not right. I don't want that to happen again. If anyone comes around annoying you, don't leave. Come and tell me. I'll fix it." He said that he had sent the officer out on a tour of inspection of all the signal apparatus, and this guy must have been scared out of his wits. That's why he drank so much, couldn't cope and turned to the drink in an effort to get by. That's worse. I really got away with murder that time. Walking out on an officer and telling him to stuff the telephone set.

It was hell, but it was still easy enough for me to keep in mind that this was an anti-fascist war. I found it easy enough to keep in mind. Things began to happen that drove it home. Once you started advancing into France and later Belgium the Résistance people started coming to the surface and arrested people who had been collaborators and so on. And you found people who were very hungry, had nothing. When we got into Rouen we had rations that were beneath your dignity to eat. You bloody well had to starve to death. When we got in there there were people on the streets, little kids, begging. We were giving them things like hard tack that they were standing there eating. I never did eat hard tack. The guys around me, I said to them, "Give the people the rations." We were handing them out. Nothing left. This was just before we were nailed in this schmozzle at Lalonde-Hult. We moved up there shortly afterwards. We were pinned down there for two days with no rations. Totally out of everything. Nothing to eat. So, we could see backwards from where we were and we saw a carrier trying to get rations up to us. It couldn't. It couldn't get through the fire. I guess it was close to two days before we could get some rations, get something to eat. We had given everything away.

I was in Deventer, in Holland. Cities there were in pretty bad shape. Rotterdam and Amsterdam particularly. In Rotterdam we managed to make an agreement with

the Germans that were holed up there. They let us go through to take water and some food in to the Dutch people. They didn't even have enough water to drink. It was a terrible situation. In Deventer I was in a Dutch family's home. A fairly nice home. The guy brought out a loaf of bread. It smelled funny. It was made out of flour that was actually ground-up tulip bulbs. By then I recognized the smell. It smelled like tulips, really heavy. He said, "Would you like to try it." "No thanks." I don't want any part of it. The smell and the feel of it was enough. They had used this for bread for quite some time. Not only there, but in other cities in Holland.

It was no wonder the signs of the Resistance were so visible. They started in the towns and villages and you could see it in any town you went through. Women who had been prostitutes and had associated with Germans and others who collaborated were having one side of their head shaved. It was the mark of a collaborator. We saw that going on all over France. They put guys in jail that had been collaborators. The Belgians seemed to be even better organized than the French. They had a list of every collaborator and they started arresting them and bringing them to jail. There were some cases where crowds tried to get at collaborators, but the Resistance held them back and took the people to jail for trial. They were well organized. They knew exactly what to do. Never saw anybody in any other part of Europe that was so well-organized as the Belgians. You might have conversations with them from time to time. For a small country and very few places to hide out and no places really to carry out guerrilla warfare — you know it's very flat country as well as being very small — they did a very excellent job of carrying on the struggle. The French in other parts where there was the possibility of fighting — in Paris particularly, which we didn't get to at that time — had a more organized Resistance. The area that we went through — Normandy and up through the north of France — I don't think it was quite so well-organized as other parts.

We were always well-greeted. But in Normandy, the sort of approach was we're glad to see you but why couldn't you make the invasion somewhere else. There was some terrible fighting in Normandy and in Holland. There were areas of Belgium that were better off because we had the Germans on the run along the coast. We went up the coast and had the Germans on the run pretty well all the way once we moved into Belgium. They did little fighting until they got into Holland and then it got pretty serious. When we crossed the border into Holland we got hit pretty hard there. They counter-attacked. But we managed to push through and then we moved down the Beveland Peninsula. We were to get down to the point that the Scottish Brigade had landed on Walcheren Island just at the end of the Beveland Peninsula and our orders were to get down and contact them. Once the Beveland Peninsula was cleared we had a promise that we would leave and would go back to a place near Brussels for two weeks. Of course, everybody is anxious to get the goddamn thing over. It was raining and the dikes had been opened. You travelled at night and if you got off the edge of the dike, Christ you could drown in no time. It was cold. North Sea water was coming in there. We took the Germans by surprise because what with the pouring rain and dark and travelling down those bloody treacherous dikes, they didn't expect to see us. We walked in on them several times,

catching them in a total state of undress. They were in houses that they had taken and they'd be resting and we'd move in unexpectedly.

At one point we were on the radios and listening and the brigadier was calling back to the divisional headquarters and telling them the guys were impatient. They want to get this show finished. They want to go. In the dark and late at night. Finally the divisional command, the general, said, "Well, O.K., tell them to go." Down the dikes, we went happy as hell. Captured all kinds of places, took all kinds of prisoners. Finally we met up with the Scottish who had a brigadier who looked like an old Scottish lord. He had one of these goddamn big staffs that was nearly as tall as he was. He didn't need it to lean on but it was the symbolic staff of leadership — real Scottish — and all of these guys were willing to follow him to the death. We made our contact and we went back half-way between Brussels and Antwerp. You could go either way in no time.

I used to go to Antwerp. I liked Antwerp better than Brussels because it was a better city to make friends, especially amongst the dockworkers. I belonged to the same kind of class they did. In general, they had the same outlook on politics that I did. So I found it was a very friendly atmosphere there. That was where I liked to go, to Antwerp.

You met some good people. They knew what was happening. I was on leave from Brussels one time. I had a room in a hotel called the Continental supplied by the army. I never got to sleep in the goddamn thing. I went to a cafe, opened the door and ordered a cognac. I get talking to the woman who served me, an older woman. We got talking politics. She said, "I know what you are." She said, "Just a minute, I got something for you." She went in the back and she came back with a little pin and a red flag. She gave them to me. I lost them afterwards. Too bad. So she gave me a cognac, which I proceeded to drink. And I ordered another cognac and this kept up for some time. Finally I know that I'm pretty drunk and I have to get to the toilet but I couldn't get out of the toilet. That was it. I didn't know what happened until I woke up in bed the next morning. She had got her husband to come in and pack me up to the bed.

All the cafes in Belgium, certainly in Antwerp and Brussels, had prostitutes in them. You go in there and sit down. If you're alone, pretty soon a woman would be sitting beside you. When I came down and was walking out in the morning, there was a real good-looking blonde. She said, "How are you?" I said, "I'm fine. Sure got my head cleared up." "That's good," she said. "You slept in my bed last night." She was one of the prostitutes attached to this place. I don't know whether she slept beside me or not. I couldn't tell you and she didn't offer the information. I think that was the drunkest I've ever been in my life.

While we were in Antwerp, incidentally, that was the time of the great Battle of the Bulge. The Americans make a great thing of it, but there never should have been any Battle of the Bulge. The Germans were beaten to a standstill. They were on their last legs, but they made this break through the American lines. They were driving for the coast. If they had got as far as Antwerp the whole British and Canadian armies and the central division of the American army were totally cut off. We would have had no supplies, no post.

It was a pretty desperate situation and Montgomery was put in command of that whole front. Our regiment was pulled out of the lines and pulled back to Herlogenbosch, in behind the Americans. We were to stop the advance of the Germans. I remember it came New Year's. I was in a Dutch house and everybody was worried about the break-through. Our guys were a bunch of mad bastards and decide New Year's Eve to take to the streets and start firing off rifles and Bren guns. A big noise on New Year's Eve. The Dutch people that I was in there with in the house were just scared out of their wits. The Germans had come back. Nothing happened. It was just a bunch of crazy Canucks out there on the streets, firing off the New Year's Eve. But, they were really scared it was the Germans coming back and killing them all.

We ended up blocking the Germans and they had to drop back. They ran out of supplies, couldn't go any farther. So we came out of it OK. When we broke into Germany, we were a little bit behind the lines. We would fall back to Malden for a rest every once in awhile. Companies changing front lines. We were near Mook. More or less uninhabited, but the Germans were probing from both sides. There was a group that went out from our outfit one night and they got into this town and they found out that this town had been bottling gin. There were huge vats of gin in this place. Did a few samples and they came back and spread the glad word around. The next night, the whole fucking company disappeared. They were all stinking drunk. The brigadier himself came up and ordered them out. He threatened to shoot them. The brigadier sent up a group of sappers to blow holes in the vats and let all the gin run down the sewer. When they sobered up, the brigadier said, "Well you came into the town to get drunk, now you can hold on to it." It was a no-man's land. Became one of our positions. When we moved from there through Kleve that was some night. We had a thousand pieces of artillery, each with a thousand shells to fire. We had the multi-barrel mortars. I don't know how much ammunition they had. Three-inch mortars. All kinds of weapons. The barrage went on all night. It was about a twelve-hour barrage. Before dawn seven hundred planes went over. At dawn we had word, for protection of our own weapons, to stay down all night. There's so much going over, there could be some that would drop short. Protect ourselves. Talk about a racket. Millions of rounds of ammunition going over. We went through the Reich Wald the next day. There was virtually no resistance. We got into Kleve and it had been quite a large city. It was one of the links in the German line of defense. All of the houses were fortified. There was very little left of them. Kleve was just a bunch of rubble. I only saw two civilians. A man and a little girl in the entire city when we moved in there. We couldn't recognize it as a city, the city that had been there. We had quite a lot of difficulty getting through. That was coming near the end of the war then. It wasn't too long after that that the Germans gave up.

When it finally ended we were in Germany, near Bremen. The guys had a party and got a little bit drunk. They were happy it was over, but the war wasn't over yet. There was still the war in the Pacific. It was a couple of months away. Within days I was one of the group organized for a brigade for service in the Pacific. I had to come back to Canada to go to Breckenridge, Missouri for training for service in

the Pacific, which I never got to because it was over before we got our training. At that point, at least those of us there that were thinking of being on our way to the Pacific, the rejoicing was rather reserved because the war for us at that time was not yet over. It wasn't over until we had got to Canada and had been in Canada for a time.

We went on leave and then went into a camp at Trenton. We were around there not doing very much. It didn't bother us very much. If they had tried basic training they would have been hauled down, giving veterans basic training. We had all the training we needed and more so we were going off for weekends all the time. As soon as the war was over then shortly after that we got our discharge.

9. RETURNING TO CANADA

I had accumulated something of a library before I went into the army, a few hundred volumes. Not as many as I have now and certainly nothing like what I used to have, but there were a few books that were quite hard to come by in the 1930s and of course they would be extremely rare now. There were some that I haven't seen since, for example. I had a copy of the *Secret Diplomatic History of the Eighteenth Century* and *The Life of Lord Palmerston* bound together in one volume barely holding together. I bought it in Toronto somewhere, and it sticks in my mind because of the controversy surrounding the work. It was written by Marx in English and published in English, but the Soviet Union wouldn't publish it, still wouldn't for years. When Volume 15 of the collected works was coming out in the Soviet Union they wouldn't include these writings in it. And the volume I had was memorable, too, because it was one of the very few Marxist books I have seen with an illustration in it. It had a photograph of a Russian Empress inside.

Well, what with me going into the army I needed to leave this library with someone. I don't want to name the guy. He was a dental mechanic and he was a Party member. So I gave him these books to keep for me. He took them alright, but then he got scared. I guess he figured they would be incriminating if the Mounties came along or something. People had been interned, you know. I don't think he could bring himself to burn them, but he buried them out in the back yard. He might as well have burned them. There was no cover or anything, and by the time I got back they'd been there a few years. Obviously of no use by then. So they're still sitting there in this guy's back yard, what's left of them.

When I got back I contacted the Party of course. Things were not particularly to my liking. I had a number of arguments. I almost got in a fist fight with George Harris. No matter what the Party says now about how they disassociated themselves from Browder and revisionism it's all bullshit.

The leading Party figures were mouthing crap about the reconstruction of the world. Yet the state of the world was such that certainly very little had been resolved. I didn't go into the army with any idea that we were going to come out with some kind of a new world. I never was deluded in that way. I figured that if Hitler was beaten, that would be an accomplishment. That had to be done in order to keep the way open for some kind of advancement. That much was accomplished. It was worthwhile. Beyond that, I could see very little happening. Even before I came back, I could tell what was on with the Party. Bloody Yalta, Tehran, the settlement: everyone was on about at least fifty years of cooperation down the road where the reconstruction of the world would be in the forefront.

I remember it was coming near Christmas time. There was a guy who was organizing in the Steelworkers before he went into the army, a Jewish guy named Dick Steele. He was in the Party and his wife was Esther Silver. I knew the both of them quite well, knew Esther before she got married. They had twins and Dick was killed overseas in a tank. Him and Munie Erlich were killed together. Stupid. They

wanted to be together and in the tank corps of all things and they were both in the same bloody tank that got hit; both got wiped out. Dick Steele was a nice guy. I thought well, I've a few dollars and I'll go see Esther and I'll give her a few bucks to buy something for the kids for Christmas. So, I went up there.

They were living in an apartment, I think around Markham Street or Euclid or somewhere in that area. She was living upstairs in a flat. While I was there George Harris came in with somebody else. Stinking drunk. He's off on this tangent. "Great unity in the world. Reconstruction of the world. Peace. Happiness." I lit into him: "There's still fighting going on in the world. There's fighting in Palestine. There's fighting all over the Middle East. Fighting in Africa. How the hell can you talk like that? There's war all over the place. We're on the brink of despair and you talk this kind of nonsense." He's already in the central committee of the Party. I'm totally sober. I hadn't had a drink. We're at the top of the stairs. He was near the stairway. If I had hit him — and I was about ready to — I might have broken his goddamn neck. I would have sent him flying down the stairs. I'm getting madder by the minute. Finally, Esther stepped in between us. She spoke to me, not to him. She said, "Don't start anything. He's drunk." I said, "Well, because it's your place, Esther: I don't want to make any trouble for you. I won't do anything. I'll leave." I went out, but I was ready to do battle with him. This was the general attitude of the Party.

When I came back there was a law that the company that you worked for when you volunteered — and I was a volunteer not a conscript — had to take you back and give you wages that you would have been earning had you continued to work in the plant. Well, what happened was they finally got a signed agreement later on at the Campbell Soup Company where I had been working in New Toronto. I was long gone of course and Dave Archer was representing the Packing House Workers' in the district and he was in charge. But at Campbell Soup it was a crazy situation: they wound up with an agreement which said they had to honour the agreement even though the union disintegrated. There was only one union member there and he was president of a local which didn't exist. Don't ask me why. I wasn't there.

Archer came to see me. He said, "You going back to work at Campbell Soup?" I said, "You gotta be out of your mind." He said, "We have an agreement and no union to enforce it. Gotta have somebody in there that knows the guys. Everybody knows you in there. You can go in there and pull the thing together." And finally I agreed, I'd go in there for awhile. In the meantime they found out what had been going on in the shipping department with our bonus racket. No way I was going to go back to the shipping department. But they had to take me back and they made it clear that they didn't want me. I didn't want them either. They put me on this stupid blending platform. When I walked in everyone was — particularly the women in there — saying, "Hi Jack!"

I couldn't stand it working on this bloody blending platform. I'm not going to get any bonus because I'm a new hand. But the rest of them are slipping and sliding up the goddamn place, breaking their goddamn ass. The guy who was the lead hand on the blending platform, getting near the end of the shift, maybe a couple hours to go and I'm beat by this time, comes up to me and says, "Let's really try to

turn it on, Jack, and make a bit of bonus today.” He takes the other end of the platform, before it’s sunk in what he’s saying to me. I said, “Wait a minute. Stop everything.” I walked to the platform. I said, “What did you just say to me there?” He said, “Turn it on a bit, make some bonus.” I said, “I thought that’s what you said. You’re not talking my language because I’m not turning anything on. It’s a mad-house. You go tell the foreman to get me the hell off here, that I’m not fit to work in blending.” “I don’t want to do that.” He was one of the bastards that wanted to scab earlier only we threatened them during the strike. They wouldn’t picket, but they didn’t go to work. He was one of the leaders. I knew goddamn well. I said, “Look you go tell them. Get me off this platform.” “Well, OK, if you really want me to.” So he went and told the foreman.

The foreman come up. He said, “What’s the matter, Jack?” I said, “These bastards are mad. Get me off this fucking platform. You can fire me if you like.” He said, “Oh we can’t do that. We’ve got to keep you at work.” He said, “Will you finish out the day?” I said, “I’ll finish out the day, that’s it. And I’ll do it at my speed.” So I finished out the shift. The next morning he had me wheeling cooked soup to the filling machines. I forget how long I lasted, maybe six or seven weeks.

I wasn’t at Campbell Soup a couple of days when C.S. Jackson came out there and got me at noon and wanted me to go to work for the United Electrical Workers, go up to Peterborough and be the business agent in Peterborough. There was a General Electric local there. I wouldn’t go. I turned the job down. If I had gone and stayed through I’d be enjoying a good pension now. If I had wanted to become a Party bureaucrat then I could have started to climb up the ladder, which I’m very happy I never undertook. I told him: “There’s lots of things I see that I think are wrong. I may be wrong. Maybe I’m seeing things from the wrong point of view but I think the only way that I can get my feet back on the ground is to work in a factory for awhile. Stay at work. Think things out. See how things are.” He was really pressing me. I finally got him off my back by telling him to go and talk to Peter Hunter, who had also just recently come back from overseas. I knew Peter pretty well and I knew he would jump at the opportunity, which he did. I give him a big bill of goods on Peter, what a great guy he was. Fine person. Good organizer. A good solid character. So Jackson went and talked to him and got him. Hunter was with them for some years and I suppose he got finally pensioned off. I just didn’t find things all that pleasant from a political point of view.

I stayed in the Party. Had arguments with them and so on. But I never really thought of leaving. Not seriously. If someone had talked to me seriously I might have been convinced. My friends were pretty well all there. I had some friends outside the Party too, but most were there. It didn’t occur to me as a serious alternative. Again, I’m not given to quitting very much.

It was sort of a stubborn attitude. Besides I knew that if you go away and leave them, then they attack you. “Well, he wouldn’t stay and fight for his opinion.” I stayed around and fought. We had a number of arguments. A number of the veterans were in on these arguments. There were several meetings, especially with veterans. I remember one in particular in the Party office downtown. I remember Fred Collins was there and Charlie Sims and two or three others. Collins was then with the

Fur and Leather Workers Union. I think that was what he was with. Collins was there because — and Sims — they had both been veterans in the First World War. I don't know why that gave them special privilege over veterans of the Second World War. But, anyway they were there. We were discussing some issue in which there were serious differences between the young veterans and the Party leadership. Collins was chairman and had spoken a bit. Then Charlie Sims launched into a speech. Charlie could talk for four or five hours. And he went on and on and on. When he wound up, it's noon. It's been the whole bloody morning. Collins said, "I got a meeting here and somebody else has a meeting there." I said, "Oh no you don't. This is not finished yet. We've got to have another meeting." We got another meeting in the afternoon. Several of us got together. We were going around to Child's restaurant to have lunch together. Child's was at the corner of Yonge and Bay at the time. Since that time Simpson's is right across from that block. We went into the cafeteria. Got our order. We were sitting at the table. Charlie Sims walked in, sat down beside us. The son of a bitch had followed us to see where we were going together. They weren't about to let us talk things over by ourselves. He was going to horn in on us. We had several battles over various things.

These discussions and disagreements with the young veterans and the Party never really got that sharp. But they did hint at what was becoming a problem, and that was the Party's failure to keep itself a working-class organization. After the war there was a lot of playing to the upper middle class who came into the Party in some numbers as a result of Russia's involvement in the war. And some people had no idea about the war and what it was like. Hell, I came back and went to live with a couple of friends for a time before I settled in, and the woman told me that she hadn't had Canadian bacon all the time I'd been overseas. Thought it was all going to the troops. I never saw Canadian bacon when I was overseas. I never got it once. Some people seemed to think everything was going to the boys overseas. Our position was, "For Christ's sake, fight for a decent life in Canada and leave the goddamn war to us to fight." That was our position. Militants who went overseas because they were unemployed and wanted to fight fascism didn't think the no-strike pledge was such a good idea.

With these kind of differences the Party was very interested in getting me back into the swing of things. There were only two Party members that had decorations for bravery. That was Charlie Stewart out in BC and myself. The Party made a big thing of us, but I tried to keep my distance because of the differences. Gradually people got back into accepting the general position of the Party. But I was never really comfortable. I hadn't given up on the Party as a force that could put up a battle, but it never recovered from all the crises that it was involved in. From the beginning of the war — first of all it was our war and then it wasn't and then it was — there had been problems. And then there were the spy trials. There was no doubt that Canada, Britain, and the United States were not trusting the Soviet Union, which of course was an ally, with wartime research. For many in the Party the Soviet Union was the socialist fatherland and you did what you could to help them. This was clearly the position of Raymond Boyer, one of the outstanding Canadian explosives experts, a top man on the continent. He felt material should be made avail-

able to the Soviet Union and he admitted that in court, where he also implicated Fred Rose and Sam Carr. Boyer argued that the Soviet Union was our ally and if they had the research and knowledge it could be used by them to shorten the war and save lives. Sound enough argument. But it wasn't convincing as far as I was concerned because my position was that a political party should not be implicated in spying against its own country. Not that I get all uptight about spying, but when a Communist like Rose and a leading member of the political bureau, like Carr, are at the centre of it all it creates a crisis that is hard to rebound from, especially when these people admit their "guilt" by cutting and running when the going gets hot.

And Sam Carr was something else, just like an overgrown schoolboy. When I got back from overseas, still in uniform, I went to see Ma Flanagan, who had mothered a lot of us in the Party for years. The whole business of the spy trials wasn't public property yet, but Mary said to me, "Do you know what Sam did." I said, "No, but Sam is capable of anything." She told me that Sam used to call up people long-distance in Ottawa and Montreal to give them their assignments. I said, "No, not even Sam would do that." But apparently he did. The RCMP, or whatever, had all this stuff, although it was never brought out at the trial. I remember one day I was walking up Yonge Street in the 1930s and Sam came and grabbed me and was talking. "You know," he said, "I keep notes, but I keep them in eight languages. The RCMP will never be able to figure them out." Christ, the Mounties can get guys that speak eight languages. All this kind of schoolboy thing.

Anyway, when the crisis comes, and Gouzenko does his thing, and all the spying charges are laid there is another crisis in the party. And how it gets weathered depends on what the Party is made of. The middle class elements that had flocked into the Party during the war years, they just cut and ran. Disappeared. Working-class elements may have stuck around. They might have raised hell about the policies that were being pursued and that seemed wrong. But the middle class types weren't about to chance it. They had too much to lose. Who's to blame them. You're gonna save what you can from the goddamn wreckage and you certainly weren't willing to confront going to jail.

For my part I stayed, but I had my differences and never took up posts with the Party. I never took up with Mischa Cohen, who was Sam Carr's brother and was the city organizer. He wanted me to start organizing for the Party, but I didn't. I did run an election campaign for the Party in Ward Eight for three months, which was time I had coming to me from the army before I had to claim the job at Campbell Soup. We ran the campaign mainly for the purpose of defeating the CCF candidate. It was Larry Sefton. I ran the campaign for Jim Davies who was one of the Parkins from Winnipeg, but he had adopted another name in the 1930s. It didn't disturb me running to beat the CCF because of the particular candidate. Sefton was supported by the *Toronto Star*, which gives you an indication of how far to the right he was in the CCF. Mind you, we wanted to get as big a vote as we could, but we knew we were not going to win. We got a respectable three thousand votes and Sefton was beaten, I think, by less than a thousand votes. So maybe we accomplished what we set out to do. Beat him and get a respectable vote. He never ran again.

I wasn't long for Campbell Soup. The company had to give you two weeks

notice, but that wasn't the issue for me. I went into the Personnel Office and said, "I won't be coming to work tomorrow." "You quitting? You can't do that. You have to give us two weeks notice." "OK, take two weeks notice. I will punch in the clock, but I will not promise you any work." "Oh, it's alright, we'll arrange it all." So I went to work at East Toronto Dairy and peddled milk.

I got near killed a couple of times. I peddled with a horse and wagon and I had a very skittish horse. The horse knew the route, knew every delivery he had to make. Never had to bother with the horse. As soon as you start the route with the horse, just let him go and he knew when to move, when to stop and where to stop. But there was lots of things that annoyed him. When we'd be starting back for the stables, he'd want to get there in a hurry. If he heard another horse coming along behind he'd take off. He might have made a good race horse.

There was a lot of things that annoyed him. Another was the street flusher. I'm delivering a bottle and the flusher came around the corner and headed for us. I knew we were going to have trouble. I headed for the wagon and took hold, but he wasn't about to be stopped. He took off and I took off from the wagon and let him go. He went around the corner of the street. I could see the wagon swaying. He got out of sight and I heard a crash. I got down to the corner and all I could see was milk and broken milk bottles and a smashed wagon and no sign of the horse. A guy in a car stopped. He said, "Have you got any idea where he might have gone? Do you think he would go to the stables?" "No, I think he would go to the last delivery and stop there." He said, "Well, I'll drive you there." And he did. At the last place where we had a delivery, there was the horse standing there just shaking and shivering. Nothing but the shafts of the wagon. I had to put in a phone call for them to come and clear up the mess and bring out milk for the last deliveries and get the horse back to the stables.

The dairy was on one side of Gerrard Street and the place where they kept the wagons was on the other side. Quite narrow streets and street cars running both ways. I had to come in and I had a load of my returns and my empties and I took the horse over with the wagon to park the wagon, unharness the horse, and take him back to the stables. It was summertime and there were flies there that were bothering the horse. Another guy that had gone up — he was behind me — started kibbitzing with the secretaries in the office upstairs. He ignored his horse and the horse gets bothered by the flies. He decided not to wait around. He decided to leave in a hurry and headed for the parking lot where he thought he should be. The wagon should be parked and he should be in the cool of the stable. I had my horse unharnessed on one side when I heard this other horse coming. There was cars parked there. Some of the guys that drove in their cars used to park them over there and pull their wagons out and park their cars. I heard this horse coming and I knew there was going to be trouble. I dived behind a car. Sure enough my horse took off hitched to one side of the bloody wagon. He went out the exit alright and headed for the stable dragging the bloody wagon behind him. I don't know how he ever got across Gerrard Street without crashing into any traffic. He had to turn left and go a little bit and then turn right and go into the stables. He beat the hell out of the porch of a house. Dragged himself and the wagon, the whole bloody works, har-

ness and all, right into the stables. He dragged the wagon over the top of a car. There was one car really battered up badly. Old Murphy that owned the dairy comes up to me huffing and puffing. I'm still crouching behind the car. "My God," he said, "I thought you would be killed." The guy with the other horse really got shit. But, I knew my horse and I wasn't about to wait around to argue with him. As soon as I heard the other horse I dived. Like in the war. Get cover in a hurry.

It was a closed shop. I had to join the Teamsters' Union. The Teamsters' local at the time in Toronto was quite good, quite progressive. They weren't dominated by the Party or anything. They were quite progressive. An awful lot of them knew me, including the guys in the dairy where I worked. You had to be proposed by members. The guy who proposed me worked at Toronto Dairies. He was a Catholic. You had to take the oath that you were not a member of the Communist Party, never had been and never would be. They were all laughing at me. You've got to do it to be in the union. You've got to be in the union to be in the job. It was all a matter of working. So I was standing up there taking the oath and these guys were all laughing at me. It didn't matter to them. Everybody there knew me.

They were a nice bunch of guys, a good bunch, a really solid bunch of guys to work with. One of them had a niece of Murphy's on his route. She was married. Of course, when the guy went around to deliver the milk, the husband was off to work someplace. On the odd morning he would park the horse for awhile and go in and visit the wife for an hour or so. Murphy got to know this. He was going to fire him. No way. You can't fire a guy because he screws a girl whether she's your niece or not. It makes no goddamn difference. If you wanted to shoot him, it's up to you. You want to take vengeance, but you're not firing him. He didn't. Never saw anybody get fired while I was there.

This was about the time I got married to my first wife, Ann Walters. I'd known her for a long time, since the 1930s. Shortly after the war we got married. At that time in Ontario you had to get married in a church. It's changed now, but at that time, had to be in a church. So we went searching. We got a CCF minister from the Donlands United Church north of Danforth. We went to him and told him, "We don't want all of this bullshit." "That's fine," he said. "You can have a quick ceremony in my study." He made the arrangements. A couple that were friends of mine were the best man and the bride's maid. Just the four of us.

From there we went to the Don Hall, the Finnish Hall. Liquor was on ration, but we scrounged around among our friends and got their rations. We got quite a bit of liquor together. I deliberately did not invite Harvey Murphy or George Harris. Deliberately. They would drink all the liquor. They showed up anyway, drunk when they came. It was a big event, maybe seven hundred people there. Tim Buck served the first drink. He came over to me and said, "You know, you shouldn't have invited Murphy and Harris." I said, "I didn't. They found out about it and came on their own."

But after the war it was hard to settle down. It just turned out to be a bit of incompatibility between Ann and me. We parted ways and I figured I would just leave town and go someplace else. It wasn't too difficult a decision because I never did like Toronto. I was never in love with the place. Life was not that pleasant there on

all fronts and I just wanted to get as far away from the whole surroundings as I possibly could.

10. WORKING OUT WEST: HARVEY MURPHY'S FIEFDOM

I left Toronto without talking to the Party about it at all. I just picked up and went, which of course rebounded on me. They said later I had deserted my post. I didn't have a post. I was working for a living. I belonged to a Party club, and was an executive in it. I was one of the editors of the bulletin we put out in Ward Eight, but that was it. I was supposed to be one of the leading people in East Toronto within the Party organization, but I didn't have a post. I was really just a rank and filer. You're supposed to check in with the powers that be and get a transfer and be assigned to another group in the area in which you are going to be a Party member. But I wasn't about to have any arguments about it, about whether or not I was leaving. They wanted me to stay in Toronto, not so much because of my organizing ability or anything, but because they wanted to make a big thing out of my war record. They did that with Charlie Stewart on the west coast, too, making a big noise about him as a veteran. Not that it did any good. Charlie ended up on the other side, working in the Labour Board that Wacky Bennett set up. Arbitrator, he was into that. Mischa Cohen made a big point of all of this in Toronto, so naturally I caught a little flak for fucking off, but most of it came up much later, when I was involved in serious arguments with the Party. That was when they would raise the matter of my deserting my post. But at the time there wasn't much trouble.

A few years after I was out west Buck came out to speak and got introduced to a woman I was going with and that I eventually married. "This is Jack Scott's wife," somebody said, and Buck comes back: "That's not Jack Scott's wife. I know Jack Scott's wife." He had hardly become aware that I had moved. He spoke to me and said, "I hope you're not getting ideas of staying permanently in the Lower Mainland." I told him that was precisely what I was doing.

When I came out west I meandered across the country. Took me a little time. I didn't ride freights this time, I rode in the carriage. I came out by train and took it from the eastern states and simply enjoyed myself. I arrived in Vancouver next thing to being broke in October 1946. It was a glorious winter. Snowed only once. I managed to survive for a couple of weeks on what I had and then I headed for the Unemployment Insurance. I had plenty of credit: the time I had been in the army, plus the time I worked after I came out of the army. But, as a matter of fact, I didn't get unemployment insurance because they just shooed me off to the Department of Veterans' Affairs, which is much better to deal with anyhow. Much easier. So I got some assistance there and took it easy for a few weeks.

I didn't become particularly active in the Party for awhile. I took it kind of easy. I was in no rush to become involved. I knew a few people out there, but most of them I didn't know that well. I got a job in the old boat-yards that used to be down near Stanley Park, in the area of Bayshore Park. Most of them are completely out of business now. At that time there were a whole number of them. I went to work for Burrard Engineering. In a way a primitive place to work. Everything was done by gangs of men. Practically no machinery of any kind. There would be wooden

boats in there. I remember one time about thirty of us loading a piece of teak wood for the keel of a boat. Teak wood is about as heavy as iron. A real heavy wood. We were lugging this stuff around by hand. Pulling it into position. Real heavy work. But it wasn't bad. It was a job and I was making pretty good money. I was living down skid row area at the time. Was eating out at restaurants, that kind of thing. I picked up with a few Party people, mainly single guys.

One day I was coming home from work, heading up Hastings and I ran into Harvey Murphy. He grabbed hold of me and asked me what I was doing. I told him I was working in the boat yards. Doing OK. Murphy was one of the big shots in the Party. But he's having problems with his Trail local of the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers' Union because there was right-wing CCFers in control of it. And I do mean they were right-wing. Not just throwing names around. I'm not just calling names. They were. Murphy was pouring out his woes about Trail and about these characters and the Party. A terrible situation, and the Party was totally ineffective. Several good people were there but they just didn't know how to go about things. Some were fairly heavy drinkers and women-chasers, and they spent most of their spare time at that occupation rather than politics. Murphy said they were hiring at Trail and he asked me to go and apply for a job and get down to Trail and get working there and get the Party in shape. I said, "Well, you know damn well I can't get a job in Trail. They won't hire me." My political background. "Well," he said, "go apply. Maybe you can get on." Finally, ignoring the lessons of the army, you never volunteer for anything, I said, "OK, I'll go and apply. I know I won't get a job." It was more to get him off my back. I didn't want to go to Trail. It was a hell of a place. You're better off in jail.

I go up to apply for work in the Consolidated Mining and Smelting plant in the Marine building. Their offices are still there. I had no reason to hide anything, you know, about where I had worked, what my experience had been and so on. I didn't walk in the office and say, "Look, I'm a member of the Communist Party. I want to get a job and go to Trail and organize a Communist Party," although maybe I should have. But I told the guy everything else, thinking I'm gonna get turned down, because they have a policy of checking thoroughly. I told him places where I had been fired, where I had been hired for being a member of the union, but had been fired for being a communist. I told him these places I worked. You even had to give them your birth certificate to let them see where you were born, what the date was, what exactly you had done the day of your birth, all of this. Of course, I'm going through detail, telling him all the different places I had worked. "War days?" "Well, I was in the army." "Have you got records of army service?" "Sure, I've got my discharge." "Can we see it?" "Sure." I've got nothing to hide. "Bring it down. Go home and get it." Which I proceeded to do and brought it along the next day. There was a provision in the union agreement at the time, that they had ninety working days to see you were satisfactory and if you weren't they could lay you off without giving you any reason. This was to give them enough time so they could check your whole background. I figured, at worst I'll survive in Trail for thirty, forty, fifty days. I'll be out. Back to Vancouver. I brought my army service record down. They said, "This is great." I'm still convinced that it was my service that put it across.

When they finally decided to hire me, they figured that a guy with this kind of army service record couldn't be a radical or a red or anything. How mistaken you can be.

I had to go to Trail for a medical and put my ninety days in before I got any seniority, so I've still got that time period in which I can still get tossed out on my ear, hopefully, which I was praying would happen. What I didn't count on was the fact that this was precisely the year, 1947, when the whole reconstruction of Europe and Japan was going on. The Cold War placed a big demand on Canadian resources and there was very little competition from other places. Aluminum, nickel particularly. Ninety per cent of the world's nickel was still being produced in Canada. Lead and zinc too. All of these things. Big demand. And there was a huge development of production and consequently a tremendous hiring programme. Turn-over was 50 per cent. If you take into consideration that there was a hell of a lot of guys that worked there twenty, thirty, forty years, it meant that there was a rapid turn-over.

I'll tell you how rapid. One time my partner and I, working in the zinc plant, walked to the door on a break to try to get a breath of air, which you can't get anywhere in Trail anyhow. It just seems a little less dense out by the doorway. A couple of young guys came along and they had been in the office and they had been hired, but they had to pass the physical before the final hiring, and their medical clinic was up near the plant, up in the plant area. You can easily get lost in spite of how exact the directions are. They had wandered off and they had come by here where we were standing. They came and asked us where the medical clinic was. We knew they were going for the medical examination to get hired. My partner is busy explaining to them how you get there, which wasn't too difficult. He had only been going for about two minutes of the explanation and one of them said, "Just a minute. This is where you work?" My partner said, "Yeah this is where we work." "Never mind telling us where the medical clinic is. We don't need to know." They took off. I think that was probably the shortest hiring the Consolidated Mining and Smelting (CM & S) ever had. But, it gives you an idea.

The zinc plant wasn't the worst place in Trail. The worst place was the lead smelter. Really terrible. Anyhow, as I say, all of this hiring because of the turn over and because of the expansion of production and so on and they can't check up on everybody as fast as they had previously. Several thousand were coming in. A few score at a time. I suppose, again, because of my army record, they came to the conclusion I didn't need too much checking. They probably shoved me somewhere on a back burner. It took them more than the ninety days to finally get around to me and find out that politically I was somebody they don't want. Once they found out, I was under the gun. Anyhow, I got hired, I got my seniority in. Quite unhappy about the whole bloody situation.

I did pull the Party group together. There was enough people there that once you got them going it was OK. And Murphy wasn't underfoot. He was in Vancouver. He was district organizer. He had everything right up into the Yukon, the Northwest Territories, all of BC, down into Alberta and Saskatchewan. The whole western district, everything associated with Mine-Mill in the west. He was in

charge. It was a beautiful spot for the type of person that Murphy was. He was lord of all he surveyed. He had nobody to say him nay. Everybody jumped when he cracked the whip. He was a thorough bureaucrat. Anyhow, I went in and I got things going as far as the Party was concerned. Of course I was connected with the union. Pretty soon I'm the shop steward in the zinc plant and became chief steward in the same plant eventually.

The work conditions were terrible. There were four shifts rotating. There were always three shifts on and one shift off, with an eight-hour day. It worked out to a forty-two-hour week. Working twelve on and four off. They don't do it anymore. You work six and two off. Something like that. The day shift worked eleven hours and the night shift thirteen. Your long break was when one shift, I think it was the day shift, would work a straight twenty-four hours in order to swing the shift around. If you were off a day you had to bring a doctor's certificate that you had been sick. You weren't allowed to do any talking unless the shifter came around and spoke to you.

You weren't allowed to smoke on the job. There was a story about one guy in the 1930s when there was a lot of unemployment. A guy with a family. It was the end of shift. He stopped with about five or ten minutes to go. He was going to get washed up, and was rolling a cigarette. The shifter came along and told him to take five days suspension for smoking on the job. He wasn't smoking, he was just rolling a cigarette. These kind of things used to happen.

By this time, we were working eight hours but we had half an hour off for lunch. We weren't allowed any coffee breaks. The zinc cutters — the guys who worked on piece work and could leave as soon as their stint was through — drove taxis and did second jobs and so on. They only needed to work four or four and a half hours. They could take breaks if they wanted, but nobody else was supposed to have coffee breaks. But everybody took coffee breaks and, of course, the coffee breaks used to get longer and longer. They'd start out about five minutes and work up to about twenty minutes. At that point the foreman would put in an appearance. I can still visualize him standing outside the door, wagging his finger at everybody and lecturing, there's no such thing as a coffee break at the CM & S. Now drink up your coffee and get out of here. So everybody would get out and the next day you'd come back to about a five-minute coffee break and start rebuilding again until you got a new lecture.

This went on. A game. Of course, at this point they weren't laying anybody off for simple things like that. There were people who were fired, but because they had difficulty keeping workers they needed them. They weren't laying off too easily, they weren't firing too easily, so you could manage to get by.

On the job, because of my position, I never would let any boss catch me for being lazy or doing poor work. If they were going to fire me, they had to fire me for some cause. Everybody, especially me, we would do this stint of work and we wouldn't do anymore. We could do what was laid out as a stint in three hours, no more. It was hard on the day shift. You had to find all kinds of things to do. You had to deliberately do things — if you were on the tank-cleaning crew — to the tank that would keep you busy in the daytime. Once the bosses went at five o'clock

our work would be pretty well done, by the time the bosses took off. Then everybody would disappear out of the bloody plant. Go to the locker rooms, maybe phone up a bootlegger to come and throw a case of beer over the fence, sit and drink beer. I didn't. I just screwed around, around the plant. Even my partner would be gone. I remember one night, I was working there and I look around. There's about five acres of plant and there's nobody there but me. The whole bloody plant is empty. Well, I just wanted to go to the house anyhow, so I threw down my tools and decided to cut through the locker room. The toilets had showers there. You could shower there and change.

I'm walking through the locker room and here's the shifter, a little guy, Billy Thom, in the corner with the whole bloody crew except me. He's reading them a lecture. They're almost all Métis on this shift, all Catholics from Saskatchewan and very clannish. I see them and hear Thom going on and say to myself, "I'm not stopping." Thom yells at me. "Just a minute Scott, I want you to hear this." I sat down and listened and he's giving them hell. He looks at me and says, "I wanted you to hear that because if I decide to reprimand them they'll be coming to you with a grievance." "So what," I replied. "Well," he said, "they'll want you to take up a grievance for them and say that it wasn't so, that they weren't even here." I said, "Well." He said, "You wouldn't lie for them." I said, "If they come to me with a grievance about a reprimand that you give them and they want me to lie for them, I'll lie for them. If and when this company appoints me a shifter and if and when I accept and I've been working for the company, I'll do company work. But, right now, I'm working for them and I'll lie for them if they want." He said, "That's terrible." I said, "That's the way it is." I was in solid with all of these Métis after that. They became my base in the union. Thom walks away shaking his head, thinking, "There's no reprimand."

There was one other experience I had with him. One other night, again everybody's gone, two young guys breeze through with their lunch. I never checked to see what time it was. You wouldn't dare wear a watch in the goddamn place. It was a terrible place to work. I hadn't looked in at the shifter's office at the clock. I just decided, it must be lunch-time, and breezed off. I come to the lunch room and I open the door and see these two young lads. Nobody else is there. I looked up at the clock and there was still twenty minutes to go until lunch-time. I thought, to hell with it. I'm not going to go back to the goddamn plant now. I'm here, and gonna eat. I went over to the other side and I sat down and started eating. A few minutes later, Billy walks in. He shoves the door open and he doesn't see me, not at first, because the door is blocking his view, where I'm sitting. He starts in on these two youngsters. Really balling the shit out of them. He's well on his way when he spies me. He keeps on going. He finishes up with them and then he turns to me. "I want to see you in my office after lunch-time, Scott." Off he goes. After lunch, I walked into his office. "Well, you want to see me, Willie." He said, "You know, you embarrassed me. I went in there. I knew these two young fellows were in there. I went in to reprimand them and you were there and I couldn't reprimand them." I said, "Why not?" Willie said, "If I reprimanded them, I'd have to reprimand you." I said, "Why not. I had it coming. I was there before time." He said, "I can't reprimand

you. It's not the company's policy to reprimand a shop steward. I couldn't reprimand you, I couldn't reprimand them." "That's the way you interpret the company policy that's fine with me." Everybody escaped. The two kids escaped the reprimand.

We used to wear this protective clothing issued to us. Rubber boots, rubber gloves, pants, and a jacket that was resistant to acid. The only thing that couldn't resist the acid was the thread that the clothing was sewn with. It would break open every once in awhile. They supplied you with thread and a needle and you'd do your own sewing up. Rents began to appear in our clothing. Every so often they issued us this stuff free. One day a notice appeared on the notice board. They were going to stop issuing this protective clothing free. It was going to be issued at cost price with the employee paying half, the company paying the other half. I figured it out on the basis of the way the stuff would be used up and what you'd have to purchase that it was going to cost about two hundred dollars a year, per worker. It meant taking a wage cut of two hundred dollars a year. I got one of the other guys, another shop steward, and we both checked out on shop steward's hours and went to the personnel office. We told the superintendent that we saw the notice on the board. "Oh yes. It's company policy from now on." "Take the notice down." "Oh no. The notice is going to stay there. That's our policy now." "Take it down." We're getting nowhere. So I said, "You know, quite regular, three or four times a week, you bring a bunch of rubber necks through there. Conducted tours. How would you like the situation when all of these people are walking by, men and women, that about fifteen or twenty guys are working there with their bare arse hanging out." He said, "You wouldn't dare." "You want to try us." "Well," he says, "you can process a grievance if you don't like it." "Oh no, you take the notice down." "You process a grievance." Finally he said, "We'll give you notice of putting it up. Just take it down, that's all."

This all took a fair bit of time. We got a certain number of shop steward's hours each month. They paid for so many shop steward's hours a month. We used them all up. We went on downtown to the union office. Claire Billingsley was the president. Another guy was secretary. I can't remember his name. They're the two paid officials. They're two of the right-wingers of the CCF that were in there. We went in and told Billings about having gone in about this notice and ordering them to take it down. He said, "You didn't." I said, "We did. We took it down." "Well, we could have processed a grievance about it." "Bullshit. Let them process a grievance." And we began to suspect there was something fishy about this. As a matter of fact, it came out afterwards. The company did process a grievance and it went before an arbitration board. What came out in the arbitration board was that Billings and his secretary had agreed to the notice being posted. The arbitrator ruled in our favour. It was a change in contract relations that couldn't be done. After that they began bringing it up in negotiations. Up to the time that I left Trail, the union wouldn't even talk about it. The company would put it on the table. "We're not even going to discuss it. It's not going in."

There were various grievances that came up. We usually got them settled. And we had some funny ones. One of the guys had called a shift boss a bastard. They

were going to suspend him and we went up to the hearing with the superintendent. The shifter was there and the guy who called him a bastard. We asked him, "Did you call the shift boss a bastard?" He said, "No. I just asked him what kind of a bastard he was." He said this straight-faced. Another guy, the shifter was harrasing him and he happened to be hosing down the floor at the time. The shifter got hosed. They fired him. We had a grievance about that. The superintendent laughed his head off about this. "Well," he said, "you know, we can't stand the workers hosing down the shift bosses. We won't fire him. We'll give him a two-week suspension." The guy was happy to get a holiday anyhow.

It was a big place. In the zinc plant, where I worked, we would have had, with all shifts, a little over a thousand. Over four thousand all told working at the CM & S. I was the only known real radical that could get elected to anything in Trail. These Métis who were behind me were well-organized, but not particularly radical. I knew who was leading them, you know, and they wouldn't normally go to union meetings. But they paid union dues and were pretty good union guys. All I had to do was tell them there was a union meeting and I needed help. There's going to be a fight. I'm going to have to fight with someone. They'd all be there. They'd all sit behind this guy whose name was Regnier. Half French, half Scottish and Indian. I guess about equal. They'd all sit behind him. As soon as I made my position known and it came to a vote, he'd put his hand up and all the rest would put their hands up. I used to tell him, "You know, you don't support me unless you agree with me." "Oh, we agree with you."

There were a lot of Italians there as well and a fair number of new ones come in. Immigrants right after the war. There was an area there around Rossland Avenue we called the Gulch, which practically was all Italians. There were a few Czechs.

Mostly the Mine-Mill workers at Trail supported the CCF, but they went along with the right wing of the CCF. There were a number of left-wing CCFers whom I used to have relations with. Jack Gordon, who later became the international representative in the Trail area, was a left-wing CCFer that I would work with. A young guy named MacDonald, the son of a lawyer, was also a left-winger with the CCF. There were several others. I established good relations with them and finally it came to the point that the Party people and the left-wing CCFers worked quite closely together on issues. We had a Party group of about thirty, maybe twenty-three working in the smelter and we met weekly and occasionally with the left-wing CCFers. But we never were in a position — until the Steelworkers tried to take over — to really get control of the union. Guys get elected to office in a trade union over a number of years and it's awful hard to move them even though there's a lot of complaints against them. The workers tend to keep voting them in. They don't want to throw them out of office. So this right-wing CCF crew dominated the local and none of the other left-wingers could get elected except myself.

I was quite active and had the support that did exist as far as I was concerned. We had a Party group working there and had made links with the other left-wingers and had these Métis behind what we were doing. Murphy used to come in there every once in a while and have a meeting of the Party club. Talk about acting the bureaucrat and throwing his weight around.

I remember one night in particular we were having a meeting of the club and one of the young members there who didn't quite see things as Murphy saw them undertook to have some differences. Murphy — pretty near in the guy's face — says, "Look, you listen to me. When I speak, it's the Party speaking. You do as I say." It had something to do with policy in the union. I said, "For Christ's sake, Murphy. Come off it. Listen to what the guy has to say. He's talking sense. He's got a right to speak." Nobody else said boo.

Murphy was used to throwing his weight around. Just before I went in there, there had been negotiations and they had arrived at a tentative agreement which wasn't all that good. Murphy figured, "Well, it will be easy enough in Trail for it to go over." Right-wing control there and all that. It might be more difficult in Kimberley amongst the miners. He was going to go to Kimberley to push the agreement through there. It was all his authority to do it. The Party group in Trail had a meeting and decided this proposed agreement was for the birds. Didn't want to have any part of it. So they went up there and this guy Billingsley was the president. He thinks it's going to be clear sailing, no problem. After all, Murphy's authority was behind this. He makes a report and presents all of the proposals and a motion that they accept it. One after the other the Party members get up and they beat the hell out of the agreement. It came to a vote and it was turned down. Billingsley, he was crying. He rushes to the phone and he phones Murphy and he tells Murphy what happened. Murphy comes rushing back that night. A special meeting was called again the next day. Murphy got up and he points to all the Party members and says, "You, you, you. My own comrades stab me in the back while I'm out of town." At a public union meeting. The Party members all got up and walked out, walked out of the meeting.

They turned the thing over. There were negotiations came up not too long after I was there, but long enough that I had established myself. It was when there had been a take-off in prices which meant an increase in the cost of living. There was a period of about six months from December to about May or June when this increase in the cost of living affected living standards of the workers. We were discussing what we were going for in the Party club. I brought up the subject. I said, "These bastards have done it to us. They settled an agreement with us and for at least six months of that period they have been robbing us. They violated the agreement by reducing our standard of living, because they have contributed to the increase in the cost of living. We should go in there and make a fight to demand a dollar a day retroactive." This would have been for six months, back to December.

The rest of the guys said, "That's fine, we agree with it, but you put it up. You fight for it. We're not going to do it, you do it." I said, "Sure, I'll do it." We went to the meeting where we were going to discuss the demands we were going to make and went through everything. I got up at the meeting to demand a dollar a day retroactive to, I think it was the 1st of December. And they got a seconder of course. I spoke about it. Nobody else spoke in favour of it. The members were all sitting quiet.

A whole number got up and spoke against it. "You can't ask for wages for time that's gone by." Of course, I wound up the discussion, being the mover of the mo-

tion, that you bloody well can. If the company puts its hand in your pocket and takes a few dollars out, you're gonna bloody well do something about it. We're demanding that the money be put back in our pockets. It just barely passed. A hell of a big meeting. Maybe a couple thousand there. It was only by about a half a dozen votes. So I whispered to a couple of Party members, you know you're not going to get anywhere. It's split down the middle and the bloody executive doesn't want to push for it. Neither does Murphy. He's against it. So, there's no point. I got up and I moved that the motion be rescinded. There's no point in going into this thing split down the middle. I was really happy later that I did. Required a two-thirds majority to rescind it. A period of negotiations with the company starts. Finally they come to a settlement. They come down to report. Billingsley does the reporting. Murphy's there this time. He's not going to go to Kimberley. He's there. Finally, Billingsley says, "You know, without us even asking for it, the company offered us a dollar a day retroactive for a settlement." The company was really being generous. What the hell. They knew what had gone on. If the executive and Murphy had spoken in favour of the original motion it would be unanimous. They knew. A bunch of stupid bastards.

We had negotiations once again before I was out of there and that was really a funny one. The company had had fantastic profits. One of the first of the years the profits really took off. They were much greater in later years, but the increase wasn't in proportion. At this time they were making the most fantastic profits in the country as a matter of fact. Murphy is getting ready for negotiations. He is proposing that we get a research job done by the Trade Union Research Bureau which is run by Emil Bjarnason and is gonna cost us about five thousand dollars. This was a lot of money in those days. The research was to argue the need for the company to pay and the company's ability to pay. It was a fantastic research project they were talking of. We were going to present this to the company. Big argument about that. One of the Party members — an old guy from Rosslund who had already spent about twenty-five years in the plant — gets up and he speaks against this. "We don't need any research done. You want an expert. I've got one at home. I'll bring my wife down here and she can tell you how much it takes to put grubs on the table. That's all the expert you need. Anyhow, let's shut the goddamn place down for six months and give the flowers and the grass a chance to grow." Big applause for that.

But Murphy had his way. They went and they got the research. They got this goddamn big compendium of research. He goes into negotiations and starts reading this five thousand dollar research brief. A guy named Perry was in charge of negotiating for the CM & S, general manager of the Trail plant at the time, and later he was behind my firing. Murphy had been going about five minutes. He still had probably an hour and a half to go, with this brief and Perry pipes up: "Just a minute, Mr. Murphy. You know, there's no need for you to read that brief. We know that we can afford to pay what you are demanding. We know we make large profits. Our profits are an embarrassment to us. But, we are not going to pay it. We are not going to disturb the economic equilibrium." Bang went Murphy's brief. It was bloody garbage, a worthless five thousand dollars brief.

Murphy was thoroughly annoyed with us, but we were out there. We're the ones

there. We're making our decisions. The Party can send in all the orders they like. We're gonna make the decisions. We're gonna decide. Sometimes this worked, but sometimes, when it was strictly a Party thing, the ranks had no punch.

There was a case I remember, I may have been off the hill at the time, I'm not quite sure. I'll tell you how that happened. Maurice Rush came in. Rush was then Labour Secretary of the Party, trade union director. Never worked a day in his life. Never belonged to a union, but he's trade union director for the Party provincially, telling trade unions what to do. I remember he came in one time and we had a discussion about policy and so on in the union. Didn't have any differences about it because we were going to do what we were going to do anyhow. It didn't make any goddamn difference. When he's getting ready to leave, he has to go down and get the bus. It's the only way to get out of Trail. Get either a train or a plane or a bus or whatever. He asked me if I would go to the bus depot with him and have a coffee and talk. I said, sure.

We got down there. We had about an hour to spare. We went in and had a coffee. He said, "Well, we're going to decide to send somebody from this area to the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute for a course." This meant about ten months in Moscow. He said, "Have you got any suggestions about who should go." I said, "Well, yes." I suggested they send Gar Belanger. He'd been around for years. Pretty sharp guy. Well known. I thought he would measure up. "Sorry," he said. "We've already decided to send -----." He mentioned a woman's name. I could tell you her name, but I won't. I said, "Why did you ask me my opinion if you already made a decision?" He said, "I would like to know what you think about it." I said, "It's a terrible blunder. It's an awful mistake." This is a woman who's married with five kids. Her husband had left her. Not only have to send her off with all the expense to Moscow, but you'd have to put somebody in charge of the kids, some of whom are only about seven years old. It's going to cost thousands of dollars over the year to look after her family. It's gonna cost a mint of bloody money.

But it was not only for that reason I opposed it. I thought the whole bloody thing was dead wrong, which in the end it unfortunately proved to be. She went to the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute and she came back. Of course, they thought that she was a really rip-roaring Marxist all the time, but she was far from it. I don't know what the hell she learned. It never appeared. Anyhow, she got herself in trouble. First thing was that there was a guy there — a war veteran that had married a Belgian woman — and he joined the Party. He was fairly young. He'd been out drinking with this woman. They both wound up in a hotel room. Caught them two or three times apparently. His wife went and put a couple of detectives on them who broke in to the hotel room where they were one night. Both in bed. Naked. And there was a real anti-communist lawyer that was in Trail that was gonna make a job out of this. Gonna do a job on the Party. He was going to handle the divorce proceedings. I knew the guy's wife quite well. We were friendly. I had spent some time in Belgium, particularly during the war and I used to talk to her about Belgium. She never was in the Party. I always considered her more or less sympathetic. She was. She was pissed off with her husband. She blamed the Party because she said, "After all this was a Moscow graduate sleeping with him." I went around to

see her. I said to her, "You know, this guy is using you. This lawyer is using you. He wants to show up the Party. That's what he's doing. He's not concerned with your divorce. No doubt he can get you a divorce. No question about that. Can we reach some kind of settlement to keep the bloody thing out of court?" She said, "Well, there's only one way and that's if my husband leaves the Party." Only thing she would agree to, in which case she would give up the divorce proceedings. I said, "Well I can't make any decision on that, but I will talk to the Party group and recommend it." "Tell him to leave." So we had a meeting at the Party club and it was unanimous. We really give him shit. We told him, you either leave or we expel you. You've got no alternative. He didn't want to be divorced. As far as I know he's still living with his wife now. He left the Party and things blew over on that.

This woman lives in Rossland, which is a small community. If you snore at night the neighbours ten blocks away will know about it. That's the kind of community. She's out with another woman, pissed in the Rossland beer parlour. Takes to the main street soliciting. Gets picked up — both of them — for soliciting in the Rossland main street. Bang goes all the investment, the Moscow graduate. It's the kind of person she was. No chance the cops were setting her up. She was just unreliable. That's why I objected to the decision. I told them what they were getting into. The woman was unreliable. She had all kinds of problems. She had personal problems, family problems. There was just no way that she could handle the pressure. Besides, she drank a lot. She was quite a heavy drinker. But they thought she was the person to go. She'd been in the Party for awhile in Trail. Before I went there, she was supposed to be the Party leader. What bloody leadership she was giving, I don't know. I never did figure it out.

There were a couple of others if they wanted to send a woman. I certainly would not have objected to them. There was Belanger's wife — Tilly — or at least did become his wife later. They were living together then. She was a nurse in the Trail hospital and had her feet on the ground, a very straight kind of person. I didn't consider her because I didn't consider her at that time politically well-developed. She hadn't been in the Party that long or I would probably have considered her. Certainly if they had said, we want to send a woman, I would probably have said, send Tilly. If you want a woman, send Tilly. Not as long in the Party and maybe wouldn't go. I don't know. She possibly would have gone.

Anyway, I wasn't to be in Trail forever, not with the company and the union leadership both wishing I would disappear. How I ended up getting fired is kind of a long story. Its beginnings are interesting.

There was a convention of Mine-Mill in San Francisco. There were to be three delegates elected and the Party group decided I should run. I got elected. I went down to cross the border. I got picked up and brought in to Immigration. They started asking me questions and, of course, I lied. The only thing I'm interested in is staying and attending the convention. I lied away happily to them. Finally, the immigration guy said, "You're lying and we know it. We can charge you with perjury." I said, "Oh come off it. No you can't. Once you brought me into your office, you put me in the position of applying for admission to the United States. The only thing you can do to me is send me back home." "Well," he said, "we're not going

to charge you anyhow." "Of course you're not." He started telling me lots. He told me things about my life that I had forgotten about.

He said, "You know, we knew about you. We knew you were coming." I said, "Of course. RCMP." He said, "I don't mean that. We didn't get it from them. The president of your union told us you were coming. Just a minute," he said, "I'll show you the letter." He goes to the files and he brings out a letter and he brings it over. He makes me read the bloody letter. I had to ask them: "Am I staying or am I going." He said, "you're going. You're not going to stay." I said, "Well no more questions because there's going to be no more answers. I'm interested in staying. If I can't stay, that's it." So, anyway, he sat down. I had to wait for transportation. He'd been in the American army. We got talking. He found out I'd been in the Canadian army and he'd been in the American army. Started talking about the places where we'd both been. We got more or less on a friendly basis. I'd been thrown out now. So after we'd talked for awhile, I said, "It looks like I'm going to be around here for a little while waiting for transportation. I'd like to go into town and get a drink. How about sending one of your boys with me? I'll buy him a drink." He said, "You want to go downtown and have a drink. Go ahead. We're not afraid of you. We know you'll come back."

When I got back there were big headlines in the *Trail Times*. Of course it was practically a company paper. Front page about being thrown out of the States. Made a big attack upon me. Senseless attack. They had culled the information from somewhere that I had been a wireless operator and had made telephone lines and operated a switchboard and so on in the war which of course doesn't prepare you for any kind of job in communications in civilian life. No way. Entirely different thing altogether. But they're pointing this out and asking, "Why did he come to work in Trail if it wasn't because of some conspiracy by the Party." I went to the union executive. I told them: "There should be some kind of protest." "Oh, let sleeping dogs lie." I said, "The bloody dog isn't sleeping. It's biting." They didn't want to do anything about it. They wouldn't.

A couple of them knew about the letter the president had sent and I suppose they were afraid of something coming out. They didn't know I knew yet. I went to the Canadian Legion Branch — I'm going to get someone to protest — and they protested to the company. The Legion executive balled them out.

But the *Trail Times* really settled my hash as far as the States was concerned. If not for that publicity I would afterwards have ignored the fact that I was thrown out because I had been thrown out of the States before, when the Sarnia strike was on, and I had been able to go across. I was thrown out and I just ignored it. Later on would go back and nothing happened. The *Trail Times* wrote to the State Department wanting to know the official reason for my being expelled from the United States, deported from the States. Instead of writing back and giving them the information, the bloody State Department wrote me a letter informing me why I was thrown out and that it was a lifetime ban. A permanent ban. That finished me as far as the States was concerned. Anyway, the *Trail Times* attacked me a number of times. I more or less ignored them. But this didn't help me any with the company.

A final incident moved things from bad to worse. There was a guy in the Party

by the name of Bruce Mickleburgh. He had been a vice-principal in a high school up in the Prince George area and he joined the Party and ended up as city secretary in Vancouver. His son, Rod, is a journalist now. Anyway, he came up to Trail to do some investigating and to write a couple of articles for the *Tribune*, which he proceeded to do. One was an assault on the company, the CM & S; the other was an attack on the trade union leadership. About four pages apiece. The Party runs off thousands of extra copies for distribution as a sort of leaflet and sends them up to us. We have a meeting to look at the articles and decide what we think of them. We thought both were poor. The one about the union leadership we wouldn't distribute at all and decided to destroy it.

The other one — on the company — we thought, "Ah, what the hell. It's the company. Who cares?" We thought, even though we didn't like it much, we would distribute it. It had stuff in it that the company was sure not to like, such as that the CM & S was implicated in the murder of Ginger Goodwin and on and on.

I was on my four days off. I went up to the plant gates and gave leaflets out to the shift going in and the shift going out. Other guys that were working gave them till they had to go in or took leaflets and gave them out. There was five of us involved. People at the different gates. Gatemen always have instructions to come out and get two copies of every leaflet that's distributed, and note who's giving them out.

I go back home that afternoon and I get a call to come up to the personnel office. When I arrive there are four of them sitting there: personnel director, his assistant, and two lawyers. They hand my cheque to me. I refused to take my cheque: "I don't accept that you have a right to fire me. If you feel aggrieved you can take up a grievance or you can sue me." Doesn't faze them. I'm out. I go down to the union office and they are all in a dither about this. They have to take up a grievance for me but they'd prefer to see me gone.

Others were fired too, but ironically mine was the best grievance to proceed with. They had all been in trouble a few times. One, Belanger, had been fired some years before and managed to get back in, which was rather rare at CM & S. But there was absolutely nothing against me, no reprimands, nothing. So they had to go with my case and go to the arbitration board.

Perry was there as the company representative. A judge named Dawson from Nelson who was supposed to be quite a liberal was chairman of the board. Murphy sat for the union. Of course everything was going to be a straight split between the union and the company and the judge would have to decide. So they were examining my case. The company had photocopied the material. They claimed this was an insult to them, an attack on the company, undermining their prestige and so on. The superintendent of the zinc plant was called in as a witness. Murphy was cross-examining him. He asked him a question. He said, "Why was Scott fired? What's the matter with his work?" This is really funny. The superintendent says, "There's nothing wrong with Scott's work. He's a good worker. I wish I had more like him." They got nothing on me in terms of the job. This is why I say I made sure they never got me for being lazy. They have to lay it on the line.

The judge tried to get off the bloody hook of making the decision, which ap-

parently was unpleasant for him. It was the wrong decision anyhow, but he was going to make it. It was unpleasant. He told Perry, "These people have been off work now for six weeks. Don't you think that's punishment enough? Let them return to work and if there's any claim for wages as a result of being off, I will you give my assurance, I'll not grant it." But Perry just looked at him with his cold fishy eyes. He said, "Look, you let the company run its affairs and you make your decision." And, of course, the four employees are discharged for distributing the handbill entitled, "Consolidated prepares an inside job."

The judge's decision read:

Among other employees of the company they distributed the leaflets at the gates of the company to employees going on or/and off shift. But the distributors did not distribute them during their own working hours. The pamphlet, copies of which were distributed, were reprints of an article contained in the *Pacific Tribune* published in Vancouver, BC on March 11, 1949. The article is a scurrilous and malicious attack upon the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company of Canada Limited and certain officers thereof. The purpose is clearly to stir up discontent and ill-feeling between the employer and employees. It is established that the *Pacific Tribune* has a certain circulation in Trail, BC and has access to the mill. The act of the four employees to distribute the pamphlets that were discharged was not a casual or unpremeditated act. They can all read and must be taken to have known the contents of the article and the time and manner of distribution shows that it was a deliberate act on the part of each of them, a precise and predetermined means of bringing to the attention of employees generally the contents of the article in question. It should, however, be stated, that the union is not in any way responsible for the articles and had nothing to do with it or its distribution and took the early opportunity to disavow altogether any approval of its contents. With respect to the argument that the acts committed were not subject to disciplinary action unless they violated the term of employment as established by the collective bargaining agreement The question we have to consider resolves itself into these elements. First of all, what was done here was done in the spare time of the employees. That leads to this. We have to consider what implication if any needs to be read into the contract of services with regard to the employee's use of his spare time. Does that implication in any way restrict him or rather does that implication make it a breach of duty on his part to do what he did? It was held that in a contract for service, it was understood that the servant should serve the master with good faith and fidelity and that this obligation of fidelity subsisted as long as the contract of service existed and that even in their spare time employees owed to their employer this obligation.

. This belonged to the nineteenth century. The decision was, of course, that my firing was upheld. I talked to a lawyer and he said that the only recourse that I had was, if I wanted to go to court, to sue the union for improper representation of my

case. Of course it is provided in the constitution of the Mine-Mill if you sue the union you are automatically out. It wasn't a viable alternative anyhow.

At this time I was living with Hilda, who I'd met in Trail and would eventually marry. We were both married at the time, but separated. She came from Saskatchewan. Brought up in the thirties, and lived on boiled wheat. Her father had come from Bohemia and settled with a bunch of his countrymen in Saskatchewan. They had a language all their own. Nobody but them, a couple of hundred people in Saskatchewan, could understand the bloody language. He had come out just around the turn of the century, from Bohemia. He got half a section of land — 320 acres of land, which is really nothing. It's on the bald-headed prairie of northern Saskatchewan. A place called Landis, near Biggar where Tommy Douglas, CCF representative, used to preach. They were all Catholics, and all these darned people were also strong CCFers.

Anyway, Hilda's father was out here and got this settlement land. Of course, he decided he wanted to get married. He had to go back to Bohemia to get a wife so he goes back, all the way to Bohemia. Finds a nice young woman there and tells her he's got 320 acres of land. Fantastic in a place where they've got bandannasized allotments to work with. This sounds like amazing wealth. They get married and he brings her out. She comes out. She takes a look at this bald-headed prairie and this goddamn shack that he's living in and she had the money so they go straight back to Bohemia. She stayed there and had about eleven kids. Devout Catholics. It was really funny. When Hilda and I were living together, not married, that was alright. That was acceptable. We were living in sin but that was acceptable. Finally, Hilda's husband, who had been in the Party in Saskatchewan and was quite a character, divorced her. After awhile she decided she would like to formalize the relationship and get married. It didn't matter with me one way or another. I had an agreement with my first wife that if either one of us wanted to divorce the other it would be no problem. I wrote and told her and I got a lawyer for her. She sued me for divorce. It all went through. I didn't even appear in court. Nothing to it.

Now that Hilda and I were married, the family became outraged. This was a mortal sin. Both divorced and getting married. Alright to live in sin, but not to get married. They used to send nuns around to the house to talk to her. I used to chase them out. No way.

After I got canned at the CM & S I had to find something. Murphy wasn't much good when it came to my beef with the union tops. He was the district director and because they were working with him he pretty much defended them. When it came to a break he would defend them against the Party, I think. Anyway, I'm out. I can't get unemployment insurance because I've been fired for a cause. At least that is the interpretation. So I found a job in a dairy.

The dairy ended up being a hell of a hard place to work. The guy that was the manager of the place was an asshole. Never did get along with him. He used to scream at me. I got along OK with the farmers who owned the bloody dairy, but not him. I worked there for a fair period of time and got to know more about it than the damned manager did. In fact the farmers finally came to me and asked me to take over as manager of the dairy. But Murphy had other plans for me.

Even though I was out of the CM & S I was not necessarily out of Mine-Mill. It clearly states in the constitution that once you are a member, you remain a member as long as you pay your union dues, unless you get expelled. This was because of the nature of the industry, with its big turnover. But Billingsley and his crew in command of the local try to put me out on the basis that I am no longer employed in the industry. They wouldn't take my dues.

I protested a grievance through John Gordon, a CCF lefty who was by then international representative for the Trail area. And we win. As long as I pay my dues they cannot throw me out. So I'm working in the dairy, still a member of Mine-Mill and going to all the meetings, taking part as far as I can in union affairs.

It was at this time that the Steelworkers Union made their first move on Trail, first attempted to raid Mine-Mill. Probably it was late 1949 or 1950. Billingsley and the right-wing CCFers in the union leadership had a meeting with Bert Gargrave, a right-wing CCFer that had been an MLA for a term and then got put on the Steel payroll. Steel sent him into Trail and set him up in an office. Suddenly there is a full-page ad in the *Trail Times* saying that the Mine-Mill local was dissolved. It was signed by all the local executive — Billingsley and Company — and most of the shop stewards. The word went out that the workers had to sign up with Steel in a hurry or they'd be out of the union and barred from the plant. The Company was pushing this hard. They even let the leading shop stewards who were lining up behind Steel go around the plant signing up workers into the Steelworkers' union. Totally out of character for anyone to be signing up workers right in the plant.

Well we had to get busy in a hurry. Called a meeting and it was packed, packed solid. The first thing we had to do was get a Mine-Mill executive elected in a hurry. We started nominating. I remember I nominated Al King, who later became an official in Steel when the merger came down. We had our differences and used to argue a lot, but he was quite well known around town, had lived there a long time, had a lot of contacts. So I convinced him to run and then nominated him for president. There ended up being about eight nominees for president. We were under pressure to do things in a hurry so the decision was made that the nominees would withdraw to the back room and decide among themselves who should be president. Once they made it unanimous we would have our president. And they made it King, so King became the president which was a paid position. Another one that I nominated was a young law student named J.A. MacDonald who was taking a year off and working in Trail. He was a left-wing CCFer. When he eventually came before the bar they were refusing a lot of lawyers the right to practice because they were Party members. Gordon Martin got turned down for this. The benchers told this young MacDonald that if it wasn't for the fact that his father was a life time member of the Liberal Party and respected lawyer in the Trail area he would not have been admitted. Told him in no uncertain terms that his year as secretary of the Mine-Mill local made him part of the communist conspiracy.

We got our executive elected and got some shop stewards functioning. Steel should have been able to beat us hands down. But we managed to pull the thing through. The people stayed together for the most part and Mine-Mill hung on. Bil-

lingsley and his boys had to go back to work in the smelter. They worked them real bad. Had been sitting pretty in the union office, drawing their pay, going as delegates to conventions, what have you, living the life of Riley, and all of a sudden they're forced back into the smelter. It was stupid on their part really. Steel had no jobs for them. Steel's man was Gargrave. He was being paid. He stayed in Trail for awhile, but finally he closed up the office and went off somewhere else for the Steelworkers. They kept up the attempt to raid Mine-Mill for awhile of course, but it was never successful. They could get some people behind them on the anti-communist thing, but they had their problems. Of the two leading priests in Trail, for example, the Italian one was absolutely down on Mine-Mill communists but the Irish priest used to tell his parish, "Belong to the union that does the best job for you. Doesn't matter what." He was sneaking in support of Mine-Mill. And the local, outside of Murphy's shenanigans there, did a reasonably good job. Outside of the communist issue there really was nothing that big that could move Trail members away from Mine-Mill and toward some other union.

11. THE BACK OF BEYOND: YELLOWKNIFE

At the time I was offered the job of managing the dairy Hilda was off at a Provincial Party School on Galiano Island. They asked her to go and off she went. She had a daughter by her previous marriage and I was looking after the youngster. Murphy has new troubles on his hands. This time it is in the back of beyond, up in the Northwest Territories, about next door to the North Pole. Since I had gone into Trail and hammered things together in a semblance of a fashion he decides I'm the guy to go to the Northwest Territories, get things going up there for Mine-Mill. This doesn't appeal to me much and Murphy gets after Hilda and has her phone me in Trail. I was outraged. "You tell that sonofabitch, Murphy, that he's not going to run my life for me. I'm gonna decide what I'm doing." I told her I would come down to Vancouver to discuss it with her.

I had some time off from the dairy and the youngster and myself piled on to the bus and headed for Vancouver. Had a big argument that lasted over several days. I lost out. Rather than end up being the manager of a dairy in Trail I ended up on my way to Yellowknife. Not that I regretted it that much. I was never in love with Trail. I was even less in love with Trail than I was in love with Toronto. Trail is down in a hole. Mountains all around it. If you flew over Trail in a plane and looked down you wouldn't see the damned place. Just a big black cloud of smoke. For years the CM & S had poured this sulphur smoke out into the atmosphere and it killed everything for miles around. It killed the apple orchards down in Washington State, I'm told. There was international litigation over it. Cost the CM & S millions of dollars, to the point that they had to do something about this smoke. When they started to look into it they found that they could make fertilizer from it. Kicking themselves in the ass for all the money they had been pouring out in the atmosphere, destroying things when they could have been making some more profits. Eventually, when they started the atomic business, they found they could make heavy water as well. The point is at the time Trail was a terrible place. Yellowknife would go it one better.

Murphy had these problems at Yellowknife. The guy who was in there as the Mine-Mill business agent was leaving, a guy named Barney McGuire. He was coming out and Murphy never trusted anybody on the site, so he wanted me to go in. It was not a particularly good set-up because it was a question of an appointment and it could only be an appointment because the international through the district pretty well had control. They paid half the salary of the business agent in Yellowknife because the local was small and it couldn't survive if it had to cover all of its expenses.

Under the best of circumstances I'm always very unhappy in paid jobs in the trade union movement. Maybe it's a deep-rooted sense that I'm inadequate to the job, although I've done as good a job as anybody else. I just feel most uncomfortable. I like to be working and do my political and trade union work as a person who is working with the workers. Be a shop steward or get elected to the executive or

something. But not an appointed post. I can debate better from the floor and so on and win support that way. I wasn't all that enthused about going to Yellowknife.

Mine-Mill was quite democratic. All officers were up for election and you couldn't just be appointed. You had to be accepted by the local. But McGuire had already left before I got in. He got tired of waiting around for Murphy to send someone else in. What was supposed to happen was that the new business agent being hand-picked and sent in by Murphy was supposed to be recommended by the outgoing business agent, who was leaving, of course, to get the hell out. Then it had to be recommended to the local, voted on, and passed. If the agent was turned down, then he wouldn't be there.

I met McGuire in Edmonton and much to my consternation I found that some of the leading members of the local knew that I was coming in but that I had not actually been recommended. I hadn't been accepted. I had to go in and recommend myself for acceptance as the business agent. As far as I was concerned it was a total disaster.

Anyhow, I was committed, so I kept on going. I went on in. Flew in from Edmonton. On the way in we stopped at Fort McMurray and pulled out a whole bunch of the backseats and brought in cases of canned goods and sides of beef and hunks of pork and what have you to fly in with the plane. It wasn't full of passengers so they just have to pull up some of the seats, which was quite easily done. The bush planes there are equipped for carrying passengers or carrying goods, whichever one is the most profitable and most urgent to be taken at the moment. So we wended our way across the Great Slave from there and I landed in Yellowknife.

Reports say it's much more of a city now, though I haven't been back. At that time the old town still existed down at the bottom of the hill on the side of the lake. You still had to go down there and pick up your mail at the post office. There was no delivery so you had to go down the hill and pick up your mail and carry it up. To me it was a thoroughly woebegone situation. There was hardly any paved roads which they have now. The only transportation was to walk or take taxis. I got a shack to live in. My wife and my stepdaughter came in about a month, I guess, after I got in. There was a little shack there that was a trade union headquarters, trade union office. I think the shack that I lived in and the trade union office were the two smallest buildings in all of Yellowknife. It was really one bedroom which I fixed up to have two rooms, sort of an alcove and another room. I paid forty dollars a month for the place. Everything was expensive in Yellowknife. Just out of this world.

I found out that I had a real problem on my hands as soon as I got in there. Living costs were astronomical. In Yellowknife perishable goods had to be flown in. The perishables — meat, milk, fruit, fresh vegetables — all had to be flown in from Edmonton. So, it was expensive. Milk — I'm talking about 1950 — was one dollar a quart. One egg would cost you twenty-five cents. It was just absolutely fantastic. We used to find other ways to cover the costs of people who were living on the townsite. But with things so expensive, it was hard and the cost of board and lodging was sky-high. There were a lot of single men, most of them single men. Married men had homes on the mine site which belonged to the company and they

were subsidized for their fuel. You heated with oil and the furnace never went out during the entire year. If you put it out even in the summertime, you'd wake up in the morning and you'd find frost on your goddamn stoves and in your toilet.

The company subsidized some things. Brought in food cooperatively and so on. You could survive. Housing wasn't too bad on the mine site. For the single men in the bunkhouses board was supplied at two dollars a day which didn't even begin to pay for the food, never mind the service. But even then things were tough. The last agreement, which was signed just a few months before I went in, provided for board to be supplied at cost. Board at cost. Just out of this world. The board was up around seven to eight dollars a day by the time I got there. This was from four dollars. It was going out of sight. And even at eight dollars a day, it still wasn't paying the cost of the board.

Of course, the single men that went in there — they were called boomers in the mining industry — had no intention of staying. They came in and for the first month or two their deduction on their cheques was paying for their fare in and then after they worked awhile their in-fare was paid back to them. After 240 days you get your return fare, back to Edmonton. The objective was to go in there, work your 240 days, a little more, get a stake together and get flown back out. Take a bit of time off and go someplace else. It was quite easy. You could go to another mine and get a job quite easy. Go to Ontario, go to Saskatchewan, go someplace else. That's the way they lived. Of course, they were working a six-day week and you couldn't get them to go for a five-day week. No way. It would take them longer to get their time to get their fare back. It would take them longer to get a stake together. There was nothing to do in the place. You could drink beer. There was a movie theatre that brought in old movies that actually weren't fit to look at either. There was a recreation hall. You could go bowling, the odd dance. But there was really nothing to do in the place except work, make a bit of money and get the hell out. I used to argue for the five-day week. No way.

There were other things that the miners were very bad on. The miners who cut the rock got a piece-rate plus a bonus. They had what they call a Swedish drill — a drill made in Sweden — that they used in the mines there up in the north. They had to use water with them to keep the dust down, otherwise they were breathing dust and would get the miners' tuberculosis. It coats the bloody lungs with dust. But the water would cut down the speed of your drilling. You couldn't cut as much rock. Some of them who were really after the money used to just cut the water off. Dry drill. Quite a lot of them. Some would get lung disease. So you had these problems.

My big problem upon arrival was that the Con Mine at Yellowknife where some of the miners worked belonged to the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company, the outfit that fired me in Trail. They had prepared people there to attack me once I came in. I remember when I got lined up on what the situation was, I got a meeting together. Members were dropping out of the union. They were cancelling the check-off. There was compulsory check-off of union dues by this time. The union was simply going to pot and the company knew it because they knew everybody that was cancelling. I got this meeting and invited everybody including

those that stopped paying their dues. "Let's have a discussion." We had everybody. The women in the cookhouse were members of the union as well as everybody else. The miners, the labourers, and so on.

There were two locals there. The biggest local was Giant Yellowknife, the largest gold mine on the North American continent. And then there was the Con Mine. I had these two locals, the whole of the Northwest Territories, which was roughly a million square miles, and only two Party members in sight: myself and my wife. That was it. One former party member had become a Conservative, joined the Conservative party and had his first leg up on his first million. A local millionaire. He had come from Trail and had gone in the same way I had gone in. He collected his money, as business agent did virtually nothing, and bought himself a truck. He got contracts for doing road work with this truck, his wife worked in the laundry, and they started getting money together and finally just abandoned the union. He became a partner in a garage and taxi business, which he ultimately bought himself, invested in other property, and so on. He's a multi-millionaire now. Still a solid Conservative. This was what you were up against.

Anyhow, the meeting was chaired by Eugene Longton. He owned some land in Alberta which he had leased out. He had quite a farm, I think, about half a section of land in southern Alberta which he leased out. He was getting his rents from that from time to time, but making his money as a miner and salting his money away in the bank. Quite well-off. He was a nice guy. I was introduced. The formalities were gone through of accepting me. I was jumped all over for being a communist. I was sitting beside Longton. He leaned over to me and he said he was going to stop them. "They can't say those things about you." "Let them go," I said. "It's their right, their privilege. When they get through, I'll have something to say." After about ten or a dozen of them had hollered at me, they settled down.

I got up. I said, "I listened to all of the complaints about my politics. I don't want to ever hear of it again as long as I'm here. You've had your say. My politics are none of your business unless my politics affect my union activities. If you want to put me out of here, you put me out of here because I don't do a union job, not because I'm a member of the Communist Party." That was the last I heard of it. We had to buckle down and fight and I put it to them. I got everybody to cancel their check-off and start paying their dues directly to the union so the company wouldn't know who we had and who we didn't have. They all went in and cancelled their membership and in a couple of days started paying their dues through the bank. The company might still have been able to find out how many members we had through contacts in the bank, but it wouldn't be quite as easy for it. Then we started to fight to stop the increase in board, to roll back the costs to where they had once been.

The wages for a labourer at the time wouldn't have been more than four or five dollars a day. Miners would have made more. The miners would have been not too bad because of the bonus for cutting the rock. A lot of the guys were moving out and beginning to get shacks on the town-site. Two or three of them would get together and buy their grub and cook up themselves, which was really very inconvenient. You had to go on shift, go off shift, cook your grub and so on. The whole

thing was really quite a mess and it's not a place to be unemployed, particularly in the winter-time. This went on for some months, fighting with the company and getting worse, right into the winter-time. There were guys hanging around the townsite that quit and didn't have enough money to get out and they're hanging around the townsite there in the winter-time. Bad situation.

Anyhow, we were carrying on this fight to get somewhere with these increasing costs. Christ knows where they would have stopped, twenty dollars a day, maybe, before it ended. There was no strike or anything. Guys were just quitting. And staying on the townsite with nothing. One day I'm sitting in the union office doing a bit of paperwork. A knock comes at the door. I shouted, "Come on in." In walks the sergeant of the RCMP, Sergeant Batty. I suppose he'd be retired now. He later became an inspector around Nelson. We pass a word about the weather, how's things and so on. Then he finally comes to the point. "Say, Jack," he said, "can't you do something with this goddamn Con Mine business. You know it is a terrible situation on the townsite. These people running around with nothing to do." I said, "I'm sure as hell trying hard to get them to come to their senses."

I finally got them to pay the board, which cost them about six or seven dollars a day. At the Giant in Yellowknife the situation was a bit better because they never did go to boarder cost, and the wages were the same, so this gave us a bit of basis for argument. Board was about one-third of what the companies were paying out at the time, I would guess.

We negotiated an agreement with the two places separately. Generally they worked out the same in both places. The Con did change their cooking set-up. They had a guy in there that was brought in from Trail some years before that was in charge of the cookhouse. They decided to hand it over on contract to one of these belly-robbing outfits that did work on the railroad and things like that. They brought in a guy and he brought a chef with him. He came from a construction camp around Mayo in the Yukon somewhere. Never had had any experience with unions. His companies never had unions. Here he comes in and we've got a union. Everything has to be negotiated. He doesn't know what the hell he's going to do. He don't know how to address himself. The guy that did come in as the boss I think he's the only woman-hater that I ever met. He hated women. Had no use for them. Of course, he used to be in the camps with men only. Men were in the cookhouse. Here he's got women. The only man he's got is the chef he brought in with him. This made for quite a situation. The set-up was that the dining hall, the cooking facilities, and the living quarters for women were all together. The women didn't have to go out to go to work. There was a door right into their quarters. The women used to be very often late getting out on the floor. There'd be breaks. They'd serve breakfast and there'd be a break until dinner and between dinner and the evening meal. They'd go in, they'd do their washing or have a rest or whatever, or listen to the radio. The boss in charge of the cookhouse would simply go and hammer on the door and yell at whoever was supposed to be out. They'd come out.

A couple of the women there were pretty wild. There was one of them that was continually missing. She finally got fired. Gone out and got drunk, totally missing. He fired her. The other young women all agreed that she deserved to be fired, but

they didn't like the boss of the cookhouse. They put up a fight, so I went in to see him. I said, "You know, you're going to have to put her back to work." "I don't want any part of her." "Well," I said, "I'm going to process a grievance. It will go to an arbitration. When it goes to arbitration, I'm not only going to fight for her to go back to the job, but I'm going to fight for you to pay all her wages for the time that she's off. I'll tell you for certain. I'm going to win this grievance." I didn't have a hope in hell, but he didn't know anything about unions. "I'll win it and you'll have to pay all the back wages. It'll take weeks." "Oh," he says, "tell her to come back to work." She went back to work for three or four days and she went off on another drunk and never went back to work again.

A funnier one. I was on the townsite. A taxi driver yelled at me. He had just come in from taking somebody out to the Con. He yelled, "The girls out at the Con want to see you." I said, "OK, take me out." I usually walked out. It might be three or four miles. If I had to get there in a hurry I'd jump in a taxi. So, he ran me out. I went to the living quarters of the women there and saw the shop steward. She called everybody in for a meeting. They had a grievance. She brought all the girls from the floor and everybody that was in the living quarters. She told what the grievance was. You know, I mentioned about the boss hammering on the door for women to come out and get on the floor when they were supposed to. This fellow has got in the habit that he doesn't knock on the door anymore. He just simply opens it and walks in. "That's our living quarters," says the women. "We might be going around in our panties when he walks in." There was a young Ukrainian woman there. A pretty little woman. She came from Edmonton. She pipes up, "That's not what makes me mad. That sonofabitch wouldn't know if I was wearing panties or not." Whether he sees you in your panties or he doesn't bother to notice. That's the funniest grievance I ever heard. I had to go out and give him a talking-to. Tell him to knock on the door and not come in unless he's invited.

Generally we got things settled down. We got everybody back in the union. But it was never easy. People were coming and people were going and people were coming. About four times a week we had new guys going in. I got a set-up with the guy in the Con who issued blankets and bedding and so on to the guys. They used to share two guys to a room in the bunkhouses. He would know when anybody was coming in and he would tell me when they were coming in so I would be on hand when they come in. They come in by plane, go through the office, and get signed up. They'd be sent down there for all this bedding and room assignments and so on. After finishing up with the blanket dispenser, sitting in his office, the guy would tell them, the union business agent wants to talk to you. We signed everybody up. No compulsory check-off or membership but they sort of got the sense that this was part of the process. It wasn't really.

We signed pretty well everybody up except one day. There had been a fair number of Italians come up. Quite a few had come to Canada. A number who had contacts down in Trail and had gone to Trail and had got jobs. And there had been a bit of a fall-back in production in Trail. They were laying a lot of people off. They sent eight of these Italians that were being laid off up to Yellowknife to work. Of course I got them. No problem at all. I signed six. Two others. No way. They wanted

no part of it. The one guy appeared to be a bit of a leader so I went to him. I asked him, "What's the trouble." "No trouble." Six people and two guys don't want any part of it. He says, "Come on. I'll talk to them." Gabbles away to them in Italian there for a few minutes. He turns to me. "Sign them up." I signed them up. I said, "How did you convince them. I couldn't." "Oh," he said, "I just told them, if you don't sign up with the union, you might as well get the hell out of here, because they're not going to go to work. Not allowed." Which wasn't true but they signed.

I had another guy who had been there thirteen years. Garrity was his name. He thought it was the best country in the world. It was the back of beyond, particularly at that time. It's more of a community now. His wife finally left him, took the kids and went to Toronto. He was going to live there all of his life and she couldn't stand it. It was horrible there on the edge of the barren lands. There he's been. He would never join the union, when all around were joining. I used to get after him quite regular. He was of Irish descent, obviously from his name. I used to get after him on the basis that an Irishman should have more sense than be a hold-out on the union. Him and I used to argue to no end. He was born in Canada. I wasn't. He was, but he was of Irish descent.

There was a drive came up for the Elks, to which he belonged. He came around to see me. A drive for membership and a competition. He offered me a trade. If I would join the Elks as one of his recruits he would join the union. It was no big deal. I agreed. The Elks in the States, incidentally, at that time — I don't know about if it's still so — had a colour line. No blacks could join. I don't think any Jews could join either. This couldn't hold in Canada at all. An entirely different constitution. The only Jew in Yellowknife, as a matter of fact, was a member. There weren't any blacks or they might have been in it too. There was no discrimination. I said, "OK." It was no big deal. I dropped by. I just let my membership lapse when I left. I wasn't that interested in being a member of the Elks.

But Garrity joined the union. He came in. He started being active. In the Elks he was real active. He took his membership seriously. He went out recruiting. He really did his job in the Elks. He transferred at least a part of that enthusiasm to his union membership. There were a couple that had come in about a month or so after Garrity joined. They wouldn't join. I had mentioned this to several people around. Garrity gets on them, saying, "You've been here a week already and you're not members of the union. What's the matter with you. You expect somebody to carry you." Imagine, thirteen years and he starts teasing the guys.

It was a queer sort of place to work. It was policed by the Mounties. Everybody had to live together. You had to get along together in Yellowknife. The only people that lived separate and apart was the government group, the government employees group. They had their own separate townsite. They had well-built home units they paid almost no rent for. Got better wages than anybody else. Got subsidized living, subsidized food. Paid nothing for their fuel oil. They lived to themselves, separate and apart from everybody else. They were sort of an elite. Everybody else in the community had to get along together. Nobody ever bothered with your personal life. They didn't give a damn about your personal life.

The Mounties — I hardly ever knew them to arrest anybody. With drunks, they

put them in a taxi, knew what mine site they came from, and told the taxi driver: "Take them home and throw them in their bunk and collect your taxi fare when they sober up." The taxi driver would take them back. I only knew of them to run a couple of drunks in who certainly wouldn't get in a taxi and started fighting. So they ran them into the cooler that they had in the basement of the town hall. They held them there until morning and then kicked them out and told them to get to work. I saw one guy who was on the list not to drink. He was in the bar one night, sitting there and a Mountie came in. Stood just inside the door and he looked and he sees this guy. He's looking right at him. He had a drink in front of him and he drank it up. The Mountie didn't make any move. The guy ordered another one. The bartender brought a second one. At that point, the Mountie came over. He said, "Johnny, you know you're not supposed to drink. You're on the list. Now, drink up your drink and get out of here." The guy drank up his drink and took off.

The liquor store was underneath the town hall. Very easy to get into. Just break a window and walk in. One day it did get broken into and liquor was stolen. The Mounties came to check up on it. There was all kinds of liquor there, including the best brandies, the best whiskies, ryes, and everything. Two guys had done the breaking. They went straight to the cheapest rotgut you could get. Took a supply of that and went back to their shack. Didn't take the Mounties long to figure that one out and they went and found them gloriously drunk on their supply of rotgut. Those were the only two guys that I knew in my time there who were sentenced for breaking and entering, for the theft of liquor.

But it was very rare for anything to get stolen in Yellowknife because you couldn't get out of the goddamn place. The truck from Giant used to drive into Yellowknife about once a month. An old broken-down panel truck with the door flying open and it would be carrying four or five gold ingots. Nobody worried because you couldn't get out of there with anything anyway without everyone knowing. If you owed any money you couldn't leave. There was this taxi driver that was bootlegging and one guy who was a terrible boozer and a gambler used to call him up and ask him to deliver a bottle. The price was the taxi fare plus the cost of the bottle and a little bit more. He'd give him a cheque that would bounce, and then he'd give him a song and a dance about the mistake that the bank must have made and would he give him another bottle. Pay for it with another rubber cheque. He would do this with others as well until he owed three or four bootlegging taxi drivers. He owed the first guy seven or eight hundred dollars. He worked at the Con Mine and everybody is tired of him by this time. Want to get rid of him. It was summertime and the boat was running. So some guys took him down to the saloon, bought him liquor, got him stupid drunk until he didn't know what was happening. They got him into a taxi and poured him on to the bloody boat. This taxi driver that is owed all the money roars down. "You can't let him get out of here. He owes me seven hundred dollars." "Go on, get out of here," says the crowd. "You're not going to stop that guy because he's going to the Hay and he's never coming back. We're glad to be rid of him."

I don't know why the bootleggers were there. There was a beer parlour that opened up at 12:01 a.m. on Monday morning and didn't close down until midnight

on Saturday. All night and all day. It was a funny place. The guy who was in charge of the bar at night used to fall asleep on the bar, his head down on the bar. The guys used to have to wait on themselves. Get their beer and put their money in the till. They used to call him Sleepy Joe. Still, there were bootleggers, particularly for hard liquor. Mostly taxi drivers as I said. They used to bootleg out to the guys in the camp. None of them would ever get arrested. If you're gonna arrest a bootlegger, the RCMP would have to sneak special guys in in plain clothes and not even tell their own men in Yellowknife they're coming in because they'd warn the bloody bootleggers. Somebody's coming in to nail them. The only way they'd get them.

I remember we had a picnic which got thoroughly washed out. It was in August. Terrible. Rain. Cold. We had fireworks there and a whole bunch of stuff. We sort of got rid of everything. Food and ice cream and so on we got rid of, but the fireworks and quite a bit of beer were left. I put the fireworks and the beer in the union office. Young Mounties bought all the beer from me over a period of a couple of weeks. Come and get three or four cases at a time. I don't know where the hell they went. Every bit of beer that was left from the picnic was sold to Mounties. No union members. Then the union office caught fire. The bloody stove got overheated and a fire started. We had a beautiful fireworks display.

The union office was right across the road from my shack where I lived. The union had access to a co-op community radio station. It was supplied by the armed services. They wanted to allow their broadcasting system to be used for a community broadcast and different organizations in the community would broadcast for a certain number of hours during the week. I ran a programme every Wednesday for five hours, played folk records, labour songs, read some poetry and prose. You did what you wanted to. The union had two programmes. I ran the one and the other was run by a union member, Charlie Crate, at one time the editor of *The Thunder*, which was the organ of the Canadian Union of Fascists. Incidentally, he's now living up in Biggar, in northern Saskatchewan. He finds the goddamnedest places in the world to live in.

He was a queer sort of a fascist. A good union member. His closest friend in Yellowknife was a dude there that ran a record store. Him and Charlie were great friends and Crate got his records from him. He did pretty much what I did in terms of songs. A queer character. I'd known him for a long time. I used to have political arguments with him. No end. He was in the army but was sentenced to Stoney Mountain at the time the war broke out. I think he spent about a year. Then he got out and joined the navy. He served with the navy mail service in Glasgow in Scotland for several years. Married a Scottish woman who got elected to the Yellowknife town council one time. Quite sharp. That's one of the characters that was there.

It was the back of beyond up there. It was the cold that got to you. One night while I was there it went down to sixty-one degrees below Fahrenheit. Fifteen Fahrenheit was warm for up there, positively equatorial. I remember one day it was really cold in the middle of July. I'm heading up the hill. I saw a guy up front of me. He had a big mackinaw on, wrapped around him, all hunched up. If you moved things were better, and I'm breezing along and start heading past him. Just as I'm

going by it starts to snow, in July. I got a few feet in front of him and he yelled, "Hey Mac, is it like this in this goddamn country all the time?" I said, "It sure is."

The constant cold could produce some funny situations at times. There was a laundry there that straddled the creek out at the Giant Yellowknife Mine. They ran their steam and boiling water off into the creek. There was a bridge that went across the creek, around one side of the laundry. You had to cross that bridge all summer to get to the mine head. When the creek would freeze up in winter time the guys used to cut off across a piece of vacant ground and cross the ice on the creek, well down from the laundry. One guy who had been driving a taxi and was new at the mine follows the track that everybody else is taking. He sees that everybody else cuts off to the right, but he figures there is a shorter way to go, right by the laundry. Walks across the ice, and of course pushes right through it and into the water which is boiling hot from the laundry run-off. He's in the hospital for three to four weeks with third degree burns on his legs. I went to visit him, but I really had to laugh at the whole situation, falling through ice and getting seriously burned. It could only happen in Yellowknife.

There were people who went crazy there, or maybe were crazy when they came. There was one guy there was a real nut. Somebody told me he had actually been in Pocona, which was the mental institute in Alberta. He had come in and quit. Used to sit around the recreational hall and hammer the piano all day long. That's about all he did, and wandering around the townsite. Then he decided he wanted to get out. Easier said than done. He decided he was going to walk across the ice and follow the tracks of the supply line that a sort of train used to go along, across the frozen lake to the Hay River and down to Rail Head, about a hundred miles in all. He set off with a lunch bucket in his hand. The Mounties had to get a bush plane to go and pick him up and bring him back and then put him on a plane and send him the hell out. Had to be crazy to be there, and crazy to get out.

The second round of negotiations came along and a guy came in from Trail to handle things for the Company. Everything was done by Trail. They had radio communications and everything was reported, every grievance had to be settled with Trail's OK. Even the mine manager didn't have the authority to settle things without Trail's approval. So this guy comes in from Trail to do the negotiations and run the whole show. When we have our first meeting he says, "I hope to get this over in a hurry because I want to go by way of Calgary and drive the rest of the way home by car." "Oh," I said, "we can settle in five minutes." "How can we do that?" "Just give us all we ask for."

This was rather funny because we had had a meeting. We cut everything down, all of our demands got streamlined. We had only seven points. The main thing was wages. In the meeting, I said, "What's the cut off point?" Twenty-five cents an hour, which was a fair amount then. It's not very much now. The workers said twenty-five cents an hour or we're closing down. I said, "OK, let's go in and tell them that. Twenty-five cents an hour or we're out." "You can't do that. You've got to negotiate. You've got to bargain. You've got to ask for more and bargain." I said, "That's goddamn nonsense." I remember the time we used to post up our demands on the board and if the boss didn't come across we'd walk out. That was it. Rare-

ly got beaten. "Have some sense," I said. "Let's go say what you want and that's it. Get it or we fight." I got overruled. It was unanimous against me. Had to ask thirty-five cents an hour and bargain.

We put our demands on the table. The guy looked them over. He came to the wages. Thirty-five cents an hour. He said, "No, twenty-five cents an hour. We give twenty-five cents an hour." This was what the real demand was. We had everything we wanted, everything the workers had really wanted. I said, "Well, let's adjourn. We've got to talk this over." We went down to the bunkhouse, just lay around one of the rooms in the bunkhouse. I said, "Well, I'm gonna go back in an hour or so and tell them that I accept the agreement." That was it.

This was the only other time that I ever heard anybody starting on the communist business. There was a Swedish guy there. He was the engineer and I guess he'd been reading the paper somewhere and it set him off. He came up, came into the bunkhouse where we were. He's in there and he's raving about the reds. There was a guy by the name of Reg Foreman there. He was a Liberal, member of the Liberal party. A nice guy. A solid union guy. He had been pacing up and down the floor. And he stopped and he looked at the Swede and he said, "Well Swede, if I was you, I wouldn't worry about the communists. Scott's the only communist in a million square miles of territory."

That was an exaggeration of course, but not by much. No real communist presence to speak of. Like I said, it was a moving population, mostly Canadian-born, but with a lot of European names. Over a period of six or eight months about half the workforce would be new hires. There was a small group on the town site, the married guys, and they stayed for a donkey's years.

In the two locals in Yellowknife, which were the big part of my responsibility, there were over eight hundred members of Mine-Mill. But we also had out in the bush several other small locals. There was one at Discovery Mine about 150 miles out of Yellowknife, and there was another not too far from Yellowknife. One of them shut down when I was there, finally ran out of ore and it closed up. So there was a lot of territory to cover and I was on my own. As far as things went politically I was on my own, made my own bloody decisions.

I belonged to a Party correspondence club. I sent my dues to an address in Vancouver and reported what was happening and so on. When they had a *Tribune* drive they had a notice that the correspondence club had to raise one hundred dollars. I thought my wife and I were the only members of the club. I went out to raise this money. I got a couple of guys to help me. They weren't Party people at all, it was just the kind of camaraderie that was around there. You were supposed to raise the money by selling subscriptions for six months, but one guy who was helping me he would just walk up to a table in the beer parlour with six guys sitting around it and say, "Give me \$2.50 a piece." "For what?" "Never mind for what." Everybody would fork over the money. Nobody read anything. I put the squeeze on this guy Henney who had been in the Party, made his fortune, and joined the Conservatives. I got about fifty dollars from him alone, and all told raised something over a hundred dollars. I figured that's the club's quota and I sent it in. When I read the *Trib* later I saw that the correspondence club had raised something over two hundred dollars.

A funny thing happened right after the last successful round of negotiations that I had been involved in. We all adjourned to the cocktail bar for a few rounds of drinks after the company agreed to give us basically all that the workers wanted. We are all sitting there, and of course I'm the only communist in the lot, my wife and I are the only reds in a million square miles. A guy crashes in, sits at one of the tables and starts yapping away. Everybody says, "Don't pay any attention to him." Eventually, after I'd had a few drinks, I get up to go to the toilet and this guy follows me. He says, "I want to tell you something. I won't tell it to any of those Communists out there at the table. But I want to tell you. I'm an RCMP agent." He pulls out his card and he shows it to me. He was one of those the RCMP recruited in the war to feed them information. So he's telling me he doesn't want to tell all those Communists at the table. Gives you an indication of what kind of information the RCMP was getting. I sat back down, laughing, and told the guys at the table. They all knew him.

By this time I'm getting pretty fed up with Yellowknife. I wasn't sorry I had gone. It was a bit of an adventure in a way. But I knew I didn't want to spend the rest of my goddamn life there. I was pissed off all the time. The shack we lived in was terrible and not the best for a family. My stepdaughter was young at the time and fortunately went to a school that was just across the way from our shack. But there was just nothing there. I remember the first year we were there it was Christmas and my wife said, "Well, you've got to go out and get a tree." A Christmas tree for the daughter. Goddamn barren lands. I go out in the snow cussing a blue streak with a little hatchet looking for a goddamn tree in this barren wilderness. Finally I came across one that was about five feet high. It had probably taken about two hundred years to get there. Chopped it down and dragged it home.

I never actually saw Murphy in Yellowknife. All the time I was there, not once did he set foot in the place. It wasn't exactly his cup of tea. I didn't even see any of the district executive all the time I was up there. My freedom came out of necessity. Murphy and I had had our differences, but I knew him a long time, from well back into the 1930s in Ontario. There was no real hostility between us at this point, and he desperately needed someone to go up to Yellowknife and do the job. He thought I was the one for it. They had had a problem with Henney who went in there as a Party member, did nothing, collected his wages, and prepared himself to move up and become a millionaire. Barney McGuire went in and did OK, but he naturally reached the end of his rope and he packed it in. So I was the one, and once I was up there I had a free hand.

And this was constantly the problem. So when the last set of negotiations came up I went to all the members of the union committee and said that while I would stay through negotiations, as long as it took, I would be leaving a couple of weeks after they were through. "Oh, you can't do that. What's the matter with you. You got a good job. Nobody is trying to take it away from you." Garrity in particular got after me. "Best country in the world," he said. "Come on," I replied, "a couple of years in this godforsaken place is enough."

This is where I got myself on the outs with Murphy. I told the guys there that I was getting out after negotiations, period. And then I said, "The problem with you

people here is you are not confronting what you want to do. Do you want somebody to come from outside or do you want to start running the show yourselves." "Oh," they said, "we can't run it ourselves. Murphy will send somebody in." "Do you want Murphy to send someone," I asked? They said, "No, but there is nothing we can do about it." I said, "Yes there is. Murphy can't send anybody in here that you don't want. It's all in the constitution of Mine-Mill." "Is that so?" I said, "For Christ's sake why don't you guys read your union constitution. You've got one of the most democratic unions on the North American continent. Use the constitution." I told them that I was going and Murphy wasn't going to like it but that it didn't matter, I was gone. And I told them that Murphy would recommend someone. If he gave me a name of somebody that I thought could do the job I would let them know, but that they had to decide what they wanted to do and who they would or would not accept.

Of course I had a big argument with Murphy. He was madder than hell. Kenny Smith finally told him, "Look, the guy's coming out. That's it. Accept it. There's nothing you can do about it." So Murphy sent me the name of somebody, a guy from around Nelson or Trail. He was a good enough guy as I recall and I told the guys at Yellowknife that I believed he would do a good job. They said they didn't care if he was the best guy in the country. "We'll run our own show." They had decided that they would have a chairman in each of the sub-locals who would still work but who would get paid for any time loss, time taken off for union business. They were going to operate this way. Finally they would end up with Crate, the ex-fascist, and he did a hell of a good job. And Foreman, the Liberal, was the chairman of the other sub-local.

When I told Murphy he exploded. He decided that he would cut off subsidies to the local. I got Kenny Smith on my side and really fought it out. After three or four months things got ironed out and the subsidies from the International were put back in place. They built up quite a fund in the local, became quite wealthy. Years later, when the Steelworkers were raiding the hell out of Mine-Mill a guy came up to Crate and told him, "We're coming in to try to liberate the local from Communist domination." Crate, the ex-fascist, just laughs: "Nobody dominates us. We run our own show. I'll take you around and introduce you to the people and you can talk to them." He even got permission from the company to take him underground in one of the mines. Foreman and the union executive met with him. The next morning the guy got back on the plane and went back out and never came back.

Anyway my time was up. They decided to give me a party and bought me some luggage. Packed my bits and pieces up in it. The party lasted three days and three nights. A big event. I don't remember all that happened. There were two bank managers showed up and a couple of Mounties that snuck in. A real humdrum affair. The wife, stepdaughter, and I flew out to Hay and took a bus to Calgary. Stopped over in Trail, before going down to Vancouver. About twenty-five hundred mile trip by bus from Hay to Vancouver. This was pretty much the end of my escapades in Yellowknife. I was happy to get out.

12. THE REDS BEAT THEMSELVES: COMMUNISTS AND UNIONS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA IN THE EARLY 1950s

I wandered back to Vancouver. I took plenty of time coming back. I had accumulated a bit of money — not a hell of a lot — enough that I figured I could take a bit of time off and simply enjoy myself. I finally got in to town and I remember the wife and I were looking for a place to stay. We're not getting any help from the Party or anybody else to get settled. We were in the old White Lunch near Hastings Street. All broken down, having a coffee and a sandwich, the wife and the kid and I, wondering where we're going to pack our baggage. Trying to get something temporarily where there was furniture. Hilda opened a conversation with some guy there. It turned out he knew a furnished flat at Waverley near Victoria Drive that was available. We headed out there and talked to the woman that owned the house and explained to her that we were only going to be there long enough to find a place that was suitable for the three of us. She was very friendly. We moved in there. I guess we were in there two or three months, and then got a real place to live.

I'm still wanting to take a couple of weeks off, just dog it for awhile, but I thought, I'd better do something about sizing up a job somewhere, because I was going to need one eventually. I ran into Fred Collins. He had come out from Toronto. He had been one of the officials with the Fur and Leather Workers when it merged with the Butcher Workmen. Like most of the CPers, he was tossed out on his ear, so he came west to work for the IWA and landed here in the middle of the big split. This was around 1951. He got a job in the shipyard. I knew Fred for many years and had worked with him around Windsor.

Fred died of a heart attack. He was quite stupid. He decided he'd become a skilled worker in the shipyards. He had a bad heart. He went to learn welding. In welding you had to wear a mask and there was a certain amount of fumes from the welding, which makes it difficult to breathe. The doctor told him not to do it. But he did. One day at work he collapsed and he died of a heart attack. He could have lived a bit longer.

Anyhow, I ran into Fred. He asked what I was doing. I said, "Well, I'm going to be looking for a job." He said, "Go down and see Sam Jenkins in the Boilermakers. Tell him I sent you. Apply for a job there." "Well, OK." I thought I'd better go down and get my name in. I figured I won't get work for a week or two anyhow. That's fine. That's just what I wanted. So, I headed down to the Boilermakers' Hall down on Pender Street to see Jenkins. He was business agent then. Sam was one of the group that came from New Brunswick. Religious fundamentalists, full-scale gospellers. After Sam got in the shipyards he deserted religion and became a roustabout and a drinker, a hard drinker, and climbed in as business agent of the Boilermakers. He was in the Party at the time I went down to see him. Bill White was president of the local at the time. Sammy later went back to fundamentalist religion. I was an ex-Communist that returned to God, was his approach. He went off preaching after awhile.

I told Jenkins that Collins had sent me and I'd just come down from Yellowknife with Mine-Mill. "Oh," he said, "you're a member of the Mine-Mill Murphy Workers." "That's about it," I said. So he set me up. He said, "Tomorrow morning go to work at Burrard Shipyard." I didn't want to go to work tomorrow morning, but I couldn't refuse to go. I'm in there looking for a job. So, the next day, I'm working in the shipyard. Got working there and belonged to a Party club that took in various workers from the shipyards and from a few small shops, from some shops that Mine-Mill had. They were generally in the steel industry somewhere. Some belonged to the Steelworkers' Union. Murphy belonged, Bill Stewart, Jenkins was in it. That's when I became active again in that particular club. Connected in the Boilermakers' Union.

I did various things there, mostly labouring work. I worked in the different departments. I worked with the fitters. I worked with the shipwrights. I worked in the boiler shop, boiler department. It wasn't that bad. As a matter of fact I used to go around looking for things to do. There's nothing that galls me more than standing around a job waiting for the day to end. I'm also bad from the point of view that if there's work to do I do it. I'd be laid off from one place for a day or two and be back in to another department. Never had any difficulty getting jobs.

I never had seniority to stay anywhere so I was in and out — getting posted here and posted there. I was in the shipyards, in the Western Bridge for awhile. I was in the Western Bridge a couple of times. One summer I worked on the slab, which is shaping red-hot metal. You're working in front of a furnace, taking red-hot metal out and laying it on a slab and shaping it. I worked there one hot summer. Blistering hot. Had to take salt pills in order to replace the salt in your body that's going out in your sweat. All summer long. Then they started doing work for the Kitimat power project and the aluminum smelters being built there. So they began making these aluminum pylons or towers for power lines and they were all pre-set. Each piece was numbered so when they went up in the barge they went by number and they just put them together. They all had to be sorted out. It was done outside. All bloody winter after the slab in the summertime. All bloody winter I'm working out in the yard on the graveyard shift yet. Sorting out that bloody stuff. Nearly freezing to death out there.

I worked around various places. I was in some small shops. One small shop I was in once, the manager there had a whole slew of relatives working there. He had a brother, he had a cousin, a couple of nephews. They were all over the god-damn place. A hell of a place to be. I'm working one day with a guy on a job. We're working together and we're talking about things. Finally I mentioned, "Well, the thing that's most strong about this thing is that there are too many relatives in it." He looked at me and said, "Well, I'm one of the relatives." I was working with an uncle or something. I wasn't long for that place. I worked two or three other small shops.

Most of these small shops were ill-equipped. A lot of times you had guys who were skilled workers with you. I was a helper. I knew more than a lot of skilled workers because of what I'd picked up in various places. I was offered a job as a skilled worker in the shipyard once. I turned it down. I didn't want any part of it. I

didn't want to take responsibility for the work. As long as I'm a helper, the guy I'm working with has to be responsible for the job. I don't have to be. Shirking responsibility as it were. One place on Powell Street, I remember it. Making boilers. It was a long narrow shop and the boilers would be in various stages of preparation and lying on the floor. Maybe fifteen or twenty of them and they had this crane which picked things up and they had an endless chain. You had to pull to raise things up and you had to pull to let down. Very often you'd have to move a boiler from one end of the shop to the other, maybe for some work that had to be done at that end of the shop or be shipped out or whatever. You'd have to get it above all the other boilers and you'd pull on this goddamn chain. It took you about twenty minutes to get it high enough and then you'd get at the other end and another twenty minutes pulling on the chain to lower it down. I remember one morning one of the guys posted there, a guy by the name of Bill Arland, came out there and he's put on this job of moving. All bloody morning he's on this goddamn chain moving boilers from point A to point B. When we came to the lunch pit he's thoroughly pissed off. He'd been doing nothing but pulling this bloody endless chain. There's got to be something different after lunch, he's thinking. So we go back after lunch and the boss came up to Bill and said: "Move that boiler from here back to there." Bill said, "Fuck you." And he walked out. He never even waited to get his half-day's pay. He just left. He wasn't going to keep pulling that chain for the rest of his life.

I was working with the shipwrights one time and they belonged to the Carpenters' Union local and the Boilermakers were trying to sign them all up. Shipyard work was a sometime thing for these carpenters. You're in and out. When they were out of the shipyard they could go on construction. There was quite a lot of construction work at the time. And there were a pile of other union locals there. The plumbers had their own local. The machinists had their own local. Small groups. But the main union in the shipyards was the Boilermakers, which took in the fitters in the boiler shop and all of the labourers and that. We started out to sign up the shipwrights while I was working there. We just needed one more and we would have had a majority.

Somebody tipped off George Bengough, who was head of the Carpenters' local and the son of Percy Bengough, top man at the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada. He came over to the shipwrights' shack one day. We were having lunch. He got everybody together. I was there too though I didn't belong. I was in the Boilermakers. I was not a shipwright. I was a shipwright's helper. I was sitting there. Here's Bengough laying down the law. We know the Boilermakers have been signing up people. He said, "If any man in the Carpenters' local is caught with a Boilermakers' card in his pocket he will be out of the union and he will never again work in the industry anywhere in North America." Imagine having that kind of power. That put an end to the drive. The guys weren't about to risk their livelihood by putting up a fight. The whole thing just went to pieces. They never did get the carpenters.

I did alright while I was there. I was in and out. I remember one time I worked with a fellow, an old shipwright who was South African. Guys were in the habit of

quitting early in the Burrard yards, heading for the time clocks. The office personnel and bosses were in a sort of mezzanine with a perfect view of the punch-out clocks. You could see everybody coming down to the time clocks, going early, and the word went out: "Stop this." One of the days when the time had crept up and we were heading for the clocks about fifteen minutes early, a guy by the name of Wills, who was the shipwrights' foreman, dashes up. The South African and I are both walking together with our lunch buckets, heading for the clocks. Of course, Wills had been harrassed by the office. He's coming up to people. "Don't come in tomorrow. You're fired." We were still about forty or fifty feet away. The South African says, "Now, what are we going to do." I said, "Keep on walking like we own the goddamn place. Don't run." Everybody else is running, trying to hide behind buildings and so on. Wills was nailing them. If he ever told me not to come in the next morning, I wouldn't come in. All of these guys came crawling back the next day. We came even with Mr. Wills. I said, "Good night Mr. Wills." We kept on. He never said a fucking word. Chasing all these guys that were running. He said good night and we kept on going. Like I said, if he ever told me not to come back, I wouldn't have come back.

He got short of work and they sent me over to the salvage. Called Burrard Salvage. It's a shipyard down there and we went over there and there wasn't anything there for us to do. We went in and the foreman said, "Yes, I have to hide you guys here or they're going to want you back." There were other guys with more seniority they were going to lay off and they didn't dare have us around so they shipped us over there. We were going over at the Salvage, I guess, for about two weeks with virtually nothing to do. Just hanging around putting in time.

I became active in the Boilermakers' Union. That was right at the tail end of quite an historical court case in Canada, the Kuzych case. It was historic in the sense that it was the last court case that went to appeal in the Privy Council. Appeals to the Privy Council had already been legislated out, but since the Kuzych case was in the process it had to go right through to the final court of appeal in London. The House of Lords' Privy Council. So, it's historic in that sense.

I wasn't involved in the Kuzych thing in the beginning, but I got into the lineup. My understanding is not quite the same as the story that Bill White gives in his book, *A Hard Man to Beat*. What happened was that there were some negotiations — and I can't give the exact details — and the question of the compulsory check-off came up and it went to the hearing. This mediation or arbitration hearing was to decide whether or not there should be compulsory check-off of union dues. Kuzych, who was a member of the Boilermakers' Union, appeared as a witness against compulsory check-off. In other words, he was on the side of the employer in this particular argument. So the union immediately proceeded to charge him, tried him, and expelled him from the union, which meant that he was out of work because of the closed shop.

From my point of view the whole thing was stupid. Not because of his opinion, because I hold the same opinion. I don't like the compulsory check-off myself. But there was no need to expel him. Certainly there was reason for charging him for something and trying him and exacting a penalty because of his appearance as a

witness for the employer, but the penalty should have been something far short of expelling him from the union and putting him out of work. The big majority of the guys in the shipyards at the time were very militant and they would have made life unbearable. The best punishment for him would have been to send him back to work in the shipyards, because they would certainly have given him hell. But they expelled him.

Of course Kuzych went to court with all the support of the Board of Trade, the Chamber of Commerce, lots of money. It kept him going for years, the years the case was in court. He got his money from them. He got his living from them and all he did for those years was fight his court case and he survived very well. It cost the union a mint of money. They had Nathan Nemetz, once a left-winger in as much as he was willing to work for CP-led labour organizations, acting as the union lawyer. He later became a justice of the Supreme Court in British Columbia. When they went to England, they had Stafford Cripps, a high-priced Socialist who certainly didn't work for nothing, as the lawyer there.

White went along with Nemetz to England for the hearing. Incidentally, they spent a little of their time in Paris while they were there. This was costing a tremendous amount of money. It was the union that appealed to the Privy Council because Kuzych won his case in all the courts in Canada, where he was awarded damages and secured a court order for his reinstatement in the union. But in the Privy Council Kuzych lost, at least temporarily, on a technicality.

What had happened was, there was a Federation of Shipyard Workers in BC that brought together the shipyard unions along the coast. There were a number of locals in Victoria, Nanaimo, up the coast and several in Vancouver. There were about seven locals altogether. There had been a quarrel within the Boilermakers' Union when it was big in the wartime and when they had fifteen thousand members in one bloody yard building. There had been right-wingers who were involved. The leftwing controlled it and they lost and it was partly because of Bill Stewart who had been knocked off when the right-wingers came in. The guys who beat their chest about beating the reds in British Columbia, a lot of them were in there. They didn't beat the reds. The reds beat themselves in British Columbia. Did a very effective job of it. George Holme, who later went to the Labour Council as director, and a number of others were involved in this. They got elected because of this internal mess and held office for a year. After a year the left came back and strongly defeated them, but they wouldn't give up office. Held on. There's a battle here. I'm talking about things, mind you, that I was not personally involved in because this was the time that I was overseas, a lot of this stuff. They had a big meeting in the arena here, where there was something like twelve thousand workers come out and supported the left, shipyardsmen and steel shop workers. It finally went to court and the new people elected won the court settlement, or a settlement that was agreeable to the court, agreeable to the people that took over. Part of the agreement was that as long as there was something like five locals in British Columbia, the Shipyard Federation would be recognized. It would not be challenged by the Congress. The result was that when all the raids came here, the Boilermakers' and the Shipyard Federation, which was distinctly leftist, were totally free from being

raided because of the fact that there was a court-endorsed settlement and they didn't dare do it. They kept trying to tell the Boilermakers that they should go into the Steelworkers voluntarily because that was the best place for it. It would be stronger and so on and so forth. They simply rejected it all the time. And so the right-wing led unions couldn't do anything about raiding it. They didn't dare because there would have been hell for contempt of court and for a lot of damages in the court of agreement. With this set-up, each local that was affiliated to the Shipyard Federation operated on its own and could proceed with disciplinary action and so on, like the Boilermakers did against Kuzych.

Any worker who was disciplined had the right to appeal to the Shipyard Federation against whatever sentence was passed. Kuzych did not do that. He simply proceeded on the basis he couldn't win. Which he couldn't. This is where he beat himself, because at that time if he had gone to the Shipyard Federation they would simply have endorsed the decision of the Boilermakers, Local One of the Federation. He didn't do it and this was ignored in the Canadian courts, but it came out pretty strongly in the hearing of the Privy Council and what the Privy Council told Kuzych was, "Look, you have not exhausted all your remedies at home. Now you go back and exhaust those remedies and if you don't get satisfaction, come back."

At any rate the Privy Council decision was all academic. The whole mess had cost the Boilermakers' Union somewhere in the neighbourhood of a hundred thousand dollars and there was the fact that if he did eventually win his case it would involve Christ knows how much damages from the union on top of this. There was a meeting of the Boilermakers' Union and there was a straightforward motion to reinstate Kuzych and post him out to work. It had nothing to do with the members thinking Kuzych was right or with any change of heart within the leadership of the union. White was President, Bill Stewart was secretary, Jenkins was the business agent, same old cabal. They were simply getting themselves off the hook was all that was going on. White tells a different story, but I was there. I voted for the motion and was in the union meeting when the recommendation was brought in, seconded, and carried unanimously.

At that point, of course, Kuzych had nowhere to go. He'd been blocked from going back through the Canadian courts and up again to the Privy Council. So Kuzych was finished after that and he wasn't heard of again.

This is very different than what gets told in White's *A Hard Man to Beat*. But I think it makes a bit more sense. Because if Kuzych had any possible recourse to return to the courts, my sense is that he would have. There was powerful interests — the Chamber of Commerce and the Board of Trade, for instance — that were backing him and giving him money. They wanted to get the closed shop ruled out. And that is what the whole thing was really all about. Kuzych's fumble right at the very beginning of the thing was what was decisive. And White doesn't really make this very clear in his book.

For the union to push it as far as it did was foolishness. Discipline was called for but not expulsion. True, you don't appear for the boss. But what they could have done was set up a trial committee and fined him \$100. If he paid, fine; if he didn't he couldn't work. He would still have the option of appealing to the Shipyard

Federation. It wouldn't, in any case, have been a big historic case. My feeling was for the union, too, they were going after Kuzych because he was against the closed shop. But the essential thing was that he appeared for the boss.

On the closed shop business the guy was taking a position on the question that, as far as I'm concerned, was open for argument. I'm for voluntary organization in the trade union movement. I support the union shop but on the basis of the workers being recruited as a voluntary effort. The compulsory dues check-off came in with the CIO, when tens of thousands of workers were coming into the trade union movement overnight and there was no organization to handle it. They decided that as a temporary measure the boss could collect the dues and pay them to the union office, which gave them the time and opportunity to set up an apparatus to service the membership. The Communist Party at this time was in principle against the compulsory dues check-off. And the reason was simple: compulsory dues check-off put a firm financial base under the labour bureaucracy. Under the old system, when the shop stewards collected the dues, if a worker had a beef he voiced it to the union representation. That pressure was removed once the boss collected the dues and paid them to the union office. The shop steward movement began to disappear and the union wasn't particularly interested in looking after grievances. This is my reason for being opposed to the compulsory check-off, and I guess it was also part of the reason I thought the whole Kuzych thing was overblown.

I argued about this with Kashtan one time when he came out here. He was then Labour Secretary in the Party. Leslie Morris was still alive and he was the national Party leader. I challenged Kashtan on this business of the compulsory check-off and asked him when the Party changed its position from being against to being in favour of the check-off. He told me the Party never changed its position. I told him there was a hell of an argument going on about it in the Boilermakers' Union and that I was involved in it, arguing against the check-off. He said that he didn't want to get involved and that there were all these big trade union operators out here in favour of it. What a situation!

I was still in the Party, of course, but after my return to Vancouver I didn't exactly jump right back in. It wasn't that hilarious a show. I didn't hold any positions of any account as far as the Party was concerned. Murphy was mad as hell at me because, from his perspective, I had deprived him of a monopoly over the full-time Mine-Mill position in Yellowknife. Also, with my wife and I coming out of the Northwest Territories, the Party was left without a goddamn member up there, which was pretty disastrous from their point of view. As far as I know, even up to the present day, there's never been a Party member in the Northwest Territories since then. But I had to get out and once I got out I tried to do what was best for the union, no matter what happened to the Party. And the Party had an alternative. They could get somebody to go up there and work. It was easy enough to get a job. Do their work as a rank-and-file worker, get themselves elected to the union, and go on from there. But they didn't take up that alternative.

To make matters worse, once I got involved in the Party club in Vancouver something came up between Murphy and me again. I was in the same club with him. He was never there. He always had his excuses. Had union business. About

once every three or four months he'd show up for a meeting. It came up that he hadn't paid his dues. Six months in arrears. Everybody is grumbling about this; they don't like the favouritism. I'm sitting back and listening for awhile. Finally I said, "Why do you stand for it?" They said, "What can we do about it?" I said, "I'll make a motion." I make a motion that the secretary notify the provincial executive that Murphy is behind in his dues and if he does not show up at the next meeting and pay he is out of the Party. Got a seconder and it passed. Murphy is at the next meeting with his dues. Nobody would touch the sonofabitch. He was mad as hell.

Years later, when I was out of the Party, some people were doing interviews in Toronto and after they interviewed me it was mentioned that they were going to see Murphy next. I said, "Ask him does he know Jack Scott." Apparently his reply was, "Oh, that goddamn Trotskyite."

Things for the Party in the BC unions had been deteriorating since late 1948 and the communist-led split in the International Woodworkers' of America union. When I said the reds did a pretty effective job of destroying themselves out here that's what I was referring to. The IWA was the beginning of the downfall of the CP. Totally dominated the trade union movement out here for a number of years.

The IWA is really key to understanding the Party's decline in the unions because the IWA was the solid base of the trade union movement in British Columbia for a number of years. The Party controlled the IWA, no question, with the exception of the New Westminster Local, which was run by what was called a "white block," essentially Catholic Action together with a number of anti-communists. The IWA at large was run by the Party, totally dominated by the Party. Mine-Mill, the Boilermakers, the Carpenters — the Party was strong in all of these unions and this gave them a solid block of votes so they ran the BC Federation of Labor and were able to send sizeable blocks of delegates to the Congress Convention.

What happened to the IWA? Originally, when it first started up the IWA was headed up by Harold Pritchett, who was in the Party. After this breakup of the Workers Unity League the Party line, of course, is for all unions to affiliate to the AFL internationals. But when the BC Woodworkers couldn't get a deal in the AFL, they simply said, "To hell with you. We'll join the CIO." Which they proceeded to do. They became the base for organization within the whole North American lumber industry.

In Ontario, it took an entirely different tack. When Bruce Magnuson was in Northern Ontario, the Woodworkers' Union in Northern Ontario, which was essentially cutting for pulp, went into the AFL Carpenters' Union, where they were second-class citizens. They had limited representation and a limited amount of autonomy. But out in BC they ran their show. And actually BC was more than half the membership of the IWA, still about half the membership in spite of the way things have gone with plants closing and jobs lost.

This was the dominant sector and it was natural that a guy like Pritchett who had laid the groundwork in organizing the union became the international president. The international IWA office was set up in Portland. I don't know why. They made that decision. When the Cold War got heated up and Taft-Hartley was passed

in the United States Pritchett couldn't cross the border anymore. He couldn't function as president. So, Pritchett had to get out. No other Canadian could do the job either because they all would have been dubbed as Communists that threatened the States and would have been stopped at the border. Now the thing to do and the thing they could have done was to move the international office to British Columbia and let the Americans come up from there. My prediction is if that ever happens the American Labor Board will rule that American workers can not belong to a foreign-dominated union. Anyhow, Pritchett was out and this left an opening — because no Canadian could get it — for a right-winger to move in to the union presidency. In other words, the American State Department has decided who's going to be international president of the IWA.

This became the base for the beginning of a strong right-wing bloc in the United States which had some connections here, particularly with the New Westminster local. The whole fight began to develop. The people here, the main progressive force in the union, were pretty well stranded because you couldn't go across the border. There was one convention which was being held and outside of the New Westminster delegates, almost nobody could get across the border. One guy who was a Party member and on the international executive went down earlier than others to meet with the international in Portland and he got across. I suppose partly because they didn't want to warn people that they were going to be stopped. First big stopping that they had. He got there alright and did his work and the rest didn't get across. After that he was expelled from the Party, accused of being a CIA agent.

Anyhow, the whole expectation was that there was going to be a battle. Bill Foster was the big figure in calling the shots in the trade union movement in North America and there was a very close liaison between the Party in BC and the Party in Washington State. The Party in Washington State was actually pretty strong. They succeeded in electing some Party members who masqueraded as members of the Democratic party, which didn't do them any damn good in the long run. They might have been able to be elected openly which possibly would have given them some kind of base. They went secretly about it and eventually were destroyed. They had a fairly strong base for this kind of operation in Washington State. Karly Larsen was one of the leading figures in the Party then. He relayed the word from Bill Foster that the international was going to take over the BC district and put it in a trusteeship, which may or may not have been true. I don't know. It seemed to me that the logical thing to do then was wait for them to put in their bloody trusteeship and simply take the union away from them, which could have been done. Instead of that they decided to set up an independent union in British Columbia.

I have to make it clear that I was not involved in it. I was in Trail and later in Yellowknife when all of this business was taking place. I'm not a part of it. I only came in on the hind end of this thing. But I had known something about it, of course, had got reports. I learned more about it when I came back to Vancouver. There were a lot of hot discussions. There was a convention of the IWA of the district here. The decision had come forward. It was the BC Party that was pushing. "We can't wait around for these guys to take the IWA away from us. We've got to keep it. The Party has to keep it." Not, mind you, that the workers in the lumber

industry have to keep it. *We* have to keep it. It's our union. Can't let them take it away from us at all. There was a hot discussion and very sharp differences between the Party cadre and the union cadre. Pritchett was against the move. He never talked about his opposition because this would mean getting into a dispute with the Party. But he felt then that the Party decision was wrong, and it proved wrong in the end. There was a whole number of others that were against it. Bobby Jackson was opposed. Pritchett told him, write a paper and bring it in. So, he went and worked all bloody night I guess. Like myself, he was just a worker. He had a hard time writing, putting his thoughts down on paper. Worked all bloody night and went down next morning with his paper. Reasoned opposition to the split. Pritchett then tells him, "Well, doesn't mean anything. The decision is made." The convention of the workers hasn't even happened. The decision has still got to be made, formally. But the decision was actually already made by the BC Party.

And it was not done through orders from or consultations with Toronto. Apparently Joe Salsberg, who was then trade union director, was furious when he heard of the split. Buck, too, was angry, but calmer. It seems that the whole thing was engineered in the US by Larsen in Washington state.

Now there is talk about the fact that at the last moment Buck phoned Nigel Morgan, who was leader of the Party and also, incidentally, on the executive of the IWA. Apparently — I've heard this several times — Buck told Morgan not to make the split, but Morgan lied to Buck, said the decision was made and it was too late to change it.

Incidentally, Morgan had been a CCFer and was recruited secretly into the Party and it decided to promote him. He used to sell venetian blinds in Victoria. Before that he was secretary to a retired British army general who had been head of MI5 in England. This was his background. They have to sort of give him a status at least as a naturalized proletarian, so they send him up to the Queen Charlottes to work for three months and put him in the IWA. Just made him a worker. He came back and was on the executive of the IWA. This was a Party cadre as opposed to a Party union cadre and he was central to the split.

Well, when the recommendaton came in, of course, from the Canadian IWA executive to split, to get out of the international and go independent, there was an argument in the union. They proceeded on the basis that all we have to do is go back and tell the workers that we're getting out of the international and setting up a BC district and the workers will fall in like a bunch of bloody sheep. That's their whole approach. The guys who fought the fiercest were the guys from around Cranbrook. They said, "It can't be done. The workers won't follow. You'll lose them." They didn't listen to them. The decision was made and essentially it's a decision that was made by the executive of the Party in BC. At the union convention in 1948 the decision to split was ratified. The delegates are going back to the camps and telling the workers we're out of the IWA and we're now an independent union of our own in BC. The guys from Cranbrook who had fought to the bitter end against it and were thoroughly convinced it would not be accepted are Party members for the most part. The decision had been made. They got to carry it out. They went back and they work like hell. It was the only group in the whole of BC

that was successful. And they existed for several years before they finally made a legitimate agreement to go back into the IWA. While everybody else was polished off they existed and survived. Guys who were convinced it wouldn't work. They really worked their asses off to convince the workers that this was the thing to do. They got them all moved.

It was a fiasco. The separate union, called the Woodworkers' Industrial Union of Canada, lasted only three years. A lot of things happened. There was guys that lost everything as a result of this. Guys that even were opposed to the move, lost their homes, lost everything they had, couldn't get a job. Hjalmar Bergren, who was married to Myrtle Bergren who wrote *Tough Timber*, lost everything he had. He'd been a business agent in the union, a member of the executive. When it was destroyed he lost out. He was sued. Lost his home. Lost everything he had. Went and lived on Vancouver Island in a shack. Lived out his life there. Pritchett did alright. Everything he owned was in his wife's name. Couldn't get anything out of him. What happened was he took the funds out of the bank account so it couldn't be taken. He had moved it around.

Harvey Murphy had his neck in a sling for awhile. He had \$100,000 in cash in a brown paper bag. He was living on Cotton Drive at the time and there was a young guy in the Party club, fairly new. Murphy gave him the bag with \$100,000 and asked him to take care of it. He didn't dare keep it himself. He could have taken off. He could have taken the goddamn money and gone anywhere. He had \$100,000. There's no proof. Honest guy. Idealistic as hell and he's got this goddamn money and he can't sleep all night. He's got the money under his pillow and he's scared somebody's gonna steal it and nobody's gonna believe him. About a week or so. No sleep. Going to work. Carrying the bag everywhere he went. Finally he came around to Murphy's house one night and Murphy was there and he threw the money at Murphy and said, "Here's your goddamn money. Look after it yourself. I've had it." He left it. Murphy got himself off the hook, eventually, by turning the money back into the IWA when it was re-established.

The courts got judgements against some of the guys. Bergren was one. Bobby Jackson, who'd been on the On-to-Ottawa Trek was another. They claimed these people took union funds. Thousands of dollars against Jackson. But they didn't have anything to collect except his pay so they got a judgement against that and there had to be so much taken off his pay cheque each week to be turned into the union against his judgement. Then what happened was that the workers in the plant simply took up a collection to give him back the money that was taken off his pay cheque. After a few months of this, Jackson went down to the union office and he said, "This is all nonsense." He said, "I'm not paying you this money. The members of the union are paying you the money. They're collecting it. Every week. It's all a lot of nonsense." They finally forgave Jackson the rest of the amount and wiped it out. But the union is gone as far as the Party is concerned. Party members thrown out for the most part.

I was not personally involved in any of this, as I say, but you could see all the ways in which the Party was squandering its trade union work in the Boilermakers' Union. That I saw firsthand, the issue between the Party cadre and the trade union

cadre. It was at that time when the fight between Bill White, who was president and Bill Stewart, who was the Party voice, was really becoming hot within the Boilermakers' Union. Frankly, I'm on White's side. It had reached the point that Bill White held Stewart in complete contempt, and with good reasons as far as I could see.

This hostility was developing and again I can't remember all of the details, but there was an issue that came up essentially between White and Stewart which was leading to some pretty sharp differences within the union. We had a Party meeting and we made a decision. Don't ask me exactly what it was. I can't remember. We did make a decision to do a certain thing. Frank Flood, at the time secretary of the Shipyards General Workers' Federation, and also a member of Local One, was involved. Stewart and Flood essentially against White. They were bringing Sammy Jenkins, who was in the Party and was the Boilermakers' business agent along, but he was not particularly outstanding as far as understanding what the politics of the case was. We had a thorough discussion in the Party club. Maurice Rush was the Labour Secretary of the BC Party and of course he was there. We made a decision that we were going to take a certain position at the union meeting, which was on the Monday night. We had our meeting on Sunday morning, a day or two before the meeting. I was working in the shipyards. I'm all set to go. The decision is there.

I go down to the hall to the meeting a little bit early. I go in. Fred Collins grabbed me and pushed me in a corner. He said, "There's been a change in the decision. We're going to go opposite to what the Party decision was." I said, "Why?" He explained there was an article in the *Sun* — which incidentally I'd read that afternoon — telling about divisions between White and Stewart and predicting a split in the Boilermakers' Union. The Party decided to support something that White was proposing at the time and back away from our own position in order not to look the instigator in the split. I said, "Well, when did we reach a decision that the Vancouver *Sun* was going to make decisions on Party policy?" He said, "I don't know." But this is what came down from the Boiler House, which was the Party office. I said, "That's not good enough for me." He said, "What are you going to do?" I said, "I'm going to go with the decision we made in the Party. Nobody has consulted me." I was part of making that decision and I'm gonna go with it. I'm not gonna take bullshit. "Well," he said, "if your gonna go with it, I'll go too."

The meeting started and the issue finally came up. One of the most distasteful things I ever saw. Here's Stewart and Flood practically on their goddamn bellies crawling to White, falling all over themselves to please White and say there's no schism, we're not going to take any action on this and so on. There was a motion. They went on at great length, the motion should be out. I got up and I gave them shit. Right openly. A big union meeting too. No way I'm gonna back away. I voted for the original motion. I talked at length about it, gave my reasons why I thought it was correct. For one reason or another I was in favour of the motion. I can't recall the details now. Whatever the policy was I was for it and I was prepared to fight for it. This was a case where I was against Bill White and I wasn't going to back away from it. I could have been wrong, but I was personally committed to a line of policy and it incensed me when the Party simply sent down word that you've

got to change your mind because we say so. What essentially happened was that Stewart got scared, he rushed to the Party office during that day, got Morgan and Rush, and between the three of them they decided to reverse a policy that had been arrived at by the workers in the shops. I really give them a blasting then. I sat down.

Collins was sitting right beside me. He said, I guess I'd better get up and speak. I said, "For Christ's sake, don't. Stay quiet." He was quite a rabble-rouser. He just sat there. Of course we got beaten. The motion that Stewart brings in carries. They had won. Then they made another blunder. Stewart and Flood got up and proposed that the motion be made unanimous. There were a few people that went with Collins and myself and we voted against it.

We had a meeting the following Sunday afternoon, early in the afternoon. It lasted almost the rest of the day. Rush is there. They're going to give Collins and me shit. No way were they gonna give me shit when I'm right. Rush is laying the law down. A decision has been made in the Party office and that decision should be carried through. "What about the decision that we made in the Party group?" "Well, that was reversed in the Party office." "We didn't reverse it." There was no reversal. "We couldn't get in touch," was the reply. "Problems came up and it had to be changed and we couldn't get in touch with people." That's bullshit. Bill Stewart could walk into the shipyard or any of the shops any time he wanted. He could have told Party people that an emergency has come up. "Come straight from work to a Party meeting. We're got decisions to make." I for one would have been there. I would have come from the shipyard. It could have been done. Simply ignored the membership. I never accepted the story that the *Sun* wrote an article and so we had to change our position. Either what we did at the previous Party meeting was right or it was wrong. One or the other. If it was right we should have gone with it, if it was wrong then it should have been changed, but there was a way in which it could be changed. Conditions could have changed from the time we made the original decision.

It must have taken me well over an hour to get Rush finally to say, well, we made a mistake in the original decision. It was apparently the wrong decision. But who decides? Who is responsible? What about the workers? If the mistake was made it wasn't the Party that made it. It was somebody else. Who knows who. Like I say, the union cadre were against the policy, the Party cadre within the union were against the policy, but it was forced on them by the Party. This is the kind of thing that you're up against.

In the Boilermakers the workers versus Party thing got reflected in the White against Stewart stuff. For one thing, Bill White was a militant. He was a real militant character. He'd fight at the drop of a hat. As far as he was concerned the worker was always right. That's my position. Even if he's wrong, if it comes to a fight with the boss I'm gonna say the worker is right and take my beating with him. This was the kind of character White was and this was what I appreciated in White. He would stand up and fight, no matter what the cost was to him personally. He could be wrong, but he would fight like hell when he thought he was right. He'd always defend the worker. Stewart was a conspirator and a manoeuvrer and was forever diddling around, getting things done in the back rooms. Stewart was the kind of

guy who would reach a tentative agreement in negotiations and the first place he'd come would be to the Party club and he'd report what had been achieved. At the end of his report his comment was, "Now how are we gonna sell this to the workers?" It used to really incense me. That's a very fundamental thing. "How are we gonna sell this to the workers?" In other words, the workers may be opposed to it, so don't give them your hand, don't say, "Here's the situation, what do you want?" You have to give your opinion, but you don't go in there with the idea of planting the Party workers around the meeting and assigning each of them to speak, and get up and hammer like hell, to push the thing through. Especially if there's gonna be some opposition.

Two entirely different kinds of people in addition to which Stewart was a hard drinker. And he was forever getting himself in trouble, borrowing money, owing money. He got himself in trouble several times over the question of borrowing union funds to keep up his boozing. White knew all about this and the question arose, I suppose probably in White's mind, where is he getting the money to indulge himself in this way, to keep his home going? He had a wife and had to pay for his excesses and drinking and so on and living expenses. Where's the money coming from to liquidate his debts when they mount up? I suppose this is where White arrives at the conclusion that Stewart is a police agent being paid off by the police. And then Stewart also accused White of being the same. White's background didn't help. He spent five years in the RCMP, way the hell up north around Cambridge Bay. He told me one time about having built a cairn of stones up there. It's an indication of Canadian ownership way in the back of beyond in the Cambridge Bay area. He had a beat, a police beat that he covered by dogsled, over two thousand miles. The only people he had to carry on a conversation with were the isolated communities of Inuit, and if you couldn't speak their language and most of them couldn't speak English, you had to talk to yourself. You became what was called bushed. We used to refer to guys in the north as being bushed who went out in the bush for months at a time with nobody to talk to, so they'd talk to themselves. They'd talk to their dogs. They got in the habit of talking out loud to themselves.

But White was the kind of guy who wouldn't bow the knee to anybody. Stewart would try to insinuate himself with you and really try to be nice when he really didn't want to be and you bloody well knew it. Sickening kind of attitude. Hostility between White and Stewart built up to where it became unbearable and finally White came in quite unexpectedly one night to a union meeting and declared that he had resigned from his office and he was leaving. He coupled me in with Bill Stewart and said, "Stewart and Jack Scott can run the union." I don't know why he picked me because outside that one issue that I talked about where I figured the right decision had been made and I talked, I never had any fights with Bill White. Bill White wasn't as much a student of me as I was of him or he would have realized that I didn't want any part of his job or anybody else's. I was quite content to go to work in the shop and to hell with this business of a paid position. I was no threat to him. He knew I was in the Party. He simply assumed I was high up in the Party. If he only knew. He knew that I had some influence in the Party, but it was

only because I'd fought on issues and won support among the Party members, not the leadership.

I'm not faulting White. You could very easily assume things from the outside. Bill had been in the Party for not more than a few months. It was only a very short time. It wasn't his cup of tea. He got out. But he was there long enough to know what went on. He probably assumed that I'm a figure within the Party and apparently with some influence, and I must be the guy that was there to take over from him. I wasn't. I never had any thought of that.

I only served in office once there. I didn't really get paid for it. That was in the Shipyard General Workers' Federation. They ran out of money. As soon as they ran out of money, Frank Flood, he was a Party member, he simply took off. There was no money to pay him anymore. He was the full-time secretary of the Federation for a number of years. The job was to go around the locals and service them. The locals largely serviced themselves. I don't know what the hell he was doing full-time in the goddamn Federation. There wasn't near enough to keep you busy there full-time. They were asking sundry people who they figured could do it and I was one. I agreed I would take it one year without pay, which I ended up doing for two years. When I had to take a day off from work to go to Victoria, they paid for it, they'd pay me my wages and they'd pay me my travelling expenses and give me a certain amount to take care of my meals in Victoria. That was all I got. At the convention where I got re-elected unanimously — you had to be elected in spite of the fact that nobody else was going to contest it — they gave me an honorarium of \$50. At the end of the second year they doubled the stipend, and that was my last year.

Anyway, there was no way I could operate working half-time in the shipyard and half time for the Federation. Stewart, who ended up taking the job, could work it by working half time for Local One and half time for the Federation. But the work began falling to pieces. Stewart couldn't look after a goddamn thing. The guys from Victoria started coming around to me asking, "What's wrong. We're not getting minutes of meetings, we're not getting this, we're not getting that." I said, "Well, I'll look into it and see what's doing." I told the secretary exactly what to do. He had the minutes that were roughly drawn up at the meeting and I said, "Take them to Bill Stewart and get Bill Stewart to get a Local One secretary to type them up and send them out." But even then it wasn't done. The minutes would stay lying in a drawer in his desk. This was the kind of thing that went on. That's the only position that I filled in the Boilermakers' organization and I wouldn't call it a position exactly because I wasn't really getting paid.

I was in the Boilermakers' Union for five or six years. Eventually I had to leave the work. White gave me a bit of a shove out the door, in a subtle way. I had been in the shipyard and I had been laid off. I'd only been off a couple of days and there were lots of people ahead of me that should have been posted out to work. I guess Bill White had a beef against me. He wanted to get back at me. I got called. It's White on the phone. He says, "Jack, I've got a job for you." What's going on? Like I say, I'm only off for a couple of days. I don't expect to go back. I'm quite happy to lay off for a little while. I'm gonna get Unemployment Insurance for awhile. I

go, "Oh yeah. Where?" "Allied Engineering," he says. This is one of those god-damn small shops I mentioned earlier. A hell of a place. Nobody wanted to work there. Drive you crazy. Well, you know, I'm screwed one way or another. If I say I don't want to go, then if I make a complaint later that I'm not being posted out, claiming a deliberate effort to keep me off, then White is in a position to say, "I offered brother Scott a job and he wouldn't take it."

I'm screwed. I go out there. Terrible place. Assembly line business. If there's a job to do, I like to do it, get it the hell out of the way. Then I'm quite prepared to sit down and wait for something to happen. I can't dog it on the job. I could do every job in the shop after being there a couple of weeks. I knew it. Every job except die-making I could do and I could even help the die-maker. The result was, I became a trouble-shooter right away. If there was a gap to fill, I'm in it. Most of them there couldn't do most of the jobs. I remember Bill Douglas going in there to work. The first place you work is on the assembly line and it's a bastard. You got to keep up to the assembly line. Bill had two speeds of work: dead slow and stop. Nobody was going to move him out of it. The assembly line is going just too fast for him. Bill had a solution for that. He just walked up to the switch and stopped the assembly line. Didn't last there too long. I forgot whether he got laid off or quit. It didn't annoy him anyway if he did get laid off. It was just a sonofabitch place to work. I worked there for awhile and while the superintendent was very good to me I just couldn't take it forever. So I began to look for a chance to get out.

When I was there there was a guy living in the Pender Auditorium, which was owned by the Boilermakers' Union. He had taken a contract to look after the building. He got so much a year for looking after the place. He came to me and he needed somebody to work with him on a contract and he asked me, would I work with him on this contract. It looked promising enough. It was a chance to get out of the god-damn Allied Engineering anyhow so I said, "OK." So I came to work with him.



Covers of *Progressive Worker*.



With Signal Platoon at Horsham, Scotland. Only two of this group survived.



Bill Epton, leader figure in Harlem in the 1960s, addresses a PW-sponsored meeting in British Columbia.



At Norman Bethune Statue.



Meeting Kang Sheng (1967) then head of Chinese Intelligence. Later denounced and expelled from Chinese Communist Party.



At Peking University statue of Mao. Recently demolished.



In Edmonton in the 1960s.



Wartime Leave in Belfast.



At Norman Bethune's Tomb with Young Communists.



With visiting Chinese peasant artists and CCFA members (Joyce Resin to his left; Graham Johnson in back).



Mobbed by Young Communist autograph-seekers.

13. THE PENDER, BINKY MARKS, AND MAKING WAVES

This would have been the latter half of the 1950s that I went to work at the Pender Auditorium. I was working with Eli Lachance. We sort of made a living alright, but we worked ridiculous hours. You never got any overtime. You had taken a contract, and if you had to work seven days a week to get the work done you did it. Didn't matter that you were working for the union, which owned the place.

Lachance was a nice guy or I wouldn't have bothered with it. He had been in the Boilermakers' Union for years, a welder. Very handy guy. Could do anything really. He had been a Party member, but just slid out for all kinds of reasons. Too busy at night to go to Party meetings and so on.

I come in there to work for him but finding out after a few weeks what this was like I finally went to him. I said, "Eli, this is the shits. It's just no good." The contract was coming up for renewal. I said, "Look, no contract. If I'm going to stay here I don't want a contract. If you want a contract I'm not going to stand in your way. You make a contract. But I'm out. I'll go back into the shop." He said, "OK I'll do what you want to do." We told them, no contract. Question of wages. We're going to negotiate wages.

And what a bloody time we had. Several months negotiating with Bill Stewart and Sammy Jenkins. Stewart was the worst of the two. There were janitors in the shops getting something like 40 per cent more than we were asking for. Stewart had the bloody nerve to tell us that the wages we were asking for were outrageous for janitors. Finally I got really pissed off. Jenkins was supposed to be the manager of the building so this was one of his jobs. So I said, "Eli, let's you and I go down to Jenkins's office." It was sometime in the middle of the week. I said, "Let me talk." So we went into Jenkins's office. "Sammy, we want to talk to you." "Fine." "Sammy, you've got our demands. By Monday morning it will be an agreement or we're out on strike. Monday night you got a union meeting. There will be a picket line. There will be no union meeting because there will be a picket line in front of this goddamn building. You try to bring anybody in here to work, it would be disastrous. Not only because there will be a fight between you and us, but because we'll take this goddamn building down and we'll pile the goddamn bricks in a neat pile out in the middle of the streets." He just laughed. He said, "We'll talk it over." The next day we had an agreement. We had three guys working for awhile, but Eli finally left and I was sort of in charge of the place.

At this time Hilda and I were in an apartment house on Broadway and then, later, in a basement apartment on the edge of Shaughnessy. She was active in the Party until she got sick. She was in the women's organization, the Canadian Women's Association, I think it was called. She was the secretary and Agnes Jackson, the wife of Bobby Jackson, was the president of the BC chapter. They worked together for several years. Did all of the work. It was a fairly effective organization. She was a delegate to the National Convention. This would have been back in the mid-1950s.

Hilda had a stroke. I mentioned earlier when I was talking about the family she came from that she had been born and grew up in the prairies in the thirties amidst all of the hunger. They were living on boiled wheat part of the time, a lot of the time. She developed a rheumatic heart, which was never taken care of. Eventually she had an operation on her heart to open an artery. She had a number of major operations. What happened was that the artery in the heart builds up scar tissue as a protection for a rheumatic heart and it gets smaller and smaller and the blood passes through very slowly and it begins to clot so a blood clot had formed and passed through her brain. It left damage to the brain. Her left side was paralyzed. It took a couple years pretty well to regain all of her mobility. A pretty tough couple of years. It was part of how my life developed really, through her being sick. It affected my own political affiliations and political development. But she was left mentally disturbed the rest of her life. She had ups and downs. She never was well. She finally died of a massive heart attack when we were in Peking in 1974. She was cremated and her ashes are in the cemetery of the revolutionary martyrs in Peking. That's where the ashes of Anna Louise Strong are as well.

My union association stayed with the Boilermakers for awhile. I still remained active in the union for a short time while I was working in the building. But eventually after Eli and I threw the contract out the window and came to terms on wages and conditions in the building, we joined the Building Service Employees' Union. It was an international union that was a thoroughly reactionary and corrupt outfit. It was the union in the area that we worked, so we joined it. I can't recall either of us taking an active part. We weren't all that much interested in it. We joined the union because it was the thing to do. At least it took out of our hands having to fight with Stewart and Jenkins. The union had to negotiate a contract for us. We could probably have done better for ourselves. They went for the general union contract and we might have been able to do a little better than that, but nevertheless we put up with it and we stayed with that.

I continued to work in the building right up until I retired in the late 1960s, and long after I left the Party. There were mutterings that they would have liked to have gotten rid of me, but they couldn't except by firing me and if they fired me I would have picketed. Finally the Union just sold the building. I'm convinced this was Stewart's manoeuvring and that a part of the reason for the sale was to be rid of me for good. They could have got a lot more for the building and if they had waited even another year the price would have jumped 50 per cent or so. But Stewart convinced everybody that this was a great thing to do and so they unloaded the place. They got a rock-bottom price and came away with a surplus of about eighty thousand dollars.

The real work at the Pender involved dealing with the people who rented the place. This was the 1960s and it was not just unions that rented it out. Other groups were there too. The hippies were in full flight and they used to come to the Pender for music shows and the like. The first time they used strobe lights in Canada was at the Pender. A guy brought them up from San Francisco. A young guy. Again I don't remember his name. His stepfather was a big surgeon here at one time. Worth a lot of money. The young guy got in with the hippies and he was quite inventive

and he got these strobe lights up from San Francisco. He finally took a dose of LSD — it was considered to be about fifty times the normal dose. He was a month out in the mental institution. He came out of there. He's married and has a daughter about two years old. A week or two after he comes out of the mental institute he simply put a revolver in his mouth and shot himself up through the roof of his mouth and through his head. Committed suicide. They used to come in. It used to drive me nuts. All these lights going all over the place. Old black and white movies that were running backwards and forwards and I think sideways sometimes as well on the walls of the auditorium. The noise. The music. I used to go two blocks down the street to the restaurant to get a cup of coffee and I could still hear the goddamn music. Youngsters running around. I remember one night a young girl shoved her face right almost into mine. "Are you happy?" Stoned out of her mind. "Are you happy?" "No, I'm not a goddamn bit happy." "Well, you should be happy. Everybody should be happy." She's anything but happy. Doesn't know what's happening.

Milton Acorn was living in Vancouver at the time. He used to come down to the Pender with a typewriter. There was a balcony that ran the length of the hall. Just a small thing. Two rows of seats. He used to get up there in the balcony with his typewriter typing poems. From the impressions he got. Milton is a good poet. He did some good work, but he could do some pretty awful stuff too. Some of it was done up there.

I was in the middle. They'd go — you couldn't get them out of the goddamn place — till two or three o'clock in the morning. And I'm left there. All these other types getting paid to manage a hall and so on. They're off in bed having a sleep, you know. I'm trying to handle this goddamn riot. There was a Jamaican group that used to come down there. They had an annual affair. They used to get horribly drunk. They were terrible to handle. One of them was going to hit me over the head with a bottle one night. At about four in the morning I'm trying to get them out of there. I could have called the police and got them cleared out. I never did call the police. I tried to ease people out myself.

It was a horrible bloody job altogether one way or another. I became convinced that ordinary people were terribly dirty. I stopped smoking when I was there. I was a very heavy smoker. I stopped chewing gum. There'd be butts all over the place, stamped out on the floor. The dance floor — they simply spit their gum out on the bloody floor. Big gobs of gum that the dancers didn't like and they complained to me about gum on the bloody floor. Dirty, messy, bloody operation. I was glad to see the end of it.

I had to work particularly at this time because the wife was sick. I had to keep working. It was costing me quite a bit of money. I was working all the time. With Hilda sick, there was nothing I could do. I had a young girl — stepdaughter — a sick wife in the hospital at the beginning, but after that it's an acute illness and the hospital didn't provide for it, medical care didn't. At one point, I had to put her in a private hospital so the first thing they asked me before they put her to bed was \$500. So, I'm having problems. Have to work, have to come home and look after my wife. Of course, my stepdaughter is a young girl. She's getting pretty sick of

the whole goddamn business. In fact, she finally gave up and took off from home for which I didn't blame her. It was just impossible. There's nothing I could do about it. I'm tied down. I'm still nominally a member of the Party. I was paying my dues, subscribing to the *Tribune*, doing the thing, just the bare necessities that maintained me as a member of the Party. That went on for just about a couple of years.

Finally, it wound up, when the union began cutting costs, it wound up that I was working by myself. I had to do everything. So, I worked on the night shift. I went to work by about five o'clock figuring on getting through by about one in the morning. It would very often be two, three, four o'clock in the morning before I'd get through. There were meetings on a Sunday. I'd have to be the one to go in. Like, there'd be a dance there on Saturday night and there was a meeting the next afternoon, the Sunday afternoon. The dance would be over by midnight. I'd get home about one o'clock in the morning. I'd have to be back in on Sunday morning about seven o'clock to clean the place up. Set up all the chairs and so on for a meeting. There was nobody else to do it. Occasionally they'd hire somebody to come and help me for a day or something like that. They'd have to pay him. For quite awhile I worked by myself in the building. Picking up chairs and setting them up for meetings and so on, which was actually a two-man job. I should have refused to do it.

There'd be lights to change. A twenty-foot ladder to get up to the lights when you had to change the lamps and so on. One day I'm up and it was a shaky bloody ladder. I hated to get up the goddamn thing. I'm not scared of heights. I worked in construction, so I'm not scared. But it was a shaky bloody ladder and I'm there alone. If I fall and get knocked out nobody's gonna know about it. I'm up there one day and I'm playing around with the light and the goddamn fixture came loose and fell with a fantastic crash on the floor. I don't know what the hell happened to it. It came loose. So I came down the ladder. Nobody came. The Party offices are down below. Nobody came. Finally I walked downstairs. Jack Lawson was working in there at the time I went in. I said, "Jack, did you hear a crash awhile ago." He said, "Yeah. I heard a bit of noise up there. I wondered what was going on." "Well," I said, "I was up a twenty-foot ladder and I might have fallen off. I might have been falling off and cracked my goddamn skull. I might have died and you didn't move your ass to come up there and see what was going on." Didn't think of it! Those kinds of places you should have two people working.

I was thoroughly fed up with the whole goddamn operation by the time I got out of there, but I just hung onto it because I had to work. I wouldn't have been able to get another job out of a union again. The people sitting on top would not have posted me out. Working at the Pender ended, by and large, my experience as an active trade unionist. I never was that active, like I said, with the Building Service Employees. I never could get myself excited about it. It was just a deadly set up. You couldn't accomplish anything. There was nothing on the job. Only the two of us, sometimes only me. Nothing on the job to get excited about. I was kind of out of direct union activity by and large during that time.

I'm still nominally a member of the Party. I was paying my dues, subscribing

to the *Tribune*, doing the thing, just the bare necessities that maintained me in standing. That went on for a couple of years. I once asked Stanley Ryerson why he kept at it and he replied, "Out of habit." Maybe it was the same with me.

But differences kept coming up. Nothing big until 1956. It was first of all, of course, promoted by international events, centering on the Khrushchev disclosures at the Congress. I knew about what was developing and there was a fair bit of discussion. There was far more in Toronto at the top leadership level where there was real crisis, where in fact Buck was removed from office by the Political Bureau, a decision which was overturned by the Central Committee after a big campaign which was organized by Stanley Ryerson. He was brought back from Prague specifically for the purpose of saving Buck. The campaign was successful. Out here, it didn't hit that hard. Mind you, there were discussions in the Party and Party general meetings called of the membership. There were a lot of bitter words thrown around.

Too much was coming out to ignore any longer or explain away on the basis of pressures from the outside and the reaction of those pressures. The *New York Times* came out with the complete report made by Khrushchev. It was supposedly leaked through Poland which may have been true or not. It's never been established. There were differences already existing between Warsaw and Moscow. People in Warsaw may have been taking the opportunity to strike a blow at some people with whom they had disagreements in Moscow. It did happen. It was a true report. It was here and we had it. Everybody was reading it. Everybody's subject of conversation.

In the midst of all this, Nigel Morgan arrives back in town and he had been one of the observers at the convention in Moscow along with Buck and Morris and Kashtan and I don't know. There was a whole bunch who were there at the time. The thing was, it became quite obvious that none of the foreign delegates were allowed into the session of the convention where Khrushchev gave the report. This shows how bloody stupid these supposed brilliant leaders of the International were. Here was a policy that it should have been obvious was going to be like a bloody nuclear bomb in the international movement. Instead of including the foreign delegates in the whole report and the discussion, they excluded them and then they briefed them. Shlepov was detailed to brief foreign fraternal delegates who were there. Buck almost missed it. In fact, he did miss it in a way. He was in Warsaw already and he was staying over for a couple of days and Gollan of the British Party came in to Warsaw while Buck was still there and he asked Buck what he thought of the briefing and Khrushchev's secret report. Buck says, "What secret report?" He didn't know a goddamn thing about it. Gollan said, "Well, didn't you get briefed?" "No." "You'd better get back to Moscow and get briefed." Buck piled on a train and went back to Moscow and got briefed on what had happened. Obviously they wanted to keep it as limited as possible, and Khrushchev and his group were using it to defeat the other factions that were in opposition to them.

Anyhow, Morgan landed in here and, of course, Morgan always wants to live with the big guy. He's up there in international politics and so on and the next thing you know he's tackled by the press. "What about Khrushchev's secret report?"

“What secret report?” “The report that Khrushchev made to the convention attacking Stalin’s crimes.” “There was no secret report to the convention. I was there. I know. There was no secret report. It never happened.” The *New York Times* just published it itself. He hadn’t read it yet. “Whatever it is, it’s not true. There was no secret report. I was there. I know.”

There were a lot of discussions and then of course the Hungarian affair broke. This hit the Party fairly strongly. There was a lot of sharp and really bitter discussion about this uprising in Hungary and the Russian tanks going in. I was there. I recall particularly one of the better accounts that came out and certainly one that had a lot of influence was Giuseppe Boffa’s *La grande svolta*; an abridged translation appeared as *Inside the Khrushchev Era*. Boffa represented the Italian Party journal, the *Unita*, in Moscow for seven years. Spoke the language and had a great many friends there. He wrote about the effects that Khrushchev’s report and the Hungarian uprising had on people that he knew in Moscow. Russians, Russian Party members and so on. The whole effect.

I remember that Leslie Morris came out here about that time and the question was raised about Boffa’s report. He said — as a matter of fact, later he wrote in an article in the *Communist Viewpoint* — that Boffa was too close to the action. He shouldn’t have written about it until the Russian comrades had given their assessment. Boffa is too close to the action! What were the Russian comrades? They’re not only too close, they’re involved and they’re responsible. Boffa actually gave a very good objective assessment of the whole thing and particularly stressed its effect on people, Party people, Party members in the Soviet Union.

Certainly the effect around here was quite devastating. There was a very sharp effect on the Jewish membership which was relatively large within the Party at that time. Joe Salsberg is a case in point. I knew Joe for many years. I really liked Joe. A really nice guy. I had been associated with him in the Workers Unity League. Salsberg and Meyer Klig were running the show. During the war a lot of people had come over from the Soviet Union boosting the Soviets’ case in the war, drumming up support, raising money for the Soviet Union. A fairly large number of Jews — musicians, writers, poets, what have you — had come over and Joe had taken them around in Canada, particularly around Ontario and Quebec. Showing them things and so on, associated with them, and got to know a number of them.

After the war ended for the first time in his life Joe got the opportunity to go to the Soviet Union for a visit. Like myself, he never did get to go to the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute, but he at least got to go as a delegate on a visit, he squired around. The first thing, when he got to Moscow, he started asking to see these people that he had become acquainted with in Canada. He didn’t see a single one of them. All kinds of excuses. Not one. So, when he came back to Canada he raised the point that he was disturbed about this. Put a motion forward that the Political Bureau should ask for an explanation of where these people are. Joe just had suspicions. He knew nothing and he wasn’t convinced that anything bad, real bad, had happened, but he wanted to know what did happen and have the Political Bureau ask the questions. He got ruled down. “That’s an internal matter of the Soviet Union. We shouldn’t interfere in Soviet internal affairs.” This was utter nonsense, con-

sidering the whole history of the Party. But they didn't want to get into something that might be a mess, so he was voted down. Of course, when the Khrushchev report became known and the whole Hungarian affair and so on broke, then Joe was distraught. He begins to find out that a lot of these people, in fact, had perished. Had been sent off to Siberia to labour camps, some had been executed. Virtually all of them were dead. Joe is very upset. Felt he hadn't fought his case hard enough. He stayed in the Party. He accepted the decision of the Party and worked along with it and that was the point at which, of course, Joe broke with the Party and left and denounced it quite vigorously.

So there was quite an internal crisis within the Party in 1956-1957. One crisis after another. Important people left. They lost far more over Czechoslovakia some years later, but this was the beginning. There they lost a lot, including leading people on the provincial committee. There were some things that happened in Hungary that sort of gave them a handle on the jug. Gave the leadership something to fight with. There was a lot of anti-semitism in the uprising in Hungary. There were Jews being hung from the street lights simply because they were Jews. Hell of a lot of anti-semitism, which is understandable in the Hungarian situation, not only from the point of view that it was traditional in Hungary, but the two main leaders of the Party who escaped the wrath of the people were Jews. Gero and another leader got off to Moscow. They were protected by Moscow. The chairman and secretary of the Party were both Jewish. The whole thing led to the very unfortunate outburst of anti-semitism. This was emphasized by the leadership within the Party. "Look at what they're doing. They're hanging Jews and rank-and-file communists. It's a whole anti-communist outburst."

That was a feature of the uprising, but I would say — from my examination of it as far as I could when things got calmer and you could look at things — it certainly wasn't the motivating factor of the uprising. So the Party used that to the best effect they could and that way they convinced a number of people, well, this is not a real people's uprising. It's a reaction. That saved them to some extent. It's unfortunate. They were able to survive it.

I was in a number of the meetings and being a bit mouthy anyhow, had a few things to say. It didn't endear me to the leadership, but I wasn't alone. Things were being pretty well opened up. Being involved in work and working afternoon and graveyard quite a bit, however, I wasn't that disciplined because I wasn't at my club meetings all the time. So, they weren't able to lean on me but I wasn't all that effective.

The meetings were always held Thursday night here. If you wanted to know, were suspicious of somebody being a member of the Party here, all you had to do was phone them up at eight o'clock on a Thursday night for any reason at all and if they weren't at home, they were out at the Party meeting. That was the big joke around here. You could always tell who was in the Party. But I didn't get to that many Party meetings. Things would come up from time to time. Arguments. I remember one time there that a rumour came out that Khrushchev had died. One of the guys came in to the Pender. He was a Party member. An Italian guy named Bianco I think. I was around the building and he saw me. He said, "Did you hear

the word?" I said, "I haven't heard anything." He said, "There's a news item out that Khrushchev has died." I said, "Oh good" and "Too bad he didn't do it sooner." Boy oh boy. Like a shot out of hell he's into Stewart's office to report me. What a terrible thing to say about the great secretary. Christ, later they're all running Khrushchev down, which I knew would happen at some time.

Part of my distance from the Party was reflected in my relationship to the bookstore, which was run in such a manner as to indicate some of the problems. I was involved in things a bit because I was on the board of directors of the Party bookstore, which was located in the Pender. My wife had been on the board for years and when she took sick I sort of took over in her place. But I had had dealings with the Party's handling of the bookstore before. When I was working in the shops, before I got set up with Eli in the Pender, I used to be quite friendly with Binky Marks. Binky had been working in the bookstore for years and he was an unbelievable character.

I knew Binky's wife, Connie Spain, before I knew Binky, but we went way back. She used to work in the Party office in Toronto. Binky was an unkempt character. He'd go around all dishevelled, his shirt half in his pants and half out. He was in the army. Binky Marks was a soldier, that was something to imagine. He drove a truck in Italy. I rode a number of times in Binky's car. I would sure have hated to meet him on one of those narrow Italian mountain roads with his truck coming at me. The world's worst driver. The story that I heard about him in Borden when he was stationed there was that they used to give what they called a stick pass, a weekend pass to go into Toronto. This stick pass went to the neatest soldier on parade and one weekend Binky was so desperate to get into town and go and see Connie he turned out to be the neatest soldier on parade and he got the stick pass. That was really hard to believe, knowing Binky.

I used to work with him quite a bit in the Party bookstore in Vancouver, particularly when we went out to picnics and things. We used to put up a big book table and sell, sell literature. I went with him, and of course we'd drive in his car. Connie would sit beside him there chattering away never noticing anything. I was sitting in the back seat with my feet pretty near pressing through the floorboards, trying to jam on the brakes. Binky tooting in his little Volkswagen down the highway, going all out and the thing shaking all over the place. I always wondered if we'd get there. We went out to both Paul Robeson concerts at the border, at the Peace Arch. Did a lot of selling of books and records and so on.

Binky came out here from Toronto and he had done pretty good on the stock market. Very good he was at sizing up stocks. He came out here to put on and distribute Soviet movies, some of which were bloody awful. He came out here to do a job for Artkino Sovfilm. At the time, the co-op bookstore was really in bad shape. They were able to survive because they weren't paying any rent when they were in the Pender Auditorium. They never paid their bill to the Soviet Union either. They got literature from the Soviet Union and never bothered to pay them. They tried that once with the Czechoslovakians and Czechoslovakia simply cut them off until they paid their bill. There was none of this bullshit about international

solidarity that meant getting literature free with the Czechs. They got Binky into the store as manager.

Of course, an awful lot of people knew Binky and many of them came to the store just because it was Binky. He was bringing stuff in that wasn't handled anywhere else. H.R. Macmillan, who had a big library out at UBC, used to come down to the co-op bookstore to buy books he couldn't get anywhere else. All kinds of people like that. It was a dinky little place. You used to go in there and eyeing the books up at the top you wondered when they were going to fall down on somebody's head. The shelves were leaning out from the walls. Quite fantastic. Binky presiding in the midst of all of these books, but he was very skilful.

One of the problems was you couldn't read anything that he wrote. Five minutes after he wrote it he couldn't read it himself. He'd scribble something. My God. Just terrible. I think he was in there about thirteen years in the co-op bookstore, something like that. Finally there were a lot of differences between him and the Party, although there never was really an open break between Binky and the majority of the board of directors. Harry Rankin was a very strong supporter of Binky on the board of directors. While I was on the board of directors I was too. He did a good job. He pulled the store up, and while I wouldn't go so far as to say it was a paying proposition, it wasn't a losing proposition either. He really knew books.

I don't know how Binky got so into books. He came from the movies and he was suddenly into the bookstore. I think it was just that he was a reader, and knew something about books to start. He applied himself to it once he took on the job at the bookstore and very quickly became acquainted with the books and the business. He'd go through all the catalogues and read a lot of book reviews and so on. I used to go out with him to meet booksellers. Booksellers used to come through, representatives of various book publishers, and we'd go over catalogues. I learned a lot from him. Of course I was a reader too myself and I knew quite a bit. Never claimed to know as much about the book business as Binky, but I learned a lot from him myself, working with him. I never worked in the bookstore as a paid person, but there was often people who would help voluntarily in their spare time. I guess so long as Binky was in the store I did more of that than anybody else.

Duthie's Books eventually pulled a real coup. Duthie decided that he was going to have a paperback cellar and he figured the guy to have in charge of the room was Binky Marks. When he knew that the political differences were reaching the point that Binky was going to be out of the co-op bookstore, he must have made Binky the offer. He quit, Binky didn't get fired. But there were some people happy to see him go anyhow, and there was little leadership trying to convince him to stay. I'm sure that before Binky quit he knew that Duthie was prepared to hire him. He went with Duthie and he was in on the paperback cellar right from the very beginning. It hadn't been completely prepared yet for sales. He ran that. He did all of the ordering of all of the paperbacks in Duthie's, which was quite a job.

Binky had a flat on Sixteenth Avenue which is not far off Main Street. It was virtually four storeys high because the basement was almost entirely above ground. In order to get on to just the first floor from the street, you'd have to walk up about eight or nine steps. Binky's right up in the top, in the attic, a little flat up there.

Every once in awhile he used to run a bash, a real party, a smorgasbord there. Liquor was flowing like water. People would bring bottles and some food and so on. The house was divided up into small flats, six or seven apartments people lived in. On a day when he was going to have one of these parties of his, he'd go around knocking on everybody's door warning them that there was gonna be a party in the attic. There was an outside stairway up to Binky's. You looked down. About thirty feet down. This was supposed to be a fire escape. A wooden stairway. There was a little sort of a balcony outside the kitchen door. The balcony wouldn't be anymore than about five or six feet square, with a railing that barely came up to above your knees. I fully expected that somebody who was bombed out of their minds would some day fall over that goddamn railing and just get killed. It was a cement walk down at the bottom. It just didn't happen. Two or three out there talking and reeling around and drinking. I don't know how it happened that nobody ever fell over. They used to be quite some affairs, Binky's parties. People came from all directions to them. I used to go quite regular.

For all his abilities Binky wasn't exactly organized. Oh my God. He'd have money stuffed in every pocket. When I worked in the Pender and the bookstore was in there and there'd be all kinds of garbage there and I used to put it in garbage bags and take it out in the garbage. One day there was a lot of paper there and I'm stuffing it in a garbage bag. I come across a whole roll of bills, a couple of hundred dollars. Binky had had a lot of scraps of paper. Every once in awhile he decided to clear his pockets out, pieces of paper and so on. Everything would come out and go in the garbage. He'd had a roll of bills in his pocket and he just dumped them with all the papers and everything went to the garbage. Fortunately, I was able to rescue it for him. He'd have back pockets of his pants, front pockets, jacket pockets, inside and outside pockets, the pocket of his shirt — all full of junk. He'd have to look for something — maybe a note he had made or something he had marked down that he'd have to enter somewhere — and then he'd have to take everything out because he wouldn't know which pocket it was in. Everything would come out of his pockets. He'd start going through it all. "That's no good." He'd discard it and then he'd begin discarding stuff that should have been discarded long before. It would take him half an hour to find the note that he made to himself. Stuffed in one of his pockets.

In the late 1930s and 1940s Binky had been one of the founders of the League Against War and Fascism which later became the League for Peace and Democracy. He was one of the leading figures in that. He was in the committee that the Party set up as the organizing committee for the League Against War and Fascism. A.A. MacLeod, who had come up from Nova Scotia, and Dorothy Livesay, were also originals in that. They thought the name League Against War and Fascism was too negative after a year or two and they changed it to the League for Peace and Democracy. It carried on activity right up pretty well until the war. Of course, when Stalin made his deal with Hitler I don't think we were for peace and democracy anymore for some reason. It went out the window.

Binky came to me once when he was running the Co-op because the young woman from New Zealand who had been his assistant was leaving to go home.

Binky needed someone to help him out in the store. So he asks me. It would have meant a cut in pay, but I really liked Binky. I said I would do it, but I told him "The Party will not agree to me coming in and working in the bookstore." "Oh," he said, "I'm the manager. All I have to do is give the word." He proposes me to the Party. But no way. No way were they going to let me go to work in the store. Enough problems with Binky. Him and me together in the bookstore, oh man!

After the young woman left, Bruce Yorke showed up in the store. I knew books and I used to go help Binky once in awhile in my spare time. Never got paid for it. Very often I'd go into the store and help Binky out. I figured and Binky figured that I knew about 70 per cent of the stock. If somebody comes in and asks you if you've got a certain book, you say yes or no in 70 per cent of the cases. Outside of a few pamphlets that came out of the Soviet Union, Yorke knew nothing about literature. Absolutely nothing. When I came to work in the Pender later and the bookstore was in the Pender, there was lots of times when people would come in asking for something and Yorke would come and yell for me in the Pender to find out if it was in the store or if it could be got. He didn't know. He was put there by the Party.

I found out really first hand why. Keith Ralston was over one day. He lived in Victoria at the time. He was still working on his master's which took him about twenty years, I think, to write. Part of the time he worked as curator of the Maritime Museum. They refused to give him time off to finish his master's. That's when he quit as curator of the Maritime so he could finish his master's and then went to the position in UBC. Anyhow, Keith is over from Victoria one day and I mentioned this business. I can't understand why Yorke is in there. I said, "I can understand why they wouldn't let me work there, but why did they put Yorke in there who knows nothing." Keith says, "Oh I can tell you why he's there. Morgan came to Victoria to see me and he asked me if I would go and work in the bookstore to watch Binky. I told Morgan I was prepared to go and work in the bookstore and work with Binky, but not to watch him. The whole thing was dropped." That's why Yorke was there. To watch Binky. Binky was a hell of a character to watch, eh?

When I was on the board of directors of the bookstore for a couple of years an issue came up. Binky was gone by this time. Harry Rankin was on the board there at the time. There was also a dental mechanic named Sheldon. And Sid Sarkin was also on the board. Sid was an old-time Party man. In fact he was the Party's representative on the Comintern way back in the 1920s. An old Jewish guy from Montreal in the tailoring business. An old radical for many years. He wrote his memoirs. He didn't feel that he could write all that good in English, so he wrote his memoirs in Yiddish. I don't think anybody's done anything to them. Rosalind Ross had been the key Party person in there for awhile and when I got in there Sid appeared as Chairman. In other words, he was the one that called the shots for the provincial executive within the Board.

Anyway, a controversy developed over Pasternak's book, *Doctor Zhivago*. It was made into a movie. The Soviets didn't like the book. *Novy Mir* had written a very extensive criticism. It was a well-reasoned attack. I didn't necessarily agree with it but it was well done. It was put out in separate form from the magazine. It

was available in thousands of copies. It came up about the book. Just out. They're not going to put it in the store. It's gonna be banned. They're gonna censor it, as far as Stewart was concerned. I said, "Why?" I've read it. Harry Rankin had read it. We found the book empty, incidentally. We found it boring. The killer of the book was when the *New York Times* reviewed it and compared it to *War and Peace*. It was nowhere near it. Most of the board, with the exception of Rankin and me hadn't read it. Wouldn't read it because it's on the index.

There was a fight. There were thirteen on the board. Three of us, Rankin, Sheldon and myself are in favour of it being available in the store. The rest are all against it because of the Soviet position. Bruce Yorke was on the board too at that time. I asked the question, "When somebody comes in and asks for the book, what are you going to do?" "We'll tell them we're out of stock, but we can order it for them." (Which is, incidentally, what they do about my books. They won't handle my books in the store, anything that has my name on it is not in the store. And they'll tell them, well, we can order it for you.) So, I said, "No you won't because I'll stand in the goddamn store and anybody I hear being told that, I'll tell them that the book isn't there because you won't carry it." They said, "You wouldn't dare do that." I said, "I will. If you want to make that kind of decision you're gonna make it straightforward and tell people that you refuse to carry it." I said, "You know you've got an out, if you're worried about the book. When somebody buys it you can hand them a copy of the Soviet review." They kept thousands of copies of the criticism of the book that were free. "Tell them, maybe they'll be interested in Soviet reasons for not publishing the book. Give them a copy of that free to read." "No." No way are they gonna sell it. There's a real bitter fight that night in the board with only three of us against.

Binky wouldn't have tolerated this, but he was gone. Yorke had taken over the store and I forget who was working with him. Somebody else was working with him. Sarkin finally said, "Well, let's take this up at the next meeting. Meanwhile I'll have some discussions about it." In other words, he's gonna go the Boiler House to discuss it. At the next meeting, a month later, Sarkin makes his report. He said, "The policy of the Party generally is against the book. It's anti-Soviet. But, seeing there's such strong feeling in the board, it's the decision of the executive that the store carry the book." Yorke was sitting straight across the table from Harry Rankin. He said, "I'm gonna take this up another place." In the board room of the Boilermakers' Hall. Rankin got up and he reached across the table and he grabbed Yorke by the shirt front and he said, "Don't you fucking threaten me. I'll beat your head in." Yorke, the perennial stoolie. He's gonna report to the Boiler House. So the book was carried in the store which should have been done in the first place.

I never did get to work in the bookstore, outside of the volunteer work I did with Binky. I was looked on as a shit-disturber anyhow. I was a Party member. You could get me to do things, so they were willing to tolerate me up to a point, but not allow me to get off the leash too far. I remember one time I went to a provincial convention and of course it was the old business of bringing in a slate of nominees for positions. I got elected from my club as a delegate which was no problem. I could easily get elected out of my club. It was something else again when it came

to provincial affairs and the provincial executive. I'm raising hell about some of these people that are on the list of nominees. They're not fit. They said, finally, after some blistering denunciation from me, they said, "Well, why don't you run for the executive." I said, "You know goddamn well that there isn't anybody in here that would dare stand up and nominate me for the bloody executive. They won't chance being shit on." "Well, why don't you nominate yourself." "I nominate Jack Scott." It was a secret ballot. I got one-third of the votes. I didn't get elected, but one-third of the delegates voted for me. It showed that there was a real opposition there.

But there was also fear. Bruce Mickleburgh went to live in Toronto and he's in Toronto for a couple of years. He came back here for a visit, no more than a visit. He'd been city secretary of the Party and he knew all of the Party members in the city. He figured he'd drop in and visit a few. He dropped in on a Ukrainian guy, he's a single guy and he's living in a room and Bruce just dropped around on the odd chance he was in and he was there and he went in and spent well an hour or so with him. Just talking. That's all. No big thing. As soon as he left the room, the guy rushes out of his room, down to the Party office and into the Party and said, "Bruce Mickleburgh was in to visit me. I didn't invite him. I don't know what his status is with the Party. He might be out of the Party. I don't know, but I came to you to find out." Scared shitless that maybe Mickleburgh was on the outs with the Party and somebody would find out. Maybe he's a Trotskyist already. Committing the sin of sins and he's gonna get shit.

14. EXIT FROM THE PARTY

At the end of the 1950s, perhaps very early in 1960, my wife began to recover, but it went very slowly. It was a slow process. But it came to the point where I could engage in a little bit of activity again. I wasn't all that anxious to get back into full activity in the Party. I didn't. I just more or less maintained my formal relationship, and kept Party activity as limited as possible.

A friend, living over in North Vancouver, who wasn't a Party member and never had been, got in touch with me. We had met up in the Northwest Territories and when he set up in Vancouver he found out where I was and came to see me. He suggested that I meet with some people that he knew. He introduced me to Lefty Morgan and his wife. This guy knew them because Lefty's wife had been a teacher in the Northwest Territories. Lefty was an anarcho-syndicalist type, sympathetic to the IWW kind of thing. His wife was a left CCFer. Jim Mackenzie was another in this bunch, also in the CCF, a leftist with some Trotskyist ideas. There was also a lawyer, but for the life of me I can't remember his name. He was a Trotskyist and sat once as an MP. The CCF leadership tried to prevent him from getting the nomination. He had his office down in the high-class business section of town. Quite a boozer.

They had a group that used to meet for discussion. As a matter of fact, they used to come to my apartment and meet. My wife got involved then. She was thinking she was getting well and should get in politics although she shouldn't have. But I never fought it. It was something at least she was interested in. Something in life. So she belonged to the group. I never did. I couldn't get along with the lawyer. Him and I used to argue something terrible. Terrific arguments. Mackenzie and Morgan and his wife and I could get along quite well.

There were several others in the group. I can't remember everybody. They put out a mimeographed newsletter, the title of which I can't remember. There's at least one copy in UBC Special Collections which I put in there because I wrote an article for them once under a pen name. It was the time of the controversy about the Canadian flag, when Pearson was having his big debate around a flag for Canada, and I wrote an article about that. They had part of the anarchist approach to this publication and changed the editor regularly. They put out this paper for a couple of years. I never really became involved with them, although I became involved with Mackenzie and Morgan later for different reasons.

In addition to them, I got to know others at this time around north and west Vancouver area. It was through that relationship that I met Jerry Lebourdais and a whole group of leftist type CCFers and CCYNers, a group particularly from around the Burnaby area. Lebourdais was quite a friendly type of guy who could make all kinds of acquaintances everywhere, really the kind of guy who could get along with people and attract them. So he had pretty wide connections and through him I got to know a whole lot of other people who stood to the left in the CCF. In other words I was establishing a whole body of relationships entirely outside of the Party.

I began to work a bit with these other people in the CCF. Lefty and Mackenzie and the lawyer were the key figures in the CCF that were on the left. Eventually it was in fact a socialist caucus organized in the CCF which was quite a conglomeration. Included members of the Communist Party, members of a couple of different Trotskyist trends and anarchists. A whole raft. It did a pretty good job too incidentally. Staked that out pretty well.

We did some early things around Vietnam in this socialist caucus. Around 1961 or 1962 there were a number of helicopters that had been damaged in the war, shot and one thing and another, and they loaded them on American ships to bring them back for repairs. The ship, incidentally, was sabotaged and partly sunk in the Saigon harbour. But they got the helicopters on another ship and loaded them and sent them off. At the last moment we hear in Vancouver, strangely, that an Edmonton company is bidding against all kinds of companies in the United States to secure the contract to repair these helicopters. And they got the job. They came in here in a ship and we got the word pretty late. We couldn't get a picket line set up right on the docks, which would have been best. The longshoremen had a clause in their agreement that they don't have to go through any picket lines. But since word came late we couldn't get things set up on the docks and the 'copters were already unloaded and packed up in railway cars when we went down to the railway yards and got a picket set up. We picketed the bloody railroad tracks and stopped the train from running, but you can't do that forever. We would have put a picket line on the dock and the longshoremen wouldn't have gone through the picket line so it would have held up the unloading of the ship for a hell of a long time. We'd have made it nasty for them. They might have made it going up to Seattle. But, like I say, we're too late.

I wrote an article on this in the *Socialist Caucus Bulletin*. We had an editorial board for the *Caucus Bulletin*. Ernie Tate, who was a Trotskyist, and myself and another guy who was neutral. I can't remember his name, Bernard or something like that. A hell of a nice guy. He wasn't committed to either of us. I came in with this article that I wrote under my own name. I titled it, "We missed the bus." I think I should have had it "We missed the boat" rather than "We missed the bus." Wrote on this experience of the ship coming in. I criticized the longshoremen, saying it was not good enough for them to honour a picket line. When this goddamn stuff comes in, they should not unload it. They should put out a call to the community and give the community a chance to do something. They could have us put up a picket line and then say we won't unload it. But they want all the protection for themselves, take no chances. So I really criticized this. Tate was down on us. We can't do that, we'll get the union mad at us. I said, "Well, maybe we need to get somebody mad at us. It's a lot of bloody nonsense." Oh, there was quite a discussion about it. The other guy was actually the chairman of the board and he was the deciding factor. Tate tried real hard to convince him not to run the piece. I didn't really give a shit one way or the other. If it wasn't published in the *Bulletin*, it would have come out as a leaflet. The hell with them, I thought. Eventually the guy decided that this should not run as an article, signed by me, but as an editorial. He asked

me if I minded, and I was quite happy about it. "Go ahead," I told him. So it appeared in the *Caucus Bulletin* and Tate was madder than hell.

Anyhow, after a period of time of knowing these people, one day Lebourdais came to me and he said, "I've decided I'm going to quit the CCF I want to join the Party. I want you to introduce me to Party people." I said, "Jerry, I don't think it's what you want." I said, "Think about it a bit before you do it. In any event, don't quit the CCF. If you join the Party, I can tell you right now they won't want you if you quit the CCF." Well, he would think about it for a few days. After about a week, I think it was, not very long, he come back. He says, "I'm determined. There's a group of us who want to join." I said, "I'm telling you again. I don't think it's what you want, but I'm not in the work of stopping people from joining the Communist Party if that's what they want to do. I'll put you in touch with the Party." So I put him in touch with Pritchett. I thought that was probably the best person for him to talk to.

It ended up that Jerry and a whole group of them joined the Party. They were put in a security club. There were a whole number of these security clubs. Any person who was in a profession and they thought that the Party membership might react against them would be in a security club. Nobody was supposed to know you were in the Party. You were supposed to keep it all secret. There were about thirty in this group. It was a big club. They're all members of the CCF. Members of unions. Leading figures in their unions. Very active people. All working-class. Solid working-class. Very active. It quickly became evident that Jerry and his colleagues were not happy about things that were going on, so Jerry started coming to me for advice, which he would go and tell the other people what the advice was. Getting advice from me rather than from the agent with the Provincial Bureau, the Provincial Executive.

Charlie Caron is representing the Provincial Executive with them. He met with them all the time. He brought down directives. If they didn't like the directives they would come and discuss them with me and ask what to do and I would advise them. I remember one particular incident. It was amazing. It just indicates how the trade union director didn't know what the hell was happening, what to do. There was a problem in the Oil and Chemical Workers' Union here which would come up every couple of years, because out here they did negotiations on an off-year from the rest of the country. All of the rest of the country negotiated a national agreement but BC was in an off-year. They were negotiating two-year agreements, if you understand what I mean, and then every other year BC was on their own. They were quite left-wing out here in the Oil and Chemical Workers and this negotiation business meant they could be isolated and picked off.

They went into negotiations. The company wanted to bust the local's leadership out here. Not necessarily the union. They wanted to break the leadership. So did the union hierarchy. Wanted to get rid of the local leaders, who they regarded as a bloody nuisance. So in negotiations the company offered them an increase of one cent an hour. That was deliberate. It was worse than offering them nothing at all. Obviously it was discussed in the Party club. People in the Party, they don't know what advice to give. Lebourdais comes to see me. "What am I gonna do? We

can't accept this." "Of course, you can't accept it." "Well, we've got to go on strike." "That's the last bloody thing you want to do. That's what the company wants you to do, that's what the union wants you to do. They get you on the picket line and they leave you there, they bust you." "What are we gonna do?" I said, "Call a meeting, get the membership, get them out, make your report, issue a recommendation to turn it down — which should be no problem — and then just sit on it, don't do anything. Nothing to lose. The only thing that might happen is that the company might lock you out."

Anyhow, they call a meeting, they report and make the recommendation and of course it's unanimous to turn it down. Didn't serve strike notice; didn't do anything. What was concerning me was what's the company going to do. Obviously they should lock them out. Take action. Apparently the company thought they were going to hand in strike notice and they wanted to put them in a bit of a spot. The day after they were informed that the offer had been rejected, the company came out and made an absolutely stupid statement. They said that it would be quite illegal for the group to go on strike because the old agreement had not been done away with. All the union had done was negotiate amendments to the agreement and since the agreement was still in effect it would be illegal to go on strike. Lebourdais comes storming down to see me again. "We've got to go on strike! Those bastards can't tell us when we're not going to go on strike." I said, "Hold it a minute, Jerry. It's a stupid statement they made, but they painted themselves into a corner. They can't lock you out because if it's illegal for you to go on strike, it's illegal for them to lock you out. They put themselves in a box. If you want to go on strike there's nothing to stop you. Just sit tight. Do nothing. Say nothing. Sit tight. Wait for the company to make a move." They did. They sat for the whole bloody year until the national negotiations. From then on, ever since, the workers have negotiated as a national group, so that they couldn't knock them off.

The left wing was eventually pretty well got rid of. Lebourdais was got rid of. But not until later. And the waiting tactic worked quite well because it got rid of BC's isolation. That was a good policy. It worked well but I'm surprised that somebody in the Party, Pritchett or somebody like that or somebody that supposedly had some brains, could not give them the kind of advice that they needed. I'm actually outside of this group. The Party leadership does not know that I'm giving advice to the people that's in there. It would have burned them up if they knew it.

I think the next big thing that came up was Lebourdais and some of the others had established relations with the Cuban embassy. Quite close to the Cuban embassy. Of course, there was all kinds of people that were promoting Cuba then. A lot of Trotskyists were going to Cuba with delegations and so on in the early days. Lebourdais was asked to organize a delegation from BC to go to Cuba. This was 1961. It came at a time when the New Party, so-called, was coming into being. A joint convention of the CCF and the Labour Congress was called to form a new party, would give rise to the New Democratic Party. Lebourdais and his wife were both delegates to that convention. They told the Cubans they wouldn't be able to go because they were scheduled to be in Cuba up to within a day or so, or maybe a day or so after, the convention was due to convene in Ottawa and they felt it ab-

olutely necessary to go there. The Cubans told them, “Don’t worry about it. The day or two before the convention, we’ll fly you from Havana to Montreal instead of taking you back to Vancouver.”

So they formed a delegation and Lebourdais came to see me to talk about who should be on the delegation. Of course, it became known, naturally quite widely, that there was a delegation being organized to go to Cuba and Lebourdais was in the middle of organizing it. Bill Stewart of the Boilermakers went to see Lebourdais and suggested that any delegation going from British Columbia to Cuba should include him because he was the most outstanding representative of — I’m telling you the truth — the working class in British Columbia. It was logical that he should go. Lebourdais came to see me. “What do you think?” I said, “Go and tell Stewart to fuck off. He’s not going in any delegation to Cuba.” So Jerry went and told him. Stewart was really mad. He said, “Wait till we take over and we’ll decide who’s going to be in delegations to Cuba. Wait till we take over Cuba.” Which of course is what happened.

It didn’t matter that particular time. The delegation went off without Stewart. Nancy and Jerry went. They were flown to Montreal, went to the convention. They were at the convention that founded the NDP — the CCF now became the NDP — and then came back here. Jerry was still coming to me for odds and ends of advice on various things connected with the union, connected with some of the differences that were arising within the Party and so on.

Like I say, they were still a Party group, a security group. There were some others were added to them that were already CCFers and trade union activists. The Teamsters, the Printing Trades, the Oil and Chemical Workers, Carpenters, Plumbers, Electricians, and other different unions were all represented in the club. The thing that brought them all together was the fact that they were all members of the CCF. The MP from West Kootenay, the squire of Kootenays, he was there. What the hell was his name now? I have a book on him here somewhere. I can’t remember his name off-hand. He belonged. It was quite a conglomeration of people. It worked fairly effectively within the CCF and that was the real role.

One day Lebourdais came to see me again. “Look,” he said, “here we are all in this club. We’re not getting our leadership from the provincial executive. We’re getting it from you and you don’t even belong. We talked it over and it’s the majority decision: (They excluded some people that were too close to the Party leadership as we always did later on.) you should join, take part.” I laughed. I says, “There’s no way I can join it.” You’ve got to be a member of the CCF. You’ve got to be a member of the NDP. It was the NDP now. “I can’t join the NDP I’ve been a Party member for years and I’ve never hidden the fact.” “Oh,” he said, “fill out an application. I’ll get it signed for you.” I filled out an application, gave him ten dollars which was my fee, handed it to him. Jerry knew a guy who was acceptable to both the right and the left in the NDP. The kind of guy who can get along with everybody. Jerry went to him. He said, “Sign this application and I’ll put the guy up for membership.” He signs. He doesn’t give a shit who it is. Because he signed it, apparently because they looked at who signed it, it went through. I became a member of the NDP. It’s utterly ridiculous. They put me up for membership in the

group. Of course, it went through. They've got a majority anyhow. It had to be unanimous. They convinced everybody to vote in favour. I remember Charlie Caron coming to see me and talk to me as if I didn't know that this group even existed. He told me that this group existed and that I had been recommended for membership. It was up to him. He was the one who had to make contact and it was up to him to come and see me on behalf of the group. So I agreed and became a member of this group, a member of the NDP, a member of the socialist caucus.

Then we began functioning within the group. There were a lot of things that came up that caused pretty sharp differences between us. I remember one was when the Norris Commission was set up to look into the Seamen's International Union, with Banks and all that, sometime in 1962. The Commission came out with the recommendation that the government was to set up a trusteeship over the SIU, to clean out all of the gangsters. By this time, Banks has taken off. All of the cash goes with him and he's living the life of Riley on a big yacht in the Hudson River. The government connived in that because the government brought him in in the first place to destroy the CSU. The Party's position was in essence to support them, arguing against all of these corrupt elements that have got to be gotten rid of, claiming that the only way to get rid of them is by way of this trusteeship. This was generally the decision of the Party and the Labour Congress, to accept it. We said, "No way!"

We agree that the gangsters have got to be removed. The corruption has to end, but it's got to be done by the trade union movement, not by a government, and particularly not by a government that was responsible for the goddamn situation in the first place. There was some bitter arguments. This was the beginning of the time, really, when we began openly and actively to oppose official Party policy. We organized a small conference. Wasn't big. There were Trotskyists there. Ernie Tate was there. Joe Hensbee was there. Joe was mouthy as hell. Mike James was there. He was in the CSU, a Welshman who had come out here and suddenly turned up, got a job when all kinds of guys with long membership were on the beach. Mike went out to work and he became a member of the union and started climbing in the Party. He came to one meeting and was mouthing the Party line. For the trusteeship but against it, you know. Him and Hensbee had quite an argument one night. Had to shut the two of them up.

Lebourdais is secretary of the group and we've got pretty well control of it, no matter Trotskyists or whatever. We got pretty well control of it. It was a rank-and-file committee. No bureaucrats of the trade union movement, nobody with a paid post in the labour unions. Harry Rankin was there. We even got Harry Rankin worked into the position to speak at a meeting we called. He spoke well from a legalistic point of view. He didn't straddle the fence that much. I don't know how he squared that with the Party, but that was his problem not mine. Quite a big meeting. Denunciation of the trusteeship. There was sort of a proposal that wasn't really hard and fast but maybe putting out a leaflet and some of the League for Socialist Action people decided they would write the leaflet. They decided this on their own. So they wrote up a leaflet. Tate, who was in the LSA, came to see me, and showed me the leaflet. They were going to propose that it should be accepted. I read it and

I said, "You can propose it. Nothing can stop you, but I will vote against that leaflet." I can't remember what was in it. There were a number of things. "Well," says Tate, "what do you think it should be?" I gave him some ideas. He went away and they wrote the leaflet over again and he came back to see me and showed me the leaflet again. I don't like it for these and these reasons. By this time, he's fed up. He said, "You write the leaflet and we'll guarantee to support it without ever seeing it." He said, "Go ahead. Write it." So I wrote a leaflet. I've still got a copy. It was run off and distributed. Our position on the Norris Report, that we rejected.

I remember that the business agent of the Teamsters' Union, which was in all out opposition, and in support of the SIU, came to see me to give his blessing to the leaflet. I said, "Well, I want you to understand that our position is not in support of the SIU. Our position is in opposition to the Norris Trusteeship and government intervention in the trade union movement. We're just as opposed as anybody else to Banks and to all of the crooks in the SIU." He went and he never came back to me. We decided to go in and try out the leaflet in the Labour Council of Vancouver. We had a lot of support. We had a lot of delegates in the Labour Council as well as in the BC Fed. This was the only Labour Council in the entire country that passed a resolution that was unanimous. Even the Party members had to support it. They didn't dare get up and fight against it. I can't remember now whether we got the resolution passed in the BC Fed convention or not. I think we did. Certainly got plenty of support. The Party leadership was rather put out about this. They weren't embarrassed from the point of view that the Party members were defying Party line openly because for the most part we weren't known as Party members. But it put them on the spot because of their position. What are you going to do when you're confronted with a resolution that condemns something that you wanted to go through? They ended up trying to ride two horses at the same time: opposed to the trusteeship but in favour of the trusteeship. Well, it's necessary at this time was how they rationalized it and we've got to get rid of it. That was really the beginning of the time when there began to be very open differences between the people in the group and the Party. A very large and, from the Party's point of view, a rather important group of members.

The Party wasn't in that good a position. They made it clear that they thought we were a bunch of pathetic bastards, you know. Like I say, outside of the fact that it forced the Party members in the Labour Council, for example, to vote against the trusteeship, they didn't dare do anything else. There were a few within this club that were, of course, supporting the Party position, the Party leadership's position. Only about five or six. There's always opposition. When it came to the split, they continued to support the Party. In the club we were kind of at a disadvantage because we had many sharp differences with the Party on the question of policy, which we would talk about in the club and raise hell and so on. But it was mainly kept in the club. Democratic centralism was at work which was pretty short on democracy and long on centralism. You're in a position where you couldn't make your position known to other groups within the Party. The leadership could go to all the Party groups and fight for their position and make like it was the only position. There was no opposition to it. But we couldn't. The policies that were being pursued that

we were in opposition to we were stymied from discussing in the larger Party milieu. How to reach out to other Party groups is our big problem. We started by meeting separately from the Party loyalists. Formed a club within a club. We all decided that we were not going to leave the Party. If we were going to be out of the Party, they're going to have to expell us. We made that decision.

We used to meet on Sunday morning. We used to meet at eight o'clock on Sunday morning. Mostly over in Jerry Lebourdais's house over in North Vancouver. The young guys used to come there bleary-eyed after Saturday night. But everybody used to show up at the meetings. Never miss. I remember one Sunday morning, young Gene Craven who was in the printing trades, was feeling out of sorts after a party the night before, on a Saturday night, thoroughly pissed off. Finally, he said, "Ah fuck. This is nonsense. I quit." Absolute silence for a few seconds. Then, Lebourdais, who was the chairman, he went ahead with the business and ignored him. After the meeting, we got together with Gene and we told him, "You know our agreement. Nobody quits." He came back the next Sunday and he apologized to us. He said he was wrong and he wasn't quitting. He settled in again.

We were piled up in meetings. We're active in the union. We were active here and there. We kept the Columbia River for Canada Committee going. We were the ones that kept it going right when they wanted to flood the bloody Rocky Mountain trench to supply water to California. We fought it. We were the ones who were the heart and soul of that group.

Internally we began to develop an orientation to the Party. We realized that amongst us there could be certain differences on detail, but there wouldn't be differences that were fundamental. There would be differences in detail. We didn't want those differences on inconsequential details to become a divisive force among us. We wanted to stand together within a group. So we would meet together and decide what we would do. Like when we decided that nobody was going to quit the Party, for example, and those kinds of things. And then we started putting out some documents. We must have put out four or five. These, of course, we discussed separate and apart from the regular group. It was criticisms of the Party policies like, I recall, for example, when the CP came out with a proposal for what we called democratic public control, a proposal that committees run the economy. These committees were to be made up of delegates from the trade union movement, from the employers, and from the government. At best, the working class is going to be outnumbered two to one. The government and the employers were solid, and even the workers' representative was going to come from the trade union movement which was bureaucrat-ridden and obviously it would be three to nothing against the working class before you even began. We put out a document on that. I wrote these documents. Of course that wasn't known at the time. Took the whole thing apart.

Their position would be put monopoly under control. This was the line. As a matter of fact, it was essentially a proposal to return to laissez-faire capitalism. We said that this was a populist proposal. At its best it was populist and it wasn't always at its best. And what was going to happen if they did get back to laissez-faire capitalism. The drive would be towards monopolization again and then when we've arrived at the point of monopoly again, then the Party would be back in the busi-

ness of putting monopoly under control and we're going around in circles. What we wanted was not less monopoly but more. We wanted the working class to monopolize the economy. This was the kind of position that we took in opposition. We voiced that openly within our group, but, like I said, we were stymied about reaching out to others. So we adopted this policy of putting out these anonymous documents. Never signed by anybody. We mailed them to everybody that we knew to be Party members and to a lot we weren't sure of but suspected were Party members. This was the way we carried on as far as we could within our club. We were still at a disadvantage because we couldn't discuss these darn things with the people. The leadership could go in and hammer the hell out of the positions in the other clubs. We couldn't go in and defend it.

They suspected who was putting these out. But they couldn't prove it. It was a position that we were voicing openly, but they couldn't prove it. Caron came one day and got me from work when I was working in the Pender which he could do. It was run by the Party anyhow. He came in a number of times. He came in one day and got me off work and we went and had a coffee. He put it to me plainly. He said, "You know, Jack, you don't agree with us. Why don't you go away and leave us alone?" I said, "Charlie, I'm not quitting. I don't quit. You want to get rid of me, you're going to have to put me on charge. You'll have to set up a trial committee because I'll be there to defend my position. You'll have to expel me." He said, "Oh, we don't want to take no administrative action against anyone." I said, "If you don't want to take administrative action then I'm staying. That's it." So he's stymied on that.

It went on for a period of time. It was sort of a guerrilla warfare, as it were, going on between us and the Party leadership. They're stuck unless they want to take action and knock a whole bunch of us off. If they do that, of course, we're free to roam and do what the hell we want. They're not prepared to move.

We're still in the NDP, as well, of course, and fighting there too. We had a position that we were fighting for that was contrary. We were obviously far to the left of the Party in the socialist caucus. I'm including the whole socialist caucus. We were doing a hell of a lot to influence the socialist caucus because we were probably the most solid group in there. The Trotskyists, as usual, were three or four or five different factions and often fighting one another. We were a solid group that had a position worked out. We were probably the most influential group within the socialist caucus which included all kinds of elements. The position that we were pushing was a position that the Party wouldn't agree to. There was a group within the club which wouldn't join the socialist caucus because it was too left, too leftist. Said so. There was one guy there in the Carpenters' Union, a Doukhobour named Podvinicov. He was solidly Party leadership. Never would question the leadership of the Party. Also old Hamish McKay, another carpenter who was thrown out of the United States, had been there for about thirty years, had his children born there and they deported him from Portland back to Canada. Old Hamish, I was kind of sorry for him. He was only semi-literate and a thoroughly honest guy but he couldn't see beyond the Party leadership. These guys, who were Party members in the NDP, wouldn't come to the NDP socialist caucus because we were all a bunch

of leftists. Podvinicov came right out in the open in the group and said that the socialist caucus and those of us who belonged to it were a bunch of adventuristic leftists. He said that his position was the same as the right wing in the NDP in opposition to us.

One day there were three or four of us casting around for what to do, how can we come out into the open, hold some public affairs, without giving the Party an opportunity to throw us out on our faces rather than on the basis of differences in policy. It is often incorrectly thought that our differences with the Party were over the question of China versus the Soviet Union. That's not so. We were sympathetic to China in the arguments that were taking place, but our differences with the Party were based on differences of policy for Canada. We pointed out to them several times — it's even down in writing — that our differences existed over questions of policy related to Canada and we felt that, as far as the question of China was concerned, the Party was wrong in its support of the Soviet Union, because, in the first place, it was wrong in Canada. Maybe the two were interlocking, but we felt that if we had a correct policy in Canada we would have a correct policy internationally which didn't necessarily mean all out support for China. Nor did it mean all out support for the Soviet Union either. Anyhow, we were kicking around one day. What are we going to do? Take the fight a step further, make it more open. I got an idea that I threw out. I said, well, there's a big argument now between China and the Soviet Union. "How about if we set up a China Friendship Association and start taking a public position on that. That ought to rock them a bit." The others thought it was a good idea.

It was sometime in October 1963 that we called the group together. We had eleven people, as I recall, together to discuss this idea. Some people that didn't belong to our group came. Brought two or three Chinese and a couple of other people in. Everybody agreed that this would be a great idea. So we went quietly about the business of organizing a group to set up a Canada-China Friendship Association, which was a name we had. We had something like fifty or sixty people that we rounded up and we had a meeting in February 1964 in the Scottish Auditorium on the corner of Fir and Twelfth. We founded the organization and everybody there signed up. We had the organization going. That was on a Friday night. Lebourdais was president. I was vice-president and I forget who all the officers were now. We had it going.

Sunday morning we go to our regular Party meeting. Caron, of course, as usual comes in and plants himself right beside me. He says, "Well, Comrade Scott, I see you've set up an alternate central committee." "What are you talking about, Charlie?" He says, "The Canada-China Friendship Association. That's an alternate organization, an alternate central committee, an alternate leadership." I said, "Come off it, Charlie. That's just an organization for friendship with China, for some understanding of the policies that China is pursuing." "Oh," he says, "I know what you're up to. You've been around long enough. You know that you're not supposed to do things like that. You're not supposed to set up an organization without the permission of the central committee." "Well," I said, "I have to admit that you're right on that. You got me there. However," I said, "I move a motion that we ask the

central committee for permission to set up a Canada-China Friendship Association." So it was seconded and passed unanimously. Off went the request to the central committee. Incidentally, we got a reply that if they had been asked before the organization had been set up, permission would not have been granted at this time. Since the organization had been set up they would not demand its dissolution. But if it took a position contrary to the positions of the Party, they would denounce it publicly.

This China-Soviet Union business had been an ongoing affair for some years. I guess it would be around the time of the death of Stalin, there were three articles that appeared in *Peking Review*. They were all connected. They were later published in a pamphlet. Indulged in the inner Party language. You had to be on the inside to know what all this conversation was about. I raised this in the Party here. This was before our group was set up or anything. This would already be somewhere between 1953 and 1956, around that area. I said that these articles point out very serious differences between China and the Soviet Union. I had all kinds of people here down on me, claiming there's really no substantial differences, only differences in emphasis. But these articles are on some fundamental questions. They're using language that is sort of hitting at things obliquely, however. You know the kind of approach in this situation. It's obvious to anybody that knows that there are fundamental differences here. I had arguments with Leslie Morris about this. He had had conversations with both the Chinese and people in the Soviet Union and insisted there were no fundamental differences at all. Of course, the differences began to mount. They boiled over quite a bit after the Twenty-first Congress when the Party in China came out with their articles on the dictatorship of the proletariat where they took issue with Khrushchev, which I think was alright except that they went somewhat beyond that. While they were quite prepared to be a bit critical of Stalin, they insisted that Stalin was alright.

Subsequently the issues were sharp. They were clear. There were some things that had happened. Like when Khrushchev went to the United States and then he went to China and he had made an agreement. There had been an agreement at the time that Stalin was still alive that there would be cooperation between China and the Soviet Union in the development of nuclear power and nuclear weapons. It seems very clear that the Americans laid the law down to Khrushchev that if this was pursued then there would be pretty sharp differences between the United States and the Soviet Union. One of the things that Khrushchev did was inform the Chinese that they were not going to go through with this agreement on nuclear weapons development. This led to some very sharp differences. Of course, it was largely a condemnation of Khrushchev and his supposed betrayal of Marxist-Leninist principles.

While our group was sympathetic to China on a large number of issues and certainly were not in favour of ruling them out of any of the international bodies or anything like that, at the same time, we were critical of a number of the positions that the Chinese were taking. We were critical of the Chinese supporting the Soviet Union on the expulsion of Yugoslavia from the Cominform. The Chinese later on criticized themselves for it when their differences sharpened. We were critical of

their position in relation to Hungary which they had to explain away later when they supported Czechoslovakia. Embarrassing moments, as it were. Essentially, our objective was to raise issues within Canada and in raising the China issue we saw it as an opportunity to get out into the public. It was that at least as much as — perhaps more than — the question of the actual support of China. Although, I must emphasize we were sympathetic to China. There's no question about getting away from that.

With the decision of the central committee not to insist on the Friendship Association disbanding they more or less tolerated us. The political bureau in Toronto more or less tolerated us. No action was taken against us as far as that was concerned. There was a convention that came up about that time. That would be in 1963. Party convention. Of course, again, we're stymied. We can't send delegates. We're a security club. We can't expose ourselves. All we can do is vote secretly, but propose delegates from known Party members. Caron is supposed to represent us. Caron and us are at loggerheads.

We had been having a meeting and things were pretty sharp. I had to go to work that afternoon. It was on a Sunday and I had work to do in the Pender and I always had to ride with somebody there. One of the guys who was in the Carpenters' Union and was about to become a full-time official in the Carpenters' Union said: "Jack, I got to go to the office. I'd like to give you a ride." I went with him. He said, "You know, I agree with you guys. I agree with you, but I'm not going to support you." He said, "I have an opportunity to become an official in the union and I can't become an official in the union without the support of the Party." I said, "That's fine, I understand. You want to become an official. I know you can't become an official without Party support, but we're going to fight for our position."

The Party convention is coming up. Of course, this is where the democratic part of democratic centralism is supposed to function. You can say what you want. Make all kinds of declarations, criticisms and so on. They're gonna put out a discussion — what do they call it — a viewpoint bulletin where people can express their views. The first issue comes out, mostly taken up by the preliminary report by Leslie Morris who was then the head of the Party. Buck was in semi-retirement. We read this and we discussed it and then we got off in our separate group and discussed things. We decided something had to be done about putting our position forward. This was an opportunity. It was decided I should write an article, which I did. It really expressed all of the group's opinions. We had a discussion, I wrote the thing up, and then we discussed the article and I made the changes. It reflected the general viewpoint of our group. Caron put a French name on it. Jacques. Just one name. I think he got the idea that Jacques was something the same as Jack. I don't know why. It isn't. Nothing near it. That's the name that went on it. I gave him my article for publishing. By the time I gave him the article we already had number two and we got number three before my article. One Sunday morning Caron comes in with a *Viewpoint* which he always did. He throws a copy on the table. He says, "There it is. Your article is there. I had to fight to get it published. They didn't want to publish it." So everybody got a chance to read it. This did raise a bit of a conflict.

There was a group in the Essex County Party committee in Ontario, around

Windsor, that were at loggerheads with the Party. Mostly autoworkers. Magnusson went down to Windsor. There was a meeting called of the Essex County organization. Magnusson told them, "You guys are all crazy. There's nobody in the country with your position." They were all ready to leave when suddenly this copy of *Viewpoint* hits. Some of them told me later, when we established contact with them: "This time we know Magnusson is lying. So we decided not to quit." They stayed in and they gave it a fight.

That was Issue number four. Issue number five comes out. They had assigned five different people in the Provincial Executive each to take a part of my article and take it apart. I never saw such stupidity in my goddamn life. It was pitiful. Members of the Provincial Executive. The stuff that they wrote. I could have made them look utterly stupid. This was Issue number five. Number six was the last issue. I never had time to get down and write an article. It wouldn't have been published anyhow.

China was not central. Not in the article. China was only brought in at the end, by way of mention, not more than two or three sentences. I would be critical now of my own position then on some of the issues in Canada, but I took them to task for proposing a populist programme in Canada that had nothing to do with socialism. These were the issues. Canadian issues. Not international issues, not the Soviet Union, not China. The issues were Canadian issues. Our position was us versus the Party leadership on the question of a programme for Canada and we used the China-Soviet issue quite deliberately as an opportunity to come out into the open and embarrass the bloody Party leadership as far as we could. The convention, as all the conventions, was organized to rubber-stamp the leadership's position and so nothing got discussed. The 1963 Party convention, with all of the crises that were hitting the Party, it was utterly ridiculous. Put monopoly under control and democratic public control. All of this crap. It's goddamn ridiculous.

They had socialism for the sixties which had been socialism for the fifties which became socialism for the seventies and is now socialism for the eighties and I think they mentioned socialism once in the bloody programme. They had a three-point programme. We hammered the hell out of it. The whole thing was utterly ridiculous. And I don't think we were being particularly leftist in our position. We knew that the idea of socialism was not going to gain a popular majority in Canada, particularly with all of the stink that was around with the exposure of the crimes in the Soviet Union and so on. It was supposed to be socialism and was not doing the name of socialism any good. Our position was that we're a minority anyhow and what we have to do is keep the idea of socialism alive even though we still have to remain a minority and try to build a movement of the type that will fight for socialist ideas while, at the same time, it would try as far as possible on immediate issues to reach out to the masses of people. But maintain the fight for socialism. The Party was for reaching out to the masses of people and forget socialism. It only drives the people away from you, so come out with this business of put monopoly under control and democratic public control and all of this kind of bullshit. Totally unacceptable.

I'm not saying that sometimes we were not leftist in the way we approached things. We sure as hell were. Particularly after a later date. There's no trying to es-

cape that. It can be proven. But, I think our position was more reasonable from the point of view of fighting for an understanding of socialism. Even with its leftism it was more reasonable than theirs. That's a position that I still take.

When the pressure was getting more and more on Charlie Caron and he was getting assailed in the club as the representative of the Party, he said that he felt that he needed some support and would we mind if he brought Ben Swankey in as an additional representative of the Provincial Executive. "Bring the whole bloody Provincial Executive in. We don't care." So Swankey came in. Caron figured that if he got Lebourdais and myself to support the leadership, he could get the whole group. He could have got a fairly substantial support, but even Lebourdais and myself could not have convinced some of these young people to go along with the Party leadership. He came around and he asked Lebourdais and I if we would meet with him and Swankey separate from the club and discuss issues. We said, "Alright, but we're not going to keep it secret from the Party club." Which we didn't. We told them what was going to happen. And we met with him and Swankey in Lebourdais's house one morning during the week. Jerry was off for some reason and I was on afternoon shift. I remember so well. Caron opened up, presented the case and then Lebourdais followed him. And then Swankey came in, and finally I came in. I really hollered the hell out of the both of them. When I wound up, Swankey looked at me and I was surprised. The tears were running down his cheeks. He said, "Jack, you know, if I believed all of the things that you're saying, I'd have to go jump in the river." I said, "For Christ's sake, Ben, come on down and I'll give you a push." What the hell! Communists got to commit suicide because their world is falling in. Utterly ridiculous.

Another time Caron came to the group and told us William Kashtan was coming to town and he suggested that Kashtan could talk to us and solve all our problems. He had been to Moscow and to Peking and he had all of the answers. Everything was to be clarified. When Caron was gone and some of the pro-leadership types were not there the young guys raised it with me. "Who is Kashtan and what is he like?" I said, "Well, he is one of the two most capable people the Party has got." Looking at it from the Party's point of view, he's one of the two most capable. Buck was out of action at that time. Morris was on the way to being dead anyhow. They said, "Well, if he's the most capable person they've got, how are we going to argue with him." I said, "That's your problem and I'm not going to rescue you. When he comes, I'm gonna sit quiet. I'm not going to say anything. If you can't defeat him in debate and you still think you're right, the answer is go and study some more and examine, look at his political experience and come back and fight some more. That's all."

Anyhow, comes the fateful Sunday morning and Kashtan arrives on the scene. I think he spoke for maybe about forty minutes. Laying down the line. I was sitting back in the corner, don't say a word. As soon as he got finished the young guys get after him. Oh they really took after him. It got so hot for him that finally, after only about ten or fifteen minutes, Caron said, "I've got to get Comrade Kashtan out to the airport. He's got a plane to catch." And, he took off. When they left, young Gene Craven said to me, "Is that really right? That's one of the most capable per-

sons the Party has?" I said, "Yes." "Well," he says, "in that case, the Party's sick." He didn't impress them a goddamn bit.

Here's a guy who's been in the Party a lifetime and he can't convince a few raw recruits who know very little and know that they know very little. Can't go in and debate against them. Totally out of touch with reality. Living in a world of their own that doesn't really exist.

Kashtan, of course, ended up heading the Party. Buck was on his last legs and Leslie Morris took over for him, but Morris got cancer of the lungs. No bloody wonder, because he was a heavier smoker than I was when I was smoking and I thought I was terrible. He must have been smoking about fifty or sixty cigarettes a day. He died after awhile, and there was a lot of manoeuvring about who was going to take over the leadership and Kashtan was being promoted. I don't know why. Can't figure out why anybody thought he might be capable. Nigel Morgan was also in the contest for the position. There was apparently quite a bitter battle and at the leadership convention Buck sided with Morgan. He said that he didn't think it would be good for the Party to have as its leader someone who spent their lifetime in the office in administrative positions, which when you think of it was a fantastic criticism of Kashtan. It was true. From the time he was about sixteen or seventeen years old, when he started working for the Young Communist League, Kashtan never did anything but Party stuff. Never worked a day in his life.

Anyway we got this short film from China on the Sino-India border dispute and this was an embarrassing question for the Party because the Soviet Union was supplying India with helicopter gun ships, with planes, you know, equipment to fight against China. It was just a total embarrassment when this came up. We decided to hold a meeting, a public meeting. We're still in the Party, mind you. We'll hold a public meeting on the Sino-India border dispute under the auspices of the CCF. We got the Teamsters' auditorium. Had just been recently built at that time on Broadway and started putting out advertising for this meeting. Caron came to see me. Got me again from work. Went down to the restaurant for a coffee. He said, "Well, Jack. I'm here to give you a direct order from the Provincial Executive. You are not to speak on that subject at this time. If you want, you can speak on trade and cultural relations with China, on the recognition of China, setting up diplomatic relations with China, but not on that subject." I said, "I tell you, Charlie, if you're worried about it, we are quite deliberately going to refrain from criticism of the Soviet position which is a bit ridiculous on this. Because of a number of reasons we have decided that we are not going to deal with the questions of the differences between India and China." We did. He knew of course it was going to have reflections on the Soviet position, which it couldn't help but have, but we were not going to talk about that. He said, "No. The whole thing is an embarrassment to Nehru." "What the hell do I care what an embarrassment it is to Nehru. The Indian party is wrong." All out support for Nehru and the conflict on the border. "Well," he says, "I know our comrades in India often talk like a bunch of goddamn imperialists, but the Chinese assessment of world relations is quite wrong, it's not real, and we can't embarrass Nehru." He said, "Jack, that's the order." I said, "I'll tell you what, Charlie. I'll get the executive of the CCF together and I'll put it to them.

I'll tell them what your position is and I'll leave it up to them. They'll decide. If they say the meeting goes on as scheduled on this subject, then that's the way it will be." He said, "You know what will happen if you speak." I said, "I know." I got the executive together that night. I got them down to the Pender when I was supposed to be working to discuss the issue and they decided unanimously that we were going to go ahead.

When I put it to them, they unanimously agreed, at which point I sat down and wrote out the speech that I was going to make. I was going to make sure that nobody was going to be in the position of accusing me of saying something that I did not say. As a matter of fact when I read the bloody thing I came to points where I wanted to say something differently but I didn't. I adhered to the text. There were a few copies that were mimeographed later on, but there were not many around. We showed the movie first. The place was packed. We had people standing out in the hallway. There were a couple hundred people turned away. It was the biggest left-wing meeting in the city for years. It was bigger than Buck was getting when he was coming to town.

There were a number of Party people there. A number of East Indians there. A number of Sikhs were there. There was one guy that was posted there for the Party, a member of the Provincial Executive, Bill Stewart. Not the Boilermakers' guy. There were two Bill Stewarts. One used to be called Boiler Bill and the other was Burnaby Bill in order to distinguish between the two of them. This Bill Stewart is now in Prague representing the Party. He was there, sent there to report on the meeting. Anyhow, after the movie, I started reading the text. There were maybe twenty or twenty-five Sikhs who came there because they had knowledge of my being a Party member from the old time and they came there. Apparently they were Party people, expecting that I was going to defend India against China.

After I'd been speaking for maybe ten minutes — my speech lasted forty-five minutes to an hour — they became upset that I was not supporting India. They all got up as one man and stomped out of the meeting. They would have been ready to beat the shit out of me if I had been anywhere close to them. They took off. The place was really jammed. The meeting was probably held on a Friday night so, of course, we're all gathered together on Sunday morning for the Party meeting of our Party club. I was pretty sure there would be fireworks. I didn't know how much, but I knew there was going to be fireworks. After all, I had been told I wasn't to speak. Charlie comes in. Sits down. Lebourdais opens up the meeting, starting going over the agenda. Charlie says, "Comrade Chairman, I have a point to raise." "Hold your horses. You'll get an opportunity." Going on with the agenda. "Comrade Chairman, I've got a point to make." "Just keep your shirt on Charlie. We'll come to you." Lebourdais went on. Charlie butts in again. He says, "Comrade Chairman, I have an urgent point to raise that affects the whole work of this Party club." Lebourdais says, "Well, alright if you want, if you're so anxious. What is it?" Charlie says, "Well, I'm here on instructions from the Provincial Executive to tell you that this club is dissolved. Anybody wanting to remain in the Party is to come and see me individually, not together, but individually. Come to see me and we can discuss whether or not they can remain in the Party."

Caron got up and left after this and the five or six who had always been Party loyalists went with him. This would have been in April or May of 1964. We kicked things around and we decided that Gene Craven, who was secretary of the club, would collect everybody's dues as he had always done and go down and get in touch with Caron and pay the dues. He did and I went with him. He got all the dues money and he met Charlie in a restaurant about a week later. He offered Caron the dues and Caron refused them. Caron said, "When I told you to come and see me about staying in the Party, I had a one-week limit on that and you didn't come to see me in a week, so you're all out." He had already dissolved the club, incidentally. I was sitting right close to him, so I said, "Charlie would you mind telling me under what clause of the Party constitution the Provincial Executive dissolves the club." He said, "I don't want to get in a debate with you, Comrade Scott." I said, "I'm not asking for a debate, Charlie. I'm simply asking you to inform me of the constitutional clause that allows you to do this. I'm not going to argue the point with you." The club is dissolved. Of course there was no constitutional provision. Couldn't do it constitutionally. Anyhow, he refused to take the dues.

He had personally expelled everybody that was in the club, in other words, without laying charges or anything else. He could have treated me the same way. I don't know why they wanted to make an issue of it. They decided differently. They decided to charge me with refusal to carry out a direct Party order. I got notice that the trial committee had been set up. One way or another, it was about August 1964. I went to the trial. I went there with a written statement. The trial committee consisted of three people: Harold Pritchett, Karl Rush, and Elgin Riddell, who served as secretary. In addition, Caron was there as prosecutor and Burnaby Bill Stewart as a witness.

The charges are read, failure to carry out the direct order of the Provincial Executive, which essentially is a charge of a breach of democratic centralism. That's what it amounts to. I raised the point of the question of the correctness of the position of the Provincial Executive that I hold is politically wrong. I maintain we have to discuss that, whether or not the Provincial Executive is right in its position. Couldn't be done. The question was did you or did you not refuse to carry out a direct order. I said, "Of course, I refused to carry out a direct order. It was an incorrect order to start with. I have a right to refuse it and that's what I want to discuss." "No, you can't do that. You got a direct order from a higher Party body. You have to carry it out." I said, "Well, let's look at that for a minute. Supposing the Provincial Executive gives me a direct order to go and blow up the police station. Riddell comes in with the answer to that. "Well, if you got an order to go and blow up the police station, you have a right to appeal to a higher Party body. But in the meantime, you go and blow up the police station." "Well," I said, "that's for the birds." That's the point I'm making. I'm not going out blowing up police stations. Not at this stage of the game. That's stupid, the whole thing is. "The only question is did you not refuse to carry out a direct order." "No question about that." Then they said, well, I had been in the Party a long time. "If this happened again, you wouldn't do that. You'd carry out the Party order." I said, "Given the same circumstances, I would do exactly the same thing over again." That's it.

My notification of expulsion comes August 11th 1964, signed by Nigel Morgan:

Your committee was reluctant to recommend the full disciplinary action possible under the constitution for failure to comply with a decision. In view of the additional contempt of the Party and its constitution by engaging in factional activity and the declaration to fight the convention decision publicly, the committee has no choice but to recommend the expulsion of J. Scott and does so recommend.

They wanted me to say that I would obey all Party commands from then on and they would let me remain in under certain conditions which of course I didn't go for. So, I'm out.

When we were coming up to the trial I wrote to the Central Committee. I cited the constitution and pointed out all the unconstitutional steps that were taken: the dissolution of the club, the expulsion of members wholesale without trial, my own position of being tried by the Provincial Executive where the constitution clearly states that you're tried by the Party body to which you belong and I was not a member of the Provincial Executive. But they would never have been able to expel me through the club. That's why they took the unconstitutional steps they did, dissolving the club and trying me before the executive. I understand, although I never saw the document, that the political bureau wrote to the Provincial Executive here and said that I was correct in the constitutional points that I had raised, but since it was time to get rid of Scott, they were not going to interfere. Constitution didn't matter a goddamn. If somebody was embarrassing them then they shut them right up.

15. PROGRESSIVE WORKER

The next problem that confronted us was what to do because we weren't about to declare ourselves out of existence. We still wanted to be active. Of course we were still in the NDP. Ernie Hall was then Provincial Secretary of the NDP. They had an office on Broadway at the time. They owned the building, as a matter of fact. They had to sell it later because they ran into financial difficulties. They had their headquarters there, right across from the Teamsters' Hall on Broadway. After the thing burst and particularly after we got active on our own there was a lot of public interest in us. Tom Haslett, a reporter from the *Province*, used to come around and see me. Used to come over when I was still working nights at the Pender. He used to drop in when there was nobody around and he'd talk to me. One time he was talking about being a member of the Party and the NDP simultaneously. He said, "Of course, you're not a member of the NDP any longer." And I said, "Well, yes formally I am. It doesn't mean anything to me anymore. I don't intend to be active there. But, my dues are still paid up and as far as the formality is concerned, yes, I'm still a member." He never said anything about what he was going to do, but he told me later that he went around to the NDP headquarters, and got hold of Ernie Hall. He said, "Jack Scott was expelled from the Communist Party a few months ago. He's a member of the NDP." Hall said, "Oh no. He's not a member of the NDP." Haslett said, "Oh yes he is." Hall went over to the files. A couple minutes later he came back holding a card in his hand. Haslett said he was really red in the face. He told Haslett, "Yes he is a member, but not for long." They never even gave me a trial. Worse than the CP. They sent letters of expulsion to myself, to Jerry Lebourdais, to Gene Craven, and to Bob Edwards, the four that they knew of. They knew others were there, but they didn't know their names at the time. We all got letters expelling us.

It didn't matter to me. I didn't pay any attention to it, because at that time we were off on a different tack, doing something different. We knew that it was coming up to a point that we were going to be put out of the Party so we sort of began making preparations for something like that to happen. That year I did what I'd been doing for several years. I took my vacation in around June or July. It must have been June. I would take my vacation from work and I would also take a leave of absence. I had a total of about six weeks off. I used to go across the country, meeting with people and talking to groups and so on. That year three of us decided to go across the country, John Wood, Martin Amiabel, who became a great source of trouble later, and myself. I remember we drove all day. We got in to Calgary late at night and found that we couldn't get a place to stay because the Stampede had started that day. Ended up driving to Red Deer, staying overnight, and then we drove up to Edmonton, met some people there that we talked to and came back down. We drove through to Winnipeg, talked to people there.

We had been in contact with people in Ontario, urging them to do something. We got into Toronto and nothing had been done and so we drove around Ontario,

rounding people up. We'd come all the way from BC and we organized a conference ourselves in Toronto in the King Edward Hotel and we got a group together. There were some people who came from Windsor, some from London, from Hamilton, from Ottawa, and a couple of other points. We did the organizing for this, spending our time driving around frantically and meeting people. One guy who we talked to was a lawyer, one of old Endicott's sons. He was going to go to Cuba. He thought it was very important that he go to Cuba. I told him that as far as I was concerned he could go ahead to Cuba. We met and we got an agreement that they would start organizing a periodical, a weekly or monthly, and we would help them with funds, with writing articles, with circulation and so on. That was agreed on. We raised some money right there to go towards production of the first issue.

We went on to Montreal and we established contact with a group that had set itself up there as a China Friendship Association shortly after we had out here. We also got in contact with the socialist group that was set up there that was actually a front for the FLQ at the time. Established contact with them. We came back.

Then, Endicott came back from Cuba and he was quite opposed to anything concrete really happening. He called a conference in London. Just changed all of the decisions that had been made. We had big disagreements later. This put us into the position that we never wanted to happen of starting an isolated group out here at the tail end of the country. We wanted something to support in the central part of the country. Logical place for it to be.

Endicott wrote me some private letters and I knew what his position ended up being. His position grew out of his interpretation of the Cuban Revolution. He rejected, quite correctly, the idea that the Cuban communist party, which was called the Socialist Party, had anything to do with the revolution. It didn't until the very last moment. So Endicott comes up with the theory that the Cuban Revolution was a mass movement with no party involved. It was only after the Revolution was successful that a party was formed. He argued that what must be done in Canada was build up a movement, make the Canadian revolution, and after it is successful the Marxist-Leninists could all pop out and say, "Ah ha, fooled you, we're here and taking over." This is essentially what it amounted to.

I wrote about this in a document that was mailed around to people throughout the country, and got assailed for using Endicott's private letters to me to make my case against him. But Mance Mathias, an autoworker who was the leading figure in the Essex County committee of the CP for many years before the split, wrote to me to say that what I had revealed was precisely the position Endicott put across in London. "You were a bit harsh," he said, "but you were right." At any rate, Endicott persuaded many people that we had been in touch with the validity of his position and that did in any possibility of getting something going in Ontario. But again we weren't about to go out gently, quietly. We decided at this point we would set up the Progressive Worker Movement.

We knew we had a fair bit of working-class support in the Lower Mainland. Lebourdais was President of the Oil Workers' Union at the Shellburn refinery and it was quite a radical nest. We thought we could pretty well run the show there, and we did. Even before we were kicked out of the Party we had done things there that

indicated the workers were willing to take our leadership. For instance, Wacky Bennett had come out with legislation that any union that gave any amount of their dues to the CCF would lose their check-off. The Oil Workers had about 750 members in BC at the time. The International was scared shitless, the union is about to go out of existence because of this. We decided that we would take it in to the Oil Workers and the workers could decide. They voted to tell Wacky Bennett to go to hell and to pay the usual dues percentage to the CCF. That's what they did and that's what happened. The local then set up dues collection with the members since the check-off was cancelled and out of more than seven hundred workers there was only one who refused to pay his dues. The IWA, the Steelworkers, the whole bloody lot of them caved in, but not the Oil Workers where we had some influence.

Lebourdais was really popular in the Oil Workers local. This was borne out in a funny way one time, a little bit after the club got expelled from the Party. Having established the Canada-China Friendship Association, which incidentally was the only one at the time and for some years after in the whole of the North American continent, we were led into all kinds of events that were quite peculiar in many ways. We informed the China Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries that we had set this up and who the officers were. Lebourdais, who was the president, gets an invitation to go to China as a friend. Go on a guided tour. So he decides to go and he goes and asks for leave. He was working in the Shellburn oil refinery and he's the president of the local and he goes and asks for leave of absence and they say no. They weren't going to give him leave of absence to go to China. The goddamn Chinese had taken all their refineries from them. They weren't going to let him off to go there. Lebourdais comes to see me. "I'm gonna quit." "Don't quit. Why quit?" "What am I supposed to do?" "Before you take any action on it," I said, "call a meeting of the local and tell them. Put it to the workers." He's got nothing to lose anyhow. He called a big meeting. He told them he had been invited to go to China and he accepted the invitation, went down to the company, asked for a leave of absence and the company wouldn't let him go. A real right-wing character, everybody knew is a pro-company guy, is the first on his feet. "Who the hell do this company think they are that they can tell people where they're going to go and where they're not going to go." He said, "I move that we send Jerry Lebourdais to China as a delegate from the local." Motion seconded, passed unanimously. They send a delegation to the company and the company gets scared: "We didn't know he was going as a delegate from the union. Thought he was just going on his own." They gave him a leave of absence and off he goes to China as a delegate.

So we started *Progressive Worker*. We got an A.B. Dick offset, an IBM typewriter, and all the equipment necessary to put something out. We rented a big old house on East Georgia and moved into it as headquarters. We put our printing equipment in the basement and went to work getting out the first issue of *Progressive Worker* which came out in October of 1964.

We wanted to build a movement in Canada, to put forward a particular ideological current around which a movement could coalesce, in which cadre could be built. And hopefully at some point a party could be organized. But we were not about to call ourselves a party at that point. We had maybe forty or fifty people, which was

not bad in this area. We had two groups in Vancouver. Then groups got started in New Westminster and in Victoria and in Nanaimo. We became fairly substantial. But it was what we never wanted to be. A British Columbia group that was trying to move the whole bloody country.

We maintained contact with a number of people in Ontario, including the old Party dissidents in Essex County. I used to go down there later because they would organize meetings for me to speak at, sold subscriptions to the *Progressive Worker*, but they would never actually come together and take over and move something. At one time Hensbee and Roger Perkins went down there to Toronto to live, but we were worse off with them two down there than with nobody at all. They were terrible. They set up a group and put out a paper of theirs which only resulted in two issues, called *Left Leaf*. They sold subscriptions that were never filled and we got some nasty letters from a few universities — the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor and one or two others. They were already subscribing to us. I wrote to them and told them, sorry, we're prepared to fill your subscriptions for *Progressive Worker*, but really it's got nothing to do with us. But Hensbee and Perkins used our name. We had no control over them.

Getting out our paper was our first public activity. We started the *Progressive Worker* and it lasted for six years. There are lots of things I would like to see different now in retrospect, but in view of all the difficulties we were up against it wasn't a bad effort on the whole. We got a lot of support. We got a lot of subscriptions to the paper. We could have continued to put out the paper after we finally dissolved because we were getting enough money. We weren't getting organization, but people would send us subscriptions when we put out an appeal for money, and we got big donations in money. Anna Louise Strong, who lived in China and who I visited a couple of times, gave us money. She was way out in left field. She had an account with the Royal Bank of Canada and she gave me a cheque for a thousand dollars for *Progressive Worker*. Very wealthy. We never ran into any financial difficulties as far as money was concerned.

We only saw the paper as something that would be an organizer that would get people together. This was where we lost out. Outside of British Columbia, it didn't get people to actually organize. Like I say, we got support. In fact, about three years after the last issue of *Progressive Worker* came out, I got a letter from Moncton, New Brunswick, from a group there that was functioning on the left. They had come across an issue of our paper and they wanted to set up contact with us and get copies of *Progressive Worker* to distribute in Moncton. We're already years out of existence at this time. There was a lot of sympathy out there. Certainly we had over fifteen hundred subscribers and we sold papers on the streets. We were putting out about three thousand copies of the paper, which was more than the *Tribune* was selling, because our paper was really being sold. A lot of their papers were going in a bloody furnace. Membership put pressure on them to sell papers and subscriptions. A lot of them were getting five copies and I know this for a fact and the bloody copies were going straight into the furnace without even being taken out of the wrapper, and they paid for them themselves.

We grew a bit locally, not terribly. The main problem was we didn't get groups

going in the rest of the country. This was the problem. It became a local BC group, which, like I say, we never wanted to happen. Just the way things developed. We were able to go out and hold meetings in various places, particularly myself and a bit later on when I began to get invitations to speak at universities and so on it certainly extended a lot of contacts. But a lot of people were sort of floating off and sort of doing their own things. Organizing little groups here and there and for some reason or another didn't want to become affiliated with anything in particular. This is the period of do your own thing sort of business. Sort of a revolt against organization.

We wanted to build a party that would be, in our eyes, a revolutionary party. And I'm not saying that in the sense of some of the groups that were active around at the time. They were going to make a revolution there and then. No matter what! The idea was propounded that a revolutionary should make revolution. We wanted to promote the idea of revolutionary change amongst the people. We were not going to make a revolution ourselves. We wouldn't call ourselves a party, although there was plenty of pressure on us, including later when there was closer contact with China. The Chinese Party people kept asking us, when are you going to organize a party? Of course, our position was, a party will be organized when there is a call for it amongst the workers, but we are not going to set up forty or fifty people as a party like some were doing. Like the Workers' Communist Party. Nothing outside of Montreal when they decided that within six months they were going to have a party.

I remember when we got out a couple of issues of *PW* we sent some copies to China. We got an order from China for an odd number, what appeared to be an odd number. Three hundred and some copies, subscription for six months at a time. Sent the money. We were selling subscriptions for I think about three dollars a year. It wasn't paying anyhow. We charged the same subscription to China as anywhere else. I remember when I got this order for three hundred-odd subscriptions for a six-month period, stating they would continue subscribing to us as long as the paper came out. I later found out what they did was to take orders from the various places that sold foreign Communist papers and they just totalled them up, plus the number they wanted for the Central Committee and that's why the odd number came out. They weren't just ordering a blanket number for support, which is what the Soviet Union was doing with the *Tribune*. That never happened to us.

I remember the time the Progressive Labor Party started up in the States. We had some effect. People down the west coast had come to the movement through us. They came up, and wanted to talk. Some in Seattle, Portland, San Francisco. People asked us to organize groups of Progressive Workers. We were internationalist but that would be a little bit foolish. We said there is a party in the States, Progressive Labor, and we put them in touch with Progressive Labor.

We were in touch with Progressive Labor and for a long time we had fairly friendly relations with them. One of the Rosens came from New York, came up to see us. They of course were off on a tangent on repression and the state was going to start attacking them and they were going to have to be able to get out of the country in a hurry at some point and they would need passports and they couldn't

get them in the States and they wanted us to get Canadian passports for them. I told him, "If you want Canadian passports, you get them yourself. We'll tell you how to do it, but we're not getting passports for anybody, besides we can't." It had to be your signature, it had to be your photograph, it had to be your details. It was easy then. The guy who killed Martin Luther King had two Canadian passports. That put the kibosh on Canadian passports. After that things toughened up and the state put out passports that you could only have for five years instead of for ten and you had to go through all kinds of rigmarole to get them. It became more difficult, but at that time it was easy.

I mentioned to Rosen that we had got this order for subscriptions from China. "Oh, that's great. Charge them twenty, twenty-five dollars for a subscription. You can make some money off it. They'll understand. They'll appreciate it." I said, "Look Rosen, this goddamn paper will survive with support in Canada or it won't survive at all. We're not going to depend on anything from outside." So we continued to supply. It cost us a great deal more for postage because they wanted the bloody thing sent air freight. After the first subscription, we wrote and explained to them that we would still supply the paper for the subscription but we simply had to charge for mailing the shipment. So, we charged the regular plus what it cost for shipping. We never got anything extra.

We had good relations with Progressive Labor for some time. When I came back from China in 1967 there was over forty of these contacts on the west coast that we'd steered to PL who came up here. I couldn't go to the States and they wanted to hear a report and have a discussion on China. From California, as far south as Los Angeles, all the way up to Oregon, Washington State particularly. They were *PW* readers, and often took bundles of papers to distribute in the US. A group of them came up and we had an all-day meeting. I made a report and they asked questions. We had a lot of discussion.

We had a very close relationship with these west coast PLers. One or two of them turned out to be real characters. There was a guy named Van Lydigraff in Seattle. He had been with the U.S. Air Force. He was flying those transport planes over the Himalayas from India. Flying goods into China at the time of the war against Japan. He was one of that group that got rounded up in California that were training in guerilla warfare. They had a Los Angeles group that was nailed for plotting to kill a Senator. They were being trained by two FBI agents and had made plans to assassinate a Senator, a US Senator. The FBI really made the plans. These two agents surfaced and Van Lydigraff and the rest got arrested.

Van Lydigraff used to be in Progressive Labor. He came up here a lot. One time he asked me to arrange to buy some guns for him in Canada. He had seen that they sold guns in the hunting stores here, hunting supplies stores and pawn shops and so on. I told him, "What the hell are you talking about, Van. For Christ's sake, guns are a lot easier to get in the United States than they are here." I go and buy three or four guns here they're gonna want to know what the hell I'm gonna do with them. He was really pretty way out in left field.

Not all of them associated with PL were so crazy. Once I remember we were putting a lot of material on Vietnam across the border into the United States, stuff

from China that couldn't have gotten in otherwise, and other stuff. We once took two carloads of material across the border and hauled it down to San Francisco. We split it into two halves. We gave some of it to one group and some of it to Progressive Labor people. I forget the name of the other group, but I suspected they had Trotskyist tendencies. They put the stuff out, but the PL burned theirs. Got scared. After we sneaked it all across the border and took the big risk!

Bill Epton, who was with PL then, was a different sort entirely. He was a black agitator with a real presence in Harlem. Eventually he got out of PL, but at the time I'm talking about he was with them and had been arrested during some riots. The funny one about him was that when he was arrested he got out on bail and we got word about a plan to have him come to the west coast of the U.S. to speak at some meetings. Speak at Seattle, Portland, San Francisco. This was about 1965.

I immediately wrote to PL and said that we would like him to come on up to Vancouver for several days. We'd arrange some meetings in various spots and he could come up from Seattle. No problem. It's only 150 miles. Didn't hear anything. On his bail, he wasn't supposed to leave New York State without the permission of the court. He went into court to ask permission to go to the west coast to these meetings, to Seattle and to these other places and to Vancouver in Canada. The judge said he is not going to be permitted to go to the west coast of the United States. If you want to go to Canada, bring in an invitation to me and I'll consider it. I got word right away and I immediately sent an open invitation which I sent to Epton to come visit in Vancouver and he took it into court and the judge gave him permission to come out to British Columbia. Utterly ridiculous, but I suppose it's not their country. They don't care what he does.

He wasn't supposed to get in. I suppose what they figured is that likely he would fly to Seattle and come up from Seattle to Vancouver, which is the logical way, but he went to Toronto and he got off the plane in Toronto and I guess there was some kind of a mix-up. They asked who he was. Bill Epton. "Where are you going?" "I'm going out to Vancouver." "What for?" "I'm going to speak at some meetings out there, give some lectures." "Not politics?" "Oh no." "Okay." So he comes out here and we had organized some meetings at Victoria and Nanaimo and somewhere else on the island and two or three around Vancouver. The first one at UBC. So we took him to the island first and when we came to UBC there's an immigration guy there. He asked Epton, "How did you get into Canada?" He told him he came through Toronto. "Didn't anybody say anything to you?" He pulled out a slip. He said, "Did you ever get one of these?" He said, "No, nobody ever gave me one of those." "I've got to give you one or somebody's gonna get in trouble." So he wrote one out and gave it to him. He wasn't supposed to get in. Here he is not allowed to travel in the United States and he's up here in Canada speaking at meetings here. We had some pretty big meetings. Quite successful.

He talked on the negro question in the States, particularly on the fight in the ghettos which was very big then. There was Watts in Los Angeles. There was Harlem in New York. There was a lot going on in the black movement. This is what he spoke on in a very militant way, of course. We had successful meetings. When he went back, he was sentenced to twelve years for criminal syndicalism. It doesn't

seem to me he served twelve years or anything like it. It seemed to me that it wasn't too long after that that he had an invitation to go to China and he went. He got an invitation, incidentally, to go to China after he broke with PL. The Chinese were looking on him as an important figure in the black movement which he was in New York, certainly in Harlem he was very well known, very influential in a militant way in Harlem.

What happened between PL and us was that there was this Trotskyist group in New York that was way out in left field. The Spartacist group. It would have been about September 1966. They published a leaflet extremely critical of Vietnam. They knew about differences that existed and were critical of Ho Chi Minh. There were criticisms to be made. In October, PL copies what the Spartacist League has said, and elaborates on it at great length, which was really an attack on Vietnam. There's to be no negotiations. Ridiculous bloody business. They were prepared to fight to victory to the very last Vietnamese. They came out quite directly and said that the Vietnamese should refuse to negotiate, should refuse to sign any agreement. They should be prepared to smash the American military machine in order to make it possible for the American working class to move forward in revolution. Ridiculous bloody position. We thought we were pretty far to the left. This was going some.

I wrote an article which was discussed before it was published. It was in *PW* Not saying anything about PL's new line, but stating our position on Vietnam. One of the things that we made quite clear was that as long as the people of Vietnam are fighting American imperialism with arms in hand we were not going to come out and criticize them. If we had criticisms, we would take them up privately with the Vietnamese. We were not going to attack them, because you couldn't attack them and at the same time call for support. This was our position, right or wrong, which is not the same as the old bugaboo about the Soviet Union. This was a question of the people who were fighting, who were in the trenches. This came out in *PW*.

The people along the west coast, who were also put out about PL's position on a number of other things, immediately took this article and copied it and began mailing it out to PL people all over the bloody country. This got Rosen in New York uptight. He sent me a letter that he wanted to send somebody to have a discussion with us. I thought, well, we're gonna have some kind of discussion to iron out our differences. So, they had, at that time, Freddy Jerome down in northern California. Freddy was the son of old B.J. Jerome, who was the Communist Party's commissar of culture for many years. Great supporter of Browder until Browder came under the gun and then, of course, he never had been a supporter of Browder. A survivor in the Party. Freddy was the California organizer of the PL. He came up on a Sunday morning when we were having a committee meeting anyhow. Gene Craven went out to the airport and picked him up and brought him to the meeting.

Jesus Christ. What a goddamn business. He comes into the meeting and starts denouncing us about this article, that it has been used to attack the PL in the States. Some of their people along the west coast creating a mess. "Calm down," I said, "you're not gonna tell us what to write." That's our position on Vietnam and he's

telling us we should publish something changing it. Wants us to line up with them. I said, "That's our position on Vietnam. You're not about to change it. As far as it being used in the States is concerned, nobody ever asked us our permission to publish and distribute it and if you're asking us to denounce anyone for doing that, we're not about to do it. Why should we? It's our position." "Well," he said, "we're stating China's position. The Chinese have told us that they agree with this position, but they can't come out openly and say it." I said, "I know what the Chinese position is. But the Chinese are not publishing their position. If they did, we would tell them where we agree and where we don't." "Well, the Chinese suggested that we publish this position." I said, "If the Chinese want to make their position public, it's not up to you to do it. It's up to them. Let them state it."

A big thick book came out around that period, a biography of Ho Chi Minh. He's waving this, and yelling, "I have positive proof here that Ho Chi Minh was a revisionist for twenty years." Some bourgeois academic. I said, "You're not impressing us. We don't give a shit what Ho Chi Minh has been for twenty years. It's a question of support for the people who are fighting imperialism. That's our stand. Do whatever you like about Ho Chi Minh." There was simply no agreement between us at all.

Before that there had been Phil Taylor. He was the organizer in Southern California and he'd been coming up to Canada, supposedly to make arrangements he wanted because of Cuba. He couldn't go from the States, but he could from here. Lots of Americans did. Come up to Canada to go to Cuba. He got to know a woman in Toronto and got involved with her. He was coming up from Los Angeles to Toronto, spending some time there with her, going to New York, back to Los Angeles. He's moving around in this triangle. He did it for a couple of years.

He's up sleeping with this woman and the Watts uprising is taking place right in his locality and he was not even there. I told him, "This is bloody nonsense. You've got to make up your mind. Are you gonna take her to the United States?" "Well, I can't do it." "Then stay here, make up your mind, and quit the goddamn commuting. If you want to stay here, we can talk about what maybe you can do about organizing something here in the Toronto, Ontario area." He said, "Rosen won't hear of me coming here." This was before our break with PL. I said, "Well, if I give you a letter to Rosen asking him to let you stay here for a year — maybe in that period you can make up your mind what you're gonna do — would that help." "Well," he said, "you can try." So I wrote him out a letter. He was going to New York. He took it to New York. Apparently Rosen told him to get the hell back to southern California. Wouldn't let him stay.

After the split came with PL and things began to sharpen up in the struggle with them, Taylor suddenly appeared permanently in Toronto, organized his Canadian Party of Labor group, which was nothing more nor less than the Canadian branch of Progressive Labor. Progressive Labor paid him. He was reporting regularly by long-distance phone to New York and they were paying his phone bills, which must have been fairly enormous. He began getting people around him. The Canadian Party of Labor was formed as a basis of opposition to PW and destroyed any pos-

sibility of our making headway organizationally in central Canada. Roger Perkins joined them. They continually attacked us.

CPL had a couple of sympathizers out here. I think probably they may still have, although they haven't been doing anything. Ed Lavalle at Capilano College was one of their people and there were two or three others. They organized meetings here. When Perkins came back here he was with them for awhile. Perkins is a joiner. He was in everything. He was in two or three different Trotskyist factions. He was one of the very few people that joined Sheila Delany's Red Collective up at Simon Fraser University. It was a ridiculous outfit. He joined another group that came along. I forget the name of it. It was a fly-by-night. It didn't last long and he's now in the Communist Party. They had Taylor out a couple of times, but he hasn't been out in donkey's years and they haven't done anything for a long time. They used to organize the odd discussion group and that. They pretty well liquidated themselves. I haven't heard of them in quite awhile.

PL began to be more and more discredited. They had some people who worked in a warehouse and were in the warehouse local of the Longshoremen's Union in northern California. It was on the verge of a strike, I guess. They began putting out leaflets criticizing the union leadership. Very poor job. At one point, the union, I think, was bargaining for something like thirty-five or forty cents an hour and they came out with a leaflet saying that the union leadership were preparing to sell out the membership for a fifteen cent an hour settlement whereas the workers wanted twenty-five cents an hour, which was less than what they were negotiating for. Within a couple of days, the employers offered twenty-five cents an hour and said this is what the membership want. PL gave them the evidence. The workers in the warehouse were so hostile to them that they had to quit. There was two of them that had to quit their jobs because the workers were so bloody hostile to them. The leadership said, "We could have got more, but these characters went out and told the bosses this is what they're willing to settle for and this is what they gave us." Real stupidity. Totally discredited themselves.

In 1966 I went on a speaking tour, addressing various groups that were forming in Regina, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, Toronto, London, Windsor, Kitchener, Montreal, and Ottawa. Gary Perly was there in Toronto, for instance, and his group became the Committee for Canadian Independence or whatever. They organized a couple of meetings. There was a sort of Independence Group in Kitchener. There was a Lebanese guy there at the time. He was chairman and he completely threw me off. He made introductory remarks and began talking about the need for a Canadian bourgeois revolution for independence. He sort of staggered me. I didn't know where to begin then. While I was certainly in the business of opposing U.S. domination of Canada, which I saw as an important factor and we had to struggle against, I certainly didn't see the primacy of the democratic revolution. I think he was affected by what was going on in Lebanon at the time. Again, I went down to London where there was a student group and I spoke at the university and I spoke in Hamilton to the group there that was mainly around the steel plant and drawn from electrical workers at Westinghouse.

I had quite successful meetings. Fairly big meetings. Of course, I'm promoting

Progressive Worker and our point of view. I spoke in McGill to a group that had been in touch with Hardial Bains and they had broken with Bains and they were the group that finally became the Workers' Communist Party. Something else in between. The Communist League or something like that. They became the Workers' Communist Party. They organized meetings in the city and at the university. Mainly a student body at the time.

Many of the gatherings turned around the national question and American domination of Canadian unions. That was the subject that the particular group in Montreal wanted. So I spoke on that. Gave our views on that. In London they wanted a talk about labour and the labour movement and a lot of historical development so I talked about that. I tried to respond to what was the interest of the particular group and at the same time try to bring in some kind of a political message from the point of view of *Progressive Worker*. On the whole, I considered the tour fairly successful. Developed, got subscriptions, some money for *Progressive Worker*. This was the kind of work you do to try to build a movement. Unfortunately, again, we didn't get any *Progressive Worker* movements going. I helped the other groups to get going. They used me if they were able to bring in people they didn't have before by having me there as a speaker and then they were able to recruit. But I was not on the ground and there's nobody on the ground to be able to recruit for the PW. As far as we are concerned, we are still in the same organizational position. We haven't grown. But other groups we made contact with have some agreements with us on some specific points.

The next year I went on another tour, this time speaking mainly on China and Vietnam. I had been to China and was given a short film taken in South Vietnam, which I brought back with me. It was about the guerrilla struggle there. I was coming through Customs at the airport and I had filled in the Customs declaration of where I'd been and what I had done. "How did you get to China?" asks the Customs guard. You know, he's going on at great length, saying how nobody can get to China. Finally I said, "Oh, I know Mao Tse-tung. He gave me an invitation." He's still going on and I'm getting mad. "Look, what business is it of yours where I go? It's none of your business. You're here to check me through Customs. Let's get on with it." This resulted in him going through my luggage with a fine-tooth comb. He gets to the film and says, "What's this?" I tell him and he says it has to go to Ottawa to be examined. It goes and then I get it back.

Anyway, I use this film on the speaking tour. Each province it has to go through the censor board. In Ontario Hensbee has organized a couple of meetings for me and I went to London and Windsor. I got an invitation to go across to Detroit and speak but I said, "No way. I'd land in jail in a hurry." Had to have the film go through the censors. Took it somewhere in Scarborough. Hensbee drove me out and I think I'm going to get it censored and get it back in a few hours. But I'm told it will take a few days. I've got a meeting the next night and explain how I need it. The next morning I got it back, and they didn't even charge me, which they were supposed to do. Couldn't figure out why it all went so easily, but we got the film back and had very successful meetings with it.

We did quite a bit of campaigning for Vietnam. We raised a fair bit of money

for Vietnam. We were in a battle royal with the CP. We started raising money before they did. Some of the Party members started accusing us of splitting the Vietnam Solidarity movement, but we just told them we had started raising money first. We had a discussion about this. The Party, you see, wanted all of the money for medical supplies. Nothing is going for guns or ammunition or anything like that. "We're not in that. We're for peace. We want aid for Vietnam. We're not going to raise any money for buying bullets or those kinds of things, just medical supplies." We had a discussion about this and our position was any money we raised was not going to decide the issue in Vietnam. If money was going to make a difference that money should come from China and the Soviet Union. They could pour all kinds of it in. The little bit we got didn't amount to much. Our position was to have people make a political commitment. If they're only going to give twenty-five cents it should be done with political understanding. So, our position was, this money is not going to Hanoi, it is going to the Provisional Revolutionary government in South Vietnam. Then they can do what they want with it. If they want to buy Band-Aids, that's their business. If they want to buy bullets to fight Americans, that's their business. We're not putting any conditions on it. It's going to them. The politics was that money we sent was going for a military defeat of imperialism. We were accused by the CP of being a bit provocative.

There were lots of demonstrations in front of the court house around Vietnam. Big marches' committees would get together and have very successful marches over a period of a couple of years on the Vietnam question. The CP even worked with their bitter enemies the Trotskyists. They didn't get along too well together, but they met anyhow. We sent delegates there, but we sent delegates who would put out our position. We had been organizing — all of us together — the march from the city hall along Broadway and along Grant and down around the American consulate and to the court house. There we'd hold a meeting.

One year the police didn't want this to happen. They suggested, you meet at the south end of the Granville Bridge, walk across the Granville Bridge, go down one of the cutouts and come around Seymour Street, around the back streets and down Georgia to the court house. In other words, don't disrupt traffic. So the Trotskyist delegates were critical of this. The CP were prepared to accept it. The Trotskyists being a minority said they'd go along with it, though they were opposed to it, that there should be no restrictions by the police. We knew this was coming, so we sent delegates, two delegates with our position. We argued to refuse the conditions of the police and march as we always did. We decided that if we were turned down we would walk out of the committee. So we got turned down. Combined vote the Trotskyists and the CP. We wanted a challenge. We got turned down and our delegates stood up and said, well, we're withdrawing from the committee but we will be on the march. We pulled out.

We got together with this group of students at UBC. They weren't all that radical, but they were more sympathetic to our position than to the position of the combined CP/Trotskyist line. We decided that the CP and Trotskyists can do what the hell they liked. We were going to start the march at the city hall. So we put all propaganda out on that basis. We had banners. That was the year we had done great

big life-size banners of a Vietnamese holding a rifle up. We made life-size banners of this. Incidentally, people were carrying them home. They were really good banners. Packed them in their car. Oh, we made a hell of a pile of them. Spent quite a bit of money. We mobilized at City Hall. Must have been pretty close to four thousand at City Hall. We marched from there down Broadway. Police didn't interfere. The only thing that happened was there were a couple of carloads of engineers from UBC. They were right-wing as hell. They had banners on, "Bomb the Kong." They were harassing us up and down. We had a few run-ins with them.

We marched down Broadway and we came to the Granville Bridge and there they had, oh, less than a third of the people that we have got, standing on the south end of the Granville Bridge waiting for us to come up so we can fall in. And they have these little Picasso peace doves. A lot of people started discarding their Picasso peace doves and asking us for the banners with the guy holding the rifle. We had them swamped. The CP was mad as hell. The *Sun* published a front-page picture of the parade on Granville Street with the CP banner showing, surrounded by our slogans and banners. They made a decision then they weren't going to participate in any more marches. It didn't show properly their line.

They started across Granville Bridge and we had put three or four of our young people in the front. I remember Gene Craven and Bob Edwards were both in the front. There were a couple of others that were there, right in the front, with orders not to veer off Granville. Go straight down Granville, never mind. So we have these people waiting at the south end of the Granville Bridge. They held the main banner. They immediately put themselves in the front of the parade. They were about twenty-five or thirty feet out in front of our parade and all the other groups fell in. We had a big parade. Possibly had a total of around seven or eight thousand people by the time everybody gathered together. We headed across the Granville bridge and we come to the Seymour cut-off. Two guys, two CPers, are out front of the banner and started down the Seymour cut-off according to the agreement with the police. Of course, a few minutes later the front end of the parade was up there and kept going straight down. Our guys go and everybody, of course, followed them. The banner is there. They had to run like hell to get the banner in front of the parade again. They headed straight down Granville. The police never made a murmur, and we just kept going.

This engineer's car came driving back in with the slogan, "Bomb the Kong." I reached out and I tore the bloody banner off, the "Bomb the Kong" banner. They came to a screeching stop and three or four of them piled out. They were going to beat the shit out of me. Homer Stevens — he's got fists like hams — he just hauled off and I heard his fist hit the guy's jaw. He really landed him one. They cleared out of there in a hurry. I was really glad somebody came to my defence. I couldn't have handled them. Homer wasn't a bad guy. His mistake was when he went back into the Party and had to crawl back in. Anyhow when we all got to the old court house it was quite a big meeting. Of course we're not on the speaking end. We're going around taking up a collection. We really got shit. We took all the collection. We had big tomato cans labelled, "Give for bullets not band-aids." We're giving out free literature and we raised over six hundred dollars in the collection. When they

came to take up a collection they got hardly anything. We took all the collection and they had expenses. We always collected money separate for expenses. Everything we made in the collection went to Vietnam, went to the government.

There was a group of these "Bomb the Kong" people sitting up in the steps, right up where the speakers were, you know. A couple of young guys came up to me and said, "We shouldn't let those people stay up there. That's a provocation." I said, "If you want to do something about it, go kick them out." Up they went, up the bloody steps. They grabbed these guys and they were hauling them off down the steps. Both the CP and the Trotskyists were screaming at them: "Leave them alone. They've got a right to their opinion." "They can have their fucking opinion someplace else, not here." They got run out.

We were always bumping into the CP. There was a group of students in the Student Union at UBC that started organizing a week of discussions on Czechoslovakia in 1968 after the Soviet invasion. One day one of them phoned me up and they asked me if I would speak at one of these meetings. I said, "Sure, I'll come out and speak." They said, "Well, will you mind speaking with Mr. Morgan?" "No I won't mind speaking with Mr. Morgan, but Mr. Morgan will mind speaking with me." They said, "Oh no, he has agreed to come." I'm surprised that he'll come and speak at all because they weren't taking the platform. They were staying out of sight and writing articles and so on but they weren't coming out holding public meetings. They were holding internal Party meetings. I wanted to hear him speak in public, because I was eager to put a couple of questions to him at a public meeting. I asked them if Morgan knew I was speaking. "No, we haven't told him yet," they said. "If you want him to speak, you'd better drop me because he will not." They still insisted he'd agreed to speak. They had all the advertising out and everything. Of course, Morgan backed out. I don't think he was going to speak anyhow even if I hadn't been there. I went out to speak and still it had only been known a little while before that Morgan wasn't going to show up. There were eight or nine Party members sitting beside each other about the third row back. They came there expecting Morgan to speak because this is what was in the UBC paper and on the posters and so on. The person in the chair got up to say that Morgan had backed out, he wasn't going to come to speak. These Party members got up just like one man, and in one motion moved out. Walked right out of the auditorium. They weren't waiting around at all.

I wouldn't say we were that aggressive in recruiting people to PW. We were there. People knew where we were. We were on the streets selling the paper, we were holding meetings, we were telling people, "You want to join us. Here's where we are." We didn't have recruiting drives like the CP used to have with prizes and so on. Recruit so many and you're a gold star recruiter, or a silver star recruiter, or a bronze star recruiter, or whatever. This was all nonsense to us. If there were people who were willing to commit themselves to the work, then they could come and say so. There were people who came around who were prepared to help. People who didn't belong would come and help us out at *PW*. Stapled it, folded, what the hell have you. But they didn't want to belong.

There were quite a few native Indians used to come around. They didn't belong.

As a matter of fact, they had a group of their own. What did they call it? The Red something or other group. They sent a delegation to China one time. I remember when they started one of them came to me and asked me to come and give some lectures on native Indian history. "What the hell are you talking about? Native Indians! You should be giving me some lectures." "We want somebody who's a Marxist." I knew a bit about native Indian history anyway, but I had to get knowing a bit more and get some lectures together.

They had their headquarters up above the China Arts and Crafts Store that we opened through the Canada-China Friendship. We opened it actually as an outlet for literature, but in order to be able to survive, and we got some arts and crafts in there to sell. When we opened it up the *Seattle-Post Intelligencer* had a photograph of the store on their front page and said that this was a centre for bringing goods from China to smuggle into the United States. Within a few days, there are people coming in there from around Seattle and Bellingham. "We want to buy something. Can you tell us how to smuggle it into the United States." Just drew it to their attention. Yeah, there was goods there they wanted.

PW rented the upstairs and also a place in the back where we put our print shop after we moved out of the house on Georgia. We had a great big barrel. A great big huge thing. About an eighty-gallon, wooden barrel. It was there when we moved in. It was sitting in a corner of the basement. We left it there. Nobody was about to lug the bloody thing around to get rid of it. It just sat there and it had a cover on it. Bobbi Lee was sitting on it one day and Hensbee is there and she asked Hensbee, "What's in the barrel?" He says, "That's where we keep the rifles." Later on when she wrote her autobiography, *Struggles of a native Canadian woman*, she told about the barrel where the PW used to keep their rifles hidden. She believed it.

People used to come around. Come in the office, used to give us a hand. We had trouble with Hensbee a couple of times, because every once in a while he would get an idea that somebody was just coming in there as a stool pigeon and he would bodily throw them out. We had a few arguments with him. He was an awful character. Everybody who didn't look just right was an FBI or an RCMP agent. He would get uptight about it.

Progressive Worker really made its impact, really got rolling, in the period 1963, 1964, 1965. It was a movement that was largely confined in this original period of vitality to people who had fought within the CP, working-class people. They had an approach that was at odds with the Party and it finally reached the point where they were expelled or squeezed out. For a few years we were able to play a small role within the class struggle in the Lower Mainland, lots of strikes and things like that, but the complexion of the times began to change as the 1960s wore on. If you want to talk about a proletarian movement we were it. No other group in the country was to the same extent that we were.

More and more, however, the student movement began to dominate the scene and with this shift things changed for us in PW. We had a discussion one day that lasted for several hours about how we were going to recruit students to PW. The students were having discussions about implantation. This came out of the United States, from PL. Students were going to go in among the workers and get jobs in

the plants, leave the universities and teach the workers how to organize and how to fight for the revolution. I used to argue against this. I thought that the experience of PL in the States, for example, was proof that it wouldn't work. They had people in New Jersey who had gone into a plant and were agitating like hell for a strike. They knew if there was a strike, PL was going to be there for them. But you know the worker with a family has to look at who is gonna put bread on the table and a strike becomes a very important thing. The implanters want to make issues, to develop controversy. I think we might have been able to have some kind of steady influence on this kind of thing in PW if we had been a real force on the scene in the later 1960s and beyond, but the truth is we were on the decline.

We tried to start up something by getting a coffee house going on West Tenth Avenue. It was called the Advanced Mattress Coffee House. The name wasn't ours; it was there. It was a big store where a small mattress company had been doing business, called the Advanced Mattress Company. They went broke and rented the place out and the name was there so we kept it.

It was really a good affair, operating pretty well every night. There would be entertainment some nights. Once a week, on Thursday, they had what they called Blab Night. Anybody could get up and speak. It would be wide open discussion there. Particularly on that night. There was simply nothing like it after it closed down until La Quena opened up on Commercial Drive, which is a little higher class than Advanced Mattress was. More business-like. Got more personnel. A lot of pretty good people went to the Mattress. Milton Acorn used to come. I remember when I published his poem "Where's Che Guevera" which is one of Milton's better poems. I published it on the back page of the *Progressive Worker* where we used to publish poetry all the time. He was out there one time and he got up and he said, "Now, for twenty-five cents, you can buy a poem by Milton Acorn, 'Where's Che Guevera,' and on the back for free, you get a copy of *Progressive Worker*." All kinds of characters used to come out there. Drugs were a big thing then. We were arguing against all kinds of drugs. We were arguing on the basis, if you're fighting for a different kind of society you've got to have your bloody head about you. We can't have you taking drugs. If you're dropping LSD and smoking pot and what have you, you don't have your senses about you. It was the same in PW. We never made any rule, but we argued against it to the point that most people refrained. We weren't that successful in the Advanced Mattress.

Peter Cameron was with *Progressive Worker* at this time. One of his sisters, Joyce, was around too. She lived in the same house with us and through the Camerons we had some students come to us from Carleton University in Ottawa. It was very funny really, for their father was a mandarin in Ottawa. His son is in PW, his daughter Joyce is in the student movement, and another daughter, Barbara, was around the Communist Party. He does have one respectable offspring, however, a daughter who was working for the Liberal party.

Peter was quite an effective person. He's the one who laid out the front page of *PW* for most of its existence. We had some really good front pages. In fact, there were times when the front pages were selling the papers on the street more than the content. Some of them were fairly dramatic. He used to drive us to distraction be-

cause he was always late. Never failed in being late with his front page. We'd have everything done, everything but that sheet with the front page on it run off and ready to go. Everybody stewing and storming and waiting for Peter to show up with the design for the front page. Otherwise he was quite effective. Eventually Cameron, who now works for some professional union making piles of money, got involved with CAIMAW and that was taking up all his time.

Lebourdais was gone. He was a good guy for organizing. A guy who could go in amongst people, work them up and convince them. Friendly, hail-fellow-well-met. Real good. The kind of guy who develops into a working-class leader. But he had personal problems and when the movement began to decline he drifted out. He's one of the group that's up in northern BC now in that business of being evicted from the land that they occupied amongst the Indians out there in the Meadow up near Williams Lake, near Quesnel. I saw him on TV a couple of times, looking quite spaced-out. But while he was in PW he was quite effective. He's a good element, he's a fighter, he's a militant. And he did have, certainly, have a leadership capacity. He could bring people along with him. When they started up there with their own environmental movement he ran for the Green Party in the provincial elections.

The point about all of this is that PW was running out of steam by the late 1960s. It was a new period and we couldn't adapt all that easily to it. We were a proletarian outfit and it seemed that things were not going in that direction. We just petered out, stopped functioning really.

People simply began drifting away. We ended up like a lot of these movements. We grew in the period when everybody sort of thought that the revolution was gonna be yesterday, that sort of business. My experience was too long for that. And, of course, it didn't happen. The struggle became more protracted and a little more difficult and, in some ways, less interesting. People left. We had some internal problems. There was an internal group that developed, that wanted to go a different way. They went off and organized a group by themselves, which didn't last long.

Most of the differences were personal. A big issue was made by some of the group about the dictatorship within the PW, which was anything but dictatorial. I was accused of being one of the dictators. Lebourdais was named as a secondary dictator. It was utterly ridiculous. The fact is that at least one of them, Martin Amiable, wanted to be the leader. He was totally incapable, and I made it understood that this was my position. He got quite hostile and he had his own supporters who gathered around. He had come out of the Party with us and was in the NDP. He's back there now. He never did get expelled. He had been in the Dutch army in the Philippines and when he was living here he was on welfare and doing all kinds of fly-by-night things. Never applied himself consistently. He wanted a movement that he could be the leader of and so he got it for a while.

And then there were attacks from other groups. Canadian Party of Labor made a lot of attacks on us, and there were attacks coming from other directions. Things gradually dwindled down. There were only seven of us at the end. If the seven of us had stayed together and wanted to we could have kept the paper coming out. We still had readers and people willing to send us money, but we never went for the

idea of a small group being a party and gonna shape the entire bloody world. We simply looked at it from a realistic point of view, recognizing that we hadn't grown outside of BC and that we were splitting apart. It was ridiculous to think that we were going anywhere and so we decided that that was it. Around 1970 we quit the business and wound up with the final issue of *Progressive Worker*. Looking back on it, it was earlier, in the mid-1960s, that we had our greatest impact.

16. LABOUR UPHEAVAL IN THE MID-1960s

Progressive Worker always tried to intersect with the labour struggles of the time, and the mid-1960s were a period of considerable upheaval in the Lower Mainland. I remember when we were in the process of putting out our first issue of the paper, the day when we mobilized people to go down there and run the thing off on the machines and staple and fold and so on, there was an explosion. There had been a strike in progress at Scott Transport, which was just off Hastings where the viaduct is now. An injunction against the picket line had been secured and the strikers' wives were down there trying to picket. The company was going to run the long-distance trucks out of there one day and a call went out for support. We heard it. They want support on the picket line. So we abandoned our work putting out the issue of *PW* for the moment and all went down to the picket line. Cops came down there. So bare-faced. A couple of cops went in to have a discussion with the company and they came out and they started on the picket line, breaking up the pickets so they could get the trucks out. They began arresting everybody in sight. All but about three members of *PW* ended up in jail that day. Craven and his wife, who was about six months pregnant got busted. Jack Maley, who was with us then but later wound up with the Bains outfit, he's down there with six kids and a dog. All, including the dog, they're in the bloody jail. We're just starting our business, getting our first issue, and we're almost all in jail. Hensbee and I escaped getting arrested. We both went down to the police station. We went in there. A big guy, a big trucker, came in and his wife had been picked up. He came through the doors, swinging doors, double swinging doors. He almost pulled them off their hinges on the way through. The guy must have weighed about 280 pounds. "Where are those goddamn police bastards." We did stop the trucks. Nothing moved out.

Ed Lawson of the Teamsters came along and he bailed everybody out. He's a senator now. Nobody got sentenced. I think there was some business of finding guilty, if I remember right, and a fine. Lawson arranged the Teamsters to pay. He disclaimed the whole thing. These bunch of Bolsheviks didn't belong with his Teamsters and all. But he did bail them all out. Fines paid. He couldn't do otherwise.

This is all on Saturday. They had an agreement by Monday morning, so it was effective. On the Sunday people started showing up. Bill Stewart from the Boilermakers' and some of the others. They hadn't been there when things were decisive. Now things are quiet they're coming out and demonstrating solidarity. Tate and Elfinstone were there and Tate was the leading figure and two or three others. They hadn't been evident on the Saturday when the real fight started. They not only came out, they came out with a leaflet denouncing the *PW* people for taking over the strike. I wrote an article really giving them shit. They failed to be there when the fight was there, come out when things were peaceful. Did they denounce Scott Transport? No way. They're denouncing the people that had been in jail. Right! I named them. There were two involved, Tate and somebody else that were

essentially involved in putting out the leaflet. I got a long letter from Tate a couple of days later threatening to sue me. That I had revealed his politics and he might get fired from his job. How the hell I revealed his politics I don't know. It was no secret that he was a Trotskyite. Going to sue me for libel or slander or some god-damn thing. There was a hell of a hulabaloo in the League for Socialist Action. He got denounced and three or four of them threatened to quit if he carried out this legal action. I never got sued. Isn't this funny. Later on, Tate went to England. He's from Ireland originally, from Belfast. He's in London. The group he's with is in a battle with the Healyites in England. They beat him up and he ended up in hospital. He made a public statement that Healy and the Healyites were responsible for beating him up. Healy threatened to sue him. I thought that was a great joke.

Anyway, this was our baptism by fire. Our beginning, so to speak, and we spend it on the picket line, fighting cops, and in jail. Not a bad start. The period was such that there was always some strike and usually we tried to be involved.

More important than the Teamsters' strike at Scott Transport was the Lenkurt strike around 1964. It was a rather important one, really, for what came out of it. What happened there was there were very bitter negotiations that went on for some time and they were in a bit of a bind because they didn't have to only confront the company, they had to confront their goddamn union as well. It was down on them as well. About twelve years before the union had been put under trusteeship of the IBEW. A guy by the name of Perry come in here from Washington with three or four other characters and took over the union and there were trials. George Gee was expelled. Couldn't work in the industry. All of the Party members that were there got the boot. Macdonald was suspended for twenty-five years. Others were suspended anywhere from fifteen to twenty-five years. Known Communists. There was a guy there named Bert Marcuse who had sold out his half share of the Trade Union Research Bureau to go and work as Research Director for the IBEW. This happened just a couple of months before this trusteeship came in. Marcuse was a war veteran and he was secretary of the new veterans' branch of the Canadian Legion. He had a habit of taking correspondence from the veterans' branch to his office in the IBEW building and he used time that he had on his hands to answer the correspondence. So he had some of this material in his desk drawer. Now the form of address in the Canadian Legion is Comrade. If they write you letters, Dear Comrade. Marcuse had been out when the trustees came in. He came in and Perry, the big shot himself, is sitting behind his desk. Marcuse had never been a member of the Party. Never was. He comes in and he sees this guy and the guy says to poor Marcuse, "Who are you?" "I'm Marcuse. I'm the Research Director." "Oh yes, a Communist." Marcuse gets red in the face. "No, I'm not a Communist. I'm not a member of the Communist Party." "Oh yes, you are." And he reaches into the desk and he pulls out some of his correspondence and he slaps it on the top of the desk. He said, "Look at that. Dear Comrade. You're a Communist." So Marcuse was caught up in all of the witch-hunting.

The guy who laid the charges against Gee and precipitated the whole thing was Art O'Keefe, who got a job, of course, and when the trusteeship was lifted he was one of the big guys. He got nailed because in the Lenkurt strike he got direct or-

ders that no strike was to happen but he couldn't stop it. At least he was militant enough that he backed the workers up. He ended up in jail. The IBEW wouldn't pay him. Everybody else — there was four of them went to jail — they paid. Other unions had to pay O'Keefe because the international wouldn't allow O'Keefe to be paid.

Wages and conditions were involved at Lenkurt but all this anti-communist business complicated things a lot. They went around sniping at people, particularly at Progressive Worker Movement. They also seized what they thought was a glorious opportunity to point it all — as the CP used to do — up as adventurism. The chairman of the shop committee was George Brown, who died later of a heart attack when he was still only in his forties. A hell of a good guy. Red-headed Scottish guy. George was a Trotskyist. Not really with the LSA, though he may have been around them for a time. He belonged to one of the other Trotskyist factions. Of course the word the Party was whispering around was that it was a Trotskyist thing, this business of the Lenkurt strike taking place, which is really a bloody slander because Brown saw all of the dangers involved in the strike, particularly because of the position of the union. He knew what the union international was going to do and he strongly advised against going on strike. Go the limit in various other ways. Slow down or what the hell you have and keep negotiating, but not go on strike. Strongly advised against it. The workers were determined. It was really the workers who were determined and walked out. Of course, George is there as Committee Chairman. He's not about to desert them. So he stayed with it.

The workers walk out and start picketing. The IWA declared its support for the strike and there were picket lines called, but the company got an injunction and the decision was made to defy the injunction and a number were arrested. Some were fined. The judge was outrageous. We had put out a leaflet and one of the guys was arrested and fined something like \$150 or a couple hundred dollars, maybe more. A fair amount of money. One of the things that the judge commented on was that he helped distribute a scurrilous leaflet, which he wasn't charged with. The charge was defying an injunction.

We knew Brown was a left-winger. We came to their support. We went on the picket line. A couple of our people were arrested. Mainly what happened was, we were really pissed off. There could have been more violence. We wanted to keep defying injunctions, but the unionists decided they would go out and defy the injunction, but as soon as some people were arrested, the picket line would be called off and they would fight it in court, which we said was a lot of bullshit. You can't win. There were a number of arrests, but four went to jail. Power was one. He was with the Boilermakers' Union and, incidentally, was a member of the Party. The Party wasn't happy about that. Paddy Neal, who was secretary of the Labour Council was another. His main complaint about jail was he couldn't play golf. Art O'Keefe, who turned in George Gee and was now himself in front of the line was another. And Tom Clark, an IWA guy who's the best of the bunch. Incidentally, he got rid of his lawyer and defended himself. Clark was another guy who died young. He was only in his forties and he also died of a heart attack. A real militant. His statement in court was great. He addressed the judge:

I will not be intimidated by courts or court action or people of your ilk when in my opinion I am morally right, nor will I stand idly by and watch my fellow workers and fellow trade unionists treated in a like manner. It has always been a basic premise of the trade union movement that an injury to one is an injury to all and when one is injured it behooves all to come to his assistance. This I will do. As you are well aware, some of the rights that society as a whole enjoys today were won by the blood of working men and women. The employer has always used all at his disposal to retard the growth of trade unions and free thought, resorting to murder, so-called legal execution, troops, police, spies, stool pigeons, scabs and what have you, all for no avail. In this day and age the employer has become a little more sophisticated and does not generally resort to the tactics of old, but he still retains this inclination. He now uses the courts to do what he cannot accomplish himself. I wish to make my position quite clear. I do not wish you, my lordship, to be under any illusions as to my actions. If a picket line appeared around this building tomorrow and you were to grant an injunction prohibiting picketing, I would join that picket line if requested to do so. In closing I will say that I refuse to apologize to you, this court, or anyone else for my actions. What I did is what I know was right.

We worked very closely with Clark in the Labour Council. We had a fair group at one time in the Labour Council. I remember one time, we got Clark aside and we said, "Look Tom, for Christ's sake, you and us together can bounce Paddy Neal out as secretary of the Labour Council. Let's do it. Let's get somebody decent in there." Tom said, "For Christ's sake, don't do that. If you put him out as Secretary of the Labour Council, he'll come back in the IWA. We don't want him." That fell through. We didn't get rid of Paddy Neal that way.

The union came into Lenkurt and eventually made a deal. There was over two hundred workers that never got their jobs back. Two of them were solidly black-listed. George Brown and Jess Succamore who is now at CAIMAW. Now rather than lie down and die they held together some of the workers and formed the Canadian Electrical Workers' Union. This is what came of Lenkurt. Most of the Canadian Union movement here grew out of it. It grew out of it by necessity. It was not something we in PW could have fomented. But it was a situation we had to address ourselves to. George's wife was working and he was on unemployment insurance for a long time. He did the new union's work with no other pay. There was no money there. Progressive Worker gave him a lot of help. We used to print their material for them, do it for nothing. If they wanted to print leaflets we did it and we printed the original membership forms for them and so on. We did all that. We didn't do it openly, but there were lots of people who were prepared to give out the information what was happening. Succamore managed to get a job in another small shop and worked there, but also worked on keeping the union together. That's what came out of the Lenkurt strike, the beginning of the independent Canadian labour movement in BC, which became quite influential in the trade union movement, and still is in BC. It got to be a fair size and it grew from the Lenkurt strike.

There was an interesting thing that happened here too with the Party. When

George Gee was expelled from the IBEW and lost his job he couldn't work in the industry because he wasn't a member of the union. The UE gave him a job and sent him to Edmonton where they had a couple of locals which they immediately proceeded to lose, incidentally. George stayed in Edmonton for quite a time. After the Lenkurt strike, when George Brown and Succamore and a few around them began to develop the Canadian Electrical Workers' Union which later became the basis of CAIMAW, UE had nothing in Vancouver. They sent Gee back to Vancouver. They rent him an office, pay him his wages, and started trying to raid this incipient Canadian union on the basis that, you know, we are the Canadian electrical union. We are the only legitimate union in the industry. They never did really succeed. Oh, they established something at one point in Cablevision which they later lost. They never made any headway. They came deliberately. This had to be a Party decision to try to prevent the growth of this new electrical union, but they didn't succeed. During the first year when this new Canadian electrical union had an executive set up, there were two members of PW that sat on that executive, John Wood and a guy named Unger. Both members of IBEW, both working in the electrical trade. They did it quite openly in defiance of the IBEW. They went in to the union meetings, raising hell, trying to get support for the Electrical Workers and so on. In other words, placed their own position on the line, taking a stand. At the end of a year, when the local was fairly strongly established, we had a discussion with Brown and Succamore and decided that we should take them off. They were no longer needed there and it was just giving the labour brass an opportunity to attack them.

During the 1965 postal strike I knew a few people in the union. I knew the president of the local at the time. I wrote an article on the postal negotiations in *PW*. I can't remember what the issue was I talked about, but I had written this article and a couple of them on the union executive came to me. This was before they were out on strike. They came to me and they said, "We would like to post the article on the union notice board at the post office. Do you mind?" I said, "I don't mind, but it probably is not a very good idea." "Why not? It's our notice board." "Do what you like." So they did and the post office was really uptight about it.

The strike was finally declared. The two places that were really militant and worked together pretty well were Montreal and Vancouver. Close contact with one another. These were the two strongest areas. There was a conference to be called. The government was calling a conference in Ottawa with the idea of putting on the pressure and getting some kind of downgraded settlement. All of these people had been called in. A couple of guys came to me and they said, what do you think of this business of this conference in Ottawa. In my opinion it was a mistake to go to it because, outside of Montreal and Vancouver, the strike movement was pretty weak. They were particularly anxious to break Vancouver away from Montreal, get a split between these two. I pointed this out and suggested that they wanted to get the delegate from here into Ottawa and put pressure on him to make some kind of break. "Well, what do you think?" "Well," I said, "in my opinion, he shouldn't go because this is where his strength is. If he goes to Ottawa, he's got none. Stay here and tell them in Ottawa, you want to talk to me, come here and I'll talk to you."

They said, "That's a great idea." They said, "Will you tell him that." I said, "Come off it. From the outside, Progressive Worker, I'm gonna go tell him. No way. You tell him. It's your idea."

I was working at the Pender at the time. I came out to have a cup of coffee. I went down the street and here are the two of them and they're talking to this guy. I'm going by. "Hey, wait a minute, come here. Tell him what you told us." He didn't take the advice. He went to Ottawa and what I predicted happened. They put the pressure on him and he broke the liaison with Montreal and the whole thing was weakened. At that point, in my opinion, the success of the strike depended on Vancouver and Montreal standing together and carrying the rest of the bloody country with them. Once they made that division between the two they weren't able to put up the same kind of fight.

Another big strike of the time was at the Shellburn refinery, involving the Oil and Chemical Workers' Union. We didn't have that many people in there who were actually in Progressive Worker, but we had a lot of sympathizers. Read *PW*, subscribed to it, gave money to it and so on. We had a lot of influence. Jerry Lebourdais was in there of course, headed up the local. It was never discussed in the *PW* that they're going on strike. Nothing like that. The whole thing came on me like a cold bloody shower. I was working, as usual, the afternoon shift at the Pender — I was on permanent afternoon shift — and Jack Greenall and somebody else came down. Fortunately there was nothing much doing. Nobody was around. They came and got me at work, told me the Oil Workers at Shellburn have gone on a sit-down strike. They said, "Three of them came over the fence. They're out at the house and they want to talk to you. Okay."

The union was in negotiations and everybody is fed up to the eyebrows about the way they're being stretched out. Nothing happening. All kinds of pressures on them. I got in the car with them and drove out. Three guys are there from the Shellburn and they want to talk about what to do. I said, "Well, first of all, do you know what you have done?" "Oh yes, we've gone on a sit-down strike." "Yes, but do you know what it means." "Well, it's a militant strike." "Well, it's a little more than that. You know you've taken the man's property and he's not going to stand for it. You've got a problem. Besides, the union won't stand for it; they won't be backing you." Anyhow, the problem is, how to get them out of the fix that they're in because it was a bit of a fix. We started maneuvering around. There was a lot of militant feeling throughout the industry in BC and a lot of workers were prepared to go, but they were looking to the leadership of the union and the leadership of the union didn't want to strike.

What we tried to do was to get even one or two of the other refineries to walk out on strike. Not sit down, walk out. This is what I proposed and it was accepted and what we tried to do. Then, when that happened, if even just one refinery would come out and establish a picket line then the guys in Shellburn could have announced that they're out on strike. There's a picket line. We're coming out too to join them on the picket line. It didn't work. Buck Phelps is out here hammering like hell and a number of workers that we approached said, look, if the union says

go on strike, we're ready to walk out, but we're not going to walk out until the union leadership says so. The union leadership won't say so, so they're stymied.

Of course the company went to get an order evicting the workers from the plant. Lebourdais was in there and the RCMP came in and handed him the eviction order. He got up on an oil drum, court order in hand. "Now, this is what we mean when we talk about the state and the employers working together. That's what's happening here." We had no alternative but to get them out of there. What we did, we got the wives rounded up. We're trying to save face as much as possible. We got the wives rounded up and they went out and they had had a picket line on for a couple of days. It was easy. They had been around and were every bit as militant as the husbands. We got the wives on the picket line within a couple of days. So then the workers inside announced, "We're going to go out and join our wives on the picket line." Whole thing lasted maybe four days. They fired, as I recall, nine workers including Lebourdais. We had a battle over that. Finally, we saved everybody's job except Lebourdais. No way they were gonna take him back and the strike would have gone on forever, so we finally had to agree that Lebourdais was gone.

Lebourdais had led the thing but didn't know where it was going. I told him you don't do things like that. That's militant as hell, alright, but you've got to look at all the ins and outs of it. It's not like Detroit in the 1930s, tens of thousands of workers want to barricade themselves in a plant and defy everybody in sight and besides they won the support of the Governor of Michigan who refused to send in the National Guard to root them out of there. You don't have that kind of situation. It's all very well and good to become enthusiastic about militant episodes of labour history, but you're in an entirely different situation. You think you're gonna make it, but it takes more than that. I knew right away we were in trouble. I began trying to scheme how to get them the hell out of the goddamn plant in the best way possible. They were figuring they had it made. We got the plant, they can't do anything, we've got the refinery tied up. No way. If they hadn't left when they were given the order, the RCMP would have been down there in battalion strength and they would have beaten them the hell out of the plant and locked the whole goddamn work system up. There's no way that they were gonna win and particularly with the union against them, the union leadership. They didn't want any part of it. Glad to see Lebourdais go.

All this should have been known and had to be taken into consideration. All of the workers that were in on it, they were all solid for it. They were all ready to go, so there was a great feeling of solidarity there amongst that particular group. But when you're looking at something like that and you're looking to take that kind of action, you had to not only consider solidarity with your own group, but what is the support outside of it. The support outside of it was obviously lacking. The CP just backed off and predictably denounced it as a bunch of leftist adventurers going off. The PW with its leftism, this kind of thing. There would absolutely have been no decision made to do this if it had been discussed in PW, but it wasn't. I would have fought like hell against it if it had been brought up ahead of time. I'm sure it would not have gone across. Mark you, in one sense, it was a PW strike in that a leading member and certainly a number of strong supporters of PW were the ones

who instigated it. It was not a *PW* strike in the sense that the *PW* made a decision that it should happen. It was something that took place spontaneously, in a sense, if you can disregard the fact that there were people who shouldn't have been acting spontaneously. Should have been looking at the thing very coldly, coolly, and calmly, and considering what would happen as a result of their actions, but that's the way it happened. Of course, we never said this publicly. Once you're in it, you're in it. We just tried to extricate the guys from it.

There was eventually an agreement made, a union agreement that was made with the oil companies that were in the process. The guys were fed up. It was going for months, dragging on, no solution to the negotiations. This is what moved them. What they should have done was go around and agitate amongst the other refineries, at least in BC, you know, and get some kind of agreement, either we're all going to work or walk out. Even if it's just BC by themselves. If they had walked out it might have been enough leverage to move the guys in Quebec who were quite militant at the time. They wouldn't have been alone, but this was one refinery moving on its own gonna drag a whole bloody outfit with them. They couldn't do it, not with the union leadership chasing and then condemning them for being all kinds of radicals. It was quite a wrong tactic to pursue. But we weren't about to start criticizing ourselves in the midst of the bloody battle.

Then there was the Allied Engineering Strike. It was a place where I had worked. There was a big picket line there. There was real solidarity in the trade union movement on that strike and that, of course, was the Boilermakers' part of the trade union movement. Legitimate strike from their point of view. A lot of support. Big massive picket lines. The strike was finally won. That's the one where the police moved in. Tom Clark was bitten by a police dog. To my knowledge, the only picketer in the history of the country that was bitten by a police dog. Can't recall anybody else being bitten by a police dog on a picket line.

Of course we supported the strike movements that took place. There was the Bookbinders' strike too. That was another dirty one. It happened before the Shellburn strike. It was in a print shop that published books and the pressmen played a real dirty trick there. The Bookbinders' scabs came in and the pressmen took them into their union. The Bookbinders were walking the picket line, mostly young women. We reported it and had a photograph in *PW* of some of the women that were on the picket line. We were really the only ones that gave them any support. They thought we were great. One morning, one of the guys got a great idea. There is stuff in the refinery that stinks like hell. Why not make stink bombs out of it? Really a terrible smell. We went very very early in the morning and poured some of the goddamn stuff into the air conditioner. When the air conditioning unit was switched on and everybody came to work the building was cleared out in about two minutes. Couldn't stand the smell. The strike was lost. We did our best for them. Tried to collect some money to support them. Just a small group of women out on their own and everybody, including the printing trades unions, are against them.

17. CANADA-CHINA FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION

As all of this was happening, there was still the Canada-China Friendship Association. For many of these years, and then after for some time, I was just a member and didn't participate centrally in the group. But there were still things to do being associated with it.

In the beginning the CCFA was a working-class organization. It was the group around the Party that organized it and got it going. There were a couple of academics there but mostly it was working people with specific political interests. During the Cultural Revolution things were really interesting, really jumping. There was always something to keep you going. You couldn't be anything but political in that period where China was concerned. My role, however, was in originating it and while I was instrumental in getting the thing off the ground, I made my exit from the leadership of it pretty early. I was a vice-president, but resigned the post. When the Party started attacking us we had a meeting in Progressive Worker and we decided that I should resign my position in the CCFA and try to keep the fire away from there, to keep the CCFA out of our struggle with the Party. We couldn't entirely avoid things, of course, because the CCFA had to reply to all of the Party attacks on China, but we contained ourselves to that.

One funny thing between the Party and the CCFA involved Felix Greene. He had written about China and was very well known among North American circles interested in China. The CCFA invited him to speak here. Green was working at the time through an outfit that arranged lectures and so on. Expensive as hell. We couldn't afford him. So we got in touch with Greene ourselves and told him we could not pay what his committee was asking. We wanted to make some direct deal with him and he offered us a good deal if he could bring his wife with him. We don't care. So we brought him in here with his wife and he brought some movies he had made. Stayed for three or four days and gave talks.

A couple of guys from the CCFA went up to the *Tribune*. Ewen, the same guy who formally headed up the Workers Unity League, was in charge then but he and some others were out to lunch or out for coffee. They were forever out to lunch or out for coffee anyhow. It was a young Ukrainian woman doing the secretarial work. We said, "Do you want to advertise this?" She said sure and took the advertising copy and we paid the fee and off they went. When Ewen came back from lunch, he's furious at her for accepting this.

He phones up the CCFA and tells them to come back and get their money, that they have no intention of putting the ad in. I was at work at the Pender. I got a phone call about this and am asked what to do. "Go picket the goddamn place, that's what to do!" A bunch of them made up signs in a hurry and one of them proceeded to call up the newspapers and TV stations and radio and tell them that we're headed down to the *Tribune* building which was where the Party was also located with our banners. Caron was still the organizer in the Party office and he comes dashing out. Caron runs up to one person and shouts, "Tell them about the time you were in the

Party." He is saying this right in front of the TV camera, and the individual involved is in a sensitive position where there could be nasty implications if it is known that he might have been a communist. There was a big blast inside the Party about that because many of the ranks didn't like this kind of thing, exposing people who disagreed with the Party, setting them up. Caron got a mass of shit for that. Later they ran an editorial on how Greene was a counter-revolutionary and PW and the CCFA were anti-communist, anti-Soviet and all the rest of it.

I was quick to point out to them the contradictions in their position since they rejected our advertisement on the grounds we were not in agreement with their policies. Yet they advertised affairs in the *Sun* and the *Province*. Were they indicating that their policies were in agreement with the *Sun* and the *Province*? This was their principled position. We really blasted them after. As usual they put themselves in a bad position. They're geniuses really at preparing difficulties for themselves down the road. When the Milwaukee Trotskyists were the first to be charged under the Smith Act the CP took a position that the people in Congress responsible for the Smith Act were a bunch of reactionary bastards, but then they were doing God's work by running the Trotskyists into jail. Some time later they're being picked up under the Smith Act and then they started screaming. It doesn't matter whether you agree or disagree, the question is the defence of democracy.

In Vancouver, ironically, they ran themselves into problems when the *Province* refused to take ads from them. They claimed their democratic right to advertise their affairs was curtailed, but they had already set the policy themselves by refusing ads from us.

Felix Greene spoke and showed these films at the Coliseum out at the Pacific National Exhibition. It was a big affair. The films, which he made himself in China, were shown on TV later. "One Man's China." A whole series of them. We showed them in an old theatre down at the corner of Granville and Dunsmuir. It's not there anymore. The old Colonial Theatre. It used to show silent movies. As a matter of fact, at that particular point, they were showing old Chaplin comedies. Soon after all of that area was in the process of being redeveloped and they started building the Pacific Centre mall. Over a two-day period I think we ran about ten different showings and we never had an empty seat. We made a pile of money at it. A year later Greene wrote to us telling us that he and his wife would like to come back. We showed him around, you know, showed him a really good time. So he came back a year later and spoke again. He was quite popular. He's a good speaker.

Anyway, we organized meetings and put out leaflets and things and generally we had a fairly good membership. We mailed a lot of Chinese stuff to people in the United States, to institutional addresses, to people who wanted the stuff. Our packaging was probably distinctive enough so that they could tell what it was and in a great many cases instead of delivering the stuff the US Post Office would send a notice to the addresses saying we have some Communist material here addressed to you, do you want us to deliver it? In other words, "Say yes if you dare."

Many Latin American countries wouldn't take mail from China. Wouldn't accept any mail. There was one point in time when China had received subscriptions to various magazines, Chinese magazines in Spanish and Portuguese, and they

couldn't get them into the countries because they wouldn't let them through the mail. So we had a discussion with them. Told them to send the CCFA the magazines in bulk, and give us all the names and addresses. They paid the postage, but we did the work, supplied the wrapping paper and we broke down the bulk and wrapped them up individually and mailed them off from here, from Vancouver. After maybe three to four months of this the post office caught on. Material was going out once a week. We'd load mail into a sub-post office out here in East Vancouver, out in the Renfrew district. One or two CCFAers would go over there when we had a load of stuff. They had a special guy to look after us. When our people would show up with a bunch of stuff, they'd yell his name and say here are the CCFA people. One day they went in with the mail and the guy came out and he said, "I'm terribly sorry. I can not take any mail for Brazil. Brazil has informed Ottawa that if they take any more mail from the CCFA in Vancouver that is addressed to Brazil, they will renounce the postal agreement." He said, "We simply can't have that happen." So we couldn't send anything to Brazil. After five or six months, though, something happened and China managed to get the mail moving.

The CCFA didn't strive particularly for membership in the Chinese community. We didn't want to make it look like a Chinese movement, but we did get some. We got a lot of opposition too because we're talking about a period when the Kuomintang was still very strong. China wasn't recognized and Taiwan was recognized. We refrained very often from calling meetings in Chinatown because the Taiwan ambassador would come there, or the consul, and he'd sit at the door watching everybody coming in, jotting down names. He had them scared because they couldn't get passports. They very often couldn't get citizenship. They were under threat of being deported to Taiwan and if the consul engineered a deportation and gave a report that they were a bunch of Communists, they'd be dead. A lot of them were scared.

When China became recognized and an ambassador came out it got better in this regard. The Chinese weren't so scared then. But it was caucasians that formed the bulk of the membership. That's the way we wanted it. We were quite well known, you know. We did a job in trying to give some understanding to people about China and that wasn't easy during the period of the Cultural Revolution. Somehow or other, we managed to maintain our credibility in the community. People still came out to meetings. The media used to come and interview us about things that were going on in China and so on and generally we got good reports. A lot of people were quite sympathetic to us.

When diplomatic relations were established, we had an argument here. When things began to change Paul Lin came out and suggested that we should dissolve. Joyce Resin was the president of the CCFA then. She's on TV. I don't watch the show. It's one of these golden years things that bullshits people that the best age is around seventy and eighty. Nonsense. Joyce was never particularly a left-winger. Never associated with PW. Anyway, some of the people are all in favour of dissolving. They thought Paul was giving Peking's word. I don't give a shit whose word it is. We managed to survive for years, to maintain our credibility. There's no

need for us to dissolve ourselves and make way for some middleclass group. So the organization decided — after a bit of a battle — to remain in existence.

Delegations started coming from China — culture and business delegations and so on — and Ottawa would phone up the CCFA and let them know the itinerary. They would ask us, “Would you like to have someone here to meet these people and give them a friendly greeting?” They were looking to build up good relations with China at this stage. We were a go-between for China and the government because they recognized that we had a fairly firm relationship with the Chinese.

By this time it is the mid-1970s and you could really sense the difference between the CCFA in its beginnings and what it had become. Academics began coming in and taking over. The last few presidents have been academic people. Graham Johnson, a professor at UBC, Ken Woodsworth, and more recently a Chinese guy who is a university graduate in computer science. These types. I get along with them alright, and respect them, but the tone of the organization is different. There’s not the same political content that there used to be.

I remember when we made arrangements for the first Chinese ambassador to tour British Columbia. The NDP government was in power then so we had lots of support. Our biggest battle turned out to be with the Chinese. One of them made a special trip out from Ottawa and came to see me and suggested that instead of doing it up for the ambassador we might instead consider a secretary from the embassy or someone like that. I said, “No.” She wondered if it was really necessary for the ambassador to do this. I told her as far as I was concerned it was the ambassador or nobody. “If you’re not going to have the ambassador, forget it.” We wanted to have him out for six weeks. They finally agreed to his coming out for ten days. And I think they were sorry afterwards that they didn’t come out for a longer period.

I guess they had the idea that we were a little far to the left when they were just starting up relations with a bourgeois country and all. But they couldn’t just ignore us because we had been in touch with them so long and we were, for some time, the only Friendship Association that existed.

When the ambassador did come out we really laid it on. Took him up the coast to some of the logging camps and the saw mills and a couple of the lumber companies put out an executive jet — two of them as a matter of fact because there were too many people to crowd into one plane — to fly him up the coast for dinner. They gave him a tour of the port here on a yacht. The whole business. The CCFA is conducting this whole tour. Somebody going along with him all the time.

I remember the final night when they had a dinner in one of the Chinese restaurants, a banquet for the last night. Had Barrett there and there were about six hundred people at it. Phillips was mayor of Vancouver at the time and he was there as a guest and Joyce is chairman. I’ll never forget when she’s opening up, she addresses Barrett, Mr. Premier, Phillips, Mr. Mayor, and turns to the Chinese ambassador, Comrade Ambassador. I thought there would be a big play the next day in the newspaper. No. The ambassador was so enthusiastic. When he got up to speak he had a speech all written out in Chinese and the translator translated into English. He said, “I have my speech here in Chinese that I was going to give in Chinese.

But this is no time for formalities.” He threw away his speech and he spoke in English.

At the meetings the government had laid on two automobiles with drivers and the drivers were invited to the banquet as guests of the CCFA. They told us afterwards that just a few days before that they had been drivers for Gandhi, who had been over visiting from India. They never got invited to anything. They were always left standing out by the cars waiting for Gandhi to show up and finish. We introduced the drivers and they stood up and took a bow. Got a big hand. There was an RCMP security officer that went around everywhere with the ambassador and he was invited. He stood and got a big hand. The whole thing was very informal and friendly.

I remember when we went to the railway station to see him off at the CP station. Somebody in Ottawa had advised him — and, you know, they have to have permission to do anything — to take the train to Banff, stay over for a couple of days, and take a train to Calgary and fly back from there. He decided to do that, so we went down to the CP station to see him off and we couldn't get down on the platform. They wouldn't let you down on the platform. Just the travellers. So, we're having to say goodbye up above and the security agent — of course, he's there right to the last — said, “I'll go down to the platform and see that they get on the train alright and I'll come up and let you know when they're off.” He came up and told us, “They're off, they're safely on the train.” Even the RCMP security, everything was very cooperative. It really went over in every way.

About ten years ago I eased out of any formal role in the CCFA. I never broke away from it. I'm a lifetime member. As a matter of fact, I can go to executive meetings anytime I want to. I'm an honorary member of the executive. I haven't attended the executive meetings in years. I go to the honorary affairs. The Chinese consulate invites me to everything. A new consul-general just came in recently so I got an invitation to a banquet, for the executive of the CCFA. I get invited to everything because I am on several different lists in the consulate. I was on the list of the friendship group, I was on the list as a political person. Anything that was going I got invitations to go to it. I usually went. I don't intend to make a break, you know. I'm critical of many of the things that go on. Not in the CCFA, but some of the developments in China, but I try to be critical from a friendly point of view. I always said, “If there's gonna be any break with China, they'll make the break. It won't be me.” I'm still interested, you know in China. The organization — because conditions changed, the organization gradually changed. The membership changed. It's a different kind of orientation.

18. WITNESS TO THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION

After Lebourdais had gone to China he came back and he said that the Chinese wanted to know when I was coming over. Here I was involved in Progressive Worker and the Canada-China Friendship Association and what not, and they wanted to talk to me. The next group that went over I sent word that I wasn't going to come over on a tour, which was the norm at that time. If they wanted me to come, I would only come on the basis that I could have political discussions, and you didn't get much of that on these cultural tours. I knew there was going to be certain limits to political discussions, but I wanted to get to someone that I could put questions to and have some answers back. The second group came back and it was the same thing. When is Scott coming over. I sent back the same word: "I'll come over when you give me an invitation from the Party, not through the Friendship Association."

Finally I got an invitation from them, from the Chinese Communist Party through its International Liaison Committee. They decided that they would give me an invitation but they wanted to know who the invitation should come from. "From the Party of course," I said. "It will be from the Party, certainly," they said, "but in whose name? After all, if we send an invitation from the Party you will be persecuted." Their position was that they had to cover it up. Well, I had two responses. First, we still have a bit of democracy here. And, second, I'm known anyhow and there is little point trying to hide what the RCMP and the rest of them will very easily find out anyway. Eventually they send me an invitation from the All China Federation of Trade Unions, which actually didn't exist anymore.

This was in the very early stages of the Chinese Cultural Revolution and the Federation had been wiped out by that point. This was about 1966 and I'd already committed myself to go on a speaking tour across the country. My main effort was in Canada and I didn't want to break my contacts. So I asked them if they would mind postponing the trip a year, which they agreed to. It ended up that I was to go in April and May of 1967, which happened to coincide with the peak of the Cultural Revolution. I had no idea this would happen of course.

I remember I didn't want to make arrangements for a leave of absence from my job at the Pender. I just wanted to arrange my vacation to coincide with this trip. I'm waiting day-by-day to get the official letter of invitation so that I know I'm actually going. The Chinese were going to pay the fare and they had told me I could bring a young comrade with me. I arranged for John Wood to come along and I'm waiting for the official letter of invitation day-by-day, living up on East Twenty-second and working the afternoon shift. The mail always came about an hour or two before I left for work, the mail-man just dropping it off. As usual the mail-man came and I'm preparing to go to work, and then there is this knock at the door. There's the mailman. He's got this registered letter from China, full of apologies that they hadn't delivered it sooner. There is a big limousine sitting out in the road and a guy standing there smiling. "This could have waited until tomorrow," I said.

“Well, I wanted to deliver it today.” The goddamn envelope had been opened and it was so goddamn obvious, they had resealed it with Scotch tape. They just wanted me to know that they knew what was going on.

I got Lilian Martin, who was in *Progressive Worker*, to move in with my wife. She was going to university and didn’t have a youngster then, so she just gave up her apartment, saved her rent, and moved in with Hilda while I went off to China. It was quite an adventure.

When I get to the airport it turns out they’ve booked me on a big tour. There are actually two big tours. One going to Tokyo and one going to Hong Kong. I’m quite hostile about this. I made it quite clear. I booked this fare a long time ago and we want to get on the plane. We’re not about to be ruled out. Just wait awhile, we’re told. “Go sit down and I’ll call for you when we’re ready.” I’m not at all satisfied. Finally we got a call and I went up to see. “I’m afraid you’re going to be really put out about this.” He says, “The plane is really crowded and we have to put you in first class.” The only time I ever went first class was to China and on the way back, the way it turned out. So, we go first class, John Wood and I. There weren’t very many people in first class to Tokyo. From Tokyo to Hong Kong there was only the two of us with two stewardesses and a steward to wait on us. If meat had been cut and a wine bottle had been opened I think they must have got to take the rest home if it wasn’t finished. “Oh try this wine. We’ve got some roast beef here. Try it.” They were pushing the stuff on us for four hours from Tokyo to Hong Kong. Really pushing the stuff on us. Sample most things that they had there. They were happy.

The Cultural Revolution is really going full-swing at this time. China, according to all reports, is on the road to hell, or maybe it’s made it there all the way and is part of the way back. When we’re going people were telling us, when you go into Hong Kong don’t wear any buttons or any badges because you’ll have trouble. I’m not a button-wearer. I’m not that kind of person. I don’t wear buttons, carry banners over my shoulder and things. I just don’t go in for that kind of thing. It’s alright for some people. I had a Mao button in my pocket. The thing to do in China, of course, is wear a Mao button, at least there. A small one. On the way from Tokyo to Hong Kong I began to figure, who the hell are those bastards to tell me what I can wear and can’t wear. I put the bloody Mao button on my lapel.

We got in to the Hong Kong airport. It’s entirely different now. A new airport. You used to go in and your baggage wouldn’t come on a carousel like it does here. It would have been carried in. It was a long area where the baggage was all spread out. There was a long bench and the higher-ups were all white, all English, but the guys you had contact with were all Chinese. I’m walking down the line. What you have to do is go up there and watch for your baggage. When you spy your baggage you point it out to them and the customs guy, maybe about ten feet back, would go pick it up. The guy looks at my button and says, “Chairman Mao. You going to Peking?” I said, “Yeah, I’m going to Peking.” The button paved my way so easy. It didn’t do any damage for me at all. We stayed over there in a hotel that was owned by the Party. The Golden Gate, Hong Kong. We were there for a couple of days, I guess.

At that time — now you can ride a train right through to Canton — you rode

to the border and you had to go out through British customs and walk across a bridge and go through Chinese customs and immigration. So we got off and of course we have no visas and we have to sit on the Hong Kong side of the border I guess for it must have been a couple of hours, waiting for visas to come out from Canton. They came out on a sheet of paper about the size of a page of your passport. When we got our visas, they had looked after our baggage, taken it across the bridge. They were just waiting. We walked across the bridge. Military guys were there and we showed our passport and our visa. Never examined our baggage or anything like this.

We were in China. We could hear the Red Guards screaming already in the town. People were out from Canton and Peking to meet us there at the border of Lo-Wu. We had a meal there in a restaurant and everybody that were there for other business got herded into a hall where we were entertained by a Mao propaganda group singing and giving us slogans. Some diplomatic people and personnel were very put out. Then we're off on the train to Canton. Spent a day or two there and then went to Peking.

Things were really in a turmoil. This was after Mao had issued his slogan, "Bombard the headquarters," which, in fact, meant attack the Party bureaucracy. The Party headquarters, which was just across the street and down a little bit from the Hotel Peking, was surrounded by thousands of Chinese workers. The Peking City Committee is inside and can't get out. Barricaded inside. It was a big building. Four storeys. Occupied nearly a square city block. Huge. Something a party in power would have for the municipal committee in the capital city of the country. Four days and four nights. Someone would march away but others would be taking their place. It was all organized. Marching away to go and eat maybe and have a rest and go to work. Kept on. Four days after we got there the Municipal Party Committee surrendered. They couldn't hold out any longer. They handed over the building to this Provisional Revolutionary Committee that was set up.

There was a young woman who had just come out of the Foreign Languages Institute. I was the first one that she was interpreter for. I really gave her a hard time. Her name was Deng. She was with me other times that I went to China except the last time. They were being very careful. You want to go someplace, there'd be a limousine at the front door and they'd almost drive you into the bloody building that you were going to. I started raising hell. I kept telling her, "I want to go out and walk in the street. I want to go to the park, want to run into people, meet people." "You can't do that. You might get hurt and how would we explain that to the Canadian people." "The Canadian people aren't interested in what happens to me. I go to work every day. I could be killed at work and they don't concern themselves with that." "Oh that would never do. You can't do that. Come up in the morning to my room and we'll discuss what we're going to do that day." I told her one morning, if I didn't get walking in the street and walking around the park, I was going to go out and put up my own big character poster, which was all the rage at the time, character posters. I'm going to put up my own big character poster and title it, "Down with bourgeois treatment of foreign guests." "You wouldn't do that, Comrade." "I would and furthermore I have a friend in the language institute and

I'll get him and he'll write it in Chinese for me so everybody can read it." "You wouldn't do that." "Yes I will."

After I raised this with her I was looking out the window in the evening. Two youngsters came along and painted in black a big character poster on the sidewalk. It must have been about thirty feet long. Chinese characters. She came up in the morning. She came in. I said, "Did you see my big character poster?" "Oh you didn't." "Come on." "See that one down there on the sidewalk. That's mine. "Down with bourgeois treatment of foreign guests." She didn't read it. It wasn't mine of course. The next day she came and told me I could walk in the streets and go to the park.

I understood later why they might have been a bit concerned. We got down the street a little bit and of course there are not that many foreigners around. There were a number of foreigners who were working there and were still there around Peking, but they stuck pretty well to their quarters and to the area where they worked. Very few foreigners on the streets. There were only seventy guests of the central committee from various parts of the world that year in China. That was it and most of them were not hitting the streets. Following orders and staying in. I got out, down the street a bit, and pretty soon I'm surrounded by what must have been three thousand young Chinese, all quite friendly. Some of them can speak English, interpreting, hammering questions at me. What's happening in the outside world. What do you think about what's going on in China and so on. All very friendly. The problem is the ones on the outside want to get in to hear what's going on in the middle so the pressure is on. It can be a bit scary. You are in the middle of a very friendly crowd, but its a crowd nevertheless. I was quite happy to get out of it. Managed to survive it.

I was quite happy to get on the streets and really see what was going on, how people were feeling. There was a tremendous mass movement at the time. It was beginning to get out of control. Mao, obviously, was hoping to keep control of it through his forces, but it was getting out of control. Education just wasn't happening at all. All they were doing was learning the quotations from Mao Tse-tung from the Little Red Book. They were sitting around learning these. They could quote Mao. That was all you needed to do.

The industry was in many places at a stand-still. I went up to Anshan in Manchuria and the steel mill there was still operating. There was a very militant attitude there, very pro-Mao. They had come out with what is known as the Anshan Constitution which was widely accepted around the country, but unlike other places they were still working. A lot of other places wasn't much going on. The only exception was the peasants were still growing food, which was the salvation of China, although there was a lot of disruption in that as well. There was quite a bit of shortage. I saw this as a real problem.

A lot of other things were going on that were substantially correct. The tendency now is to write off the Cultural Revolution. Hu Yao-bang comes out and makes a pronouncement that the Cultural Revolution was 100 per cent wrong, that there was nothing good that happened, which is not an assessment that I agree with. Because a lot of things that laid the basis for something to happen later did take place

during the Cultural Revolution. Now it could have taken place, obviously, without the chaos and without the fighting and so on that went on. But it did take place and it has to be taken into consideration in the assessment. They built canals, worked like hell doing things. Bull work doing everything by hand. Built dams, they built some roads, they terraced fields for growing crops, they levelled off some areas, they carried through a new organization of the land so that machinery could be used on it. This laid the basis for something to happen later on. Like I say, it could have been done in a better way. The fact is, it was done. Millions of people were mobilized to work by hand. That couldn't have been done otherwise. They brought water to hard land.

I was in Guangdong province outside of Canton, where they hadn't had rain for ten months. They were beginning to get worried. The only thing that saved them was that they had built five dams by hand. Real bull work. Thousands and thousands of peasants carrying dirt in baskets, build up a dam. Out of dirt and stones. There was still a little bit of water. It was very low, but there was still a little bit of water in the dams even after ten months of no rain. If it hadn't been for that there would have been absolutely no crops in that area at all. They would have been totally burned up. That was done during the early stages of the Cultural Revolution. So there were some good things that came out of it.

A hell of a lot of bad things. There was even fighting between Red Guard groups. One afternoon we were wheeling into the Stone Family Village where Bethune is buried, riding from the railroad station to the Party guesthouse. And here's a fight going on in the street. Real bad one between two Red Guard groups, supposedly supporters of Mao but both having different ideas of what Mao is and was and they're going to settle it by having a battle in the streets. The army finally intervened and sent them off to their separate headquarters whence they began to run the mimeograph machine and put out leaflets stating their positions. A lot of battles were going on. A lot of young people were going to the countryside, some of them obviously quite reluctantly going there. We had numerous discussions, and asked a lot of questions. I spoke several times. I spoke in Szechuan. I spoke to a middle school, which is a high school in Canadian parlance. In Shanghai I spoke to the Assembly. I spoke to university groups in Shanghai. There was a lot of exchange of opinion and I was able to move around quite freely.

We had some contact with high-level officials. I had dinner with Kang Sheng and his wife. His wife was also a political leader in her own right, and not because she was the wife of Kang Sheng, who was head of the intelligence apparatus, head of the Body Guard for Mao Tse-tung. I also had the opportunity twice to talk to Chou En-lai, just briefly to talk to him. I met Mao but didn't get any chance to discuss things with him. But there were discussions with leading Party people. I was a guest of the International Liaison Committee of the General Committee of the Party, so it was all political there. I talked with political people everywhere I went and asked questions. Always got answers. Some of them I wasn't particularly impressed with, but nevertheless I was able to raise questions.

Most of the Party people were in favour of the Cultural Revolution. Liu Shao-chi was not. The big campaign in the middle of the Cultural Revolution was against

him, but left him unnamed. The leading Party person taking the capitalist road was how they always referred to him. It was on May Day, the first of May, that his name was first heard. You could hear the slogan, "Da do, Liu Shao-chi." Down with Liu Shao-chi. He was being named. That was the end of Liu Shao Chi once they started using his name.

There was a group from Belgium. They broke away from the Party and they were quite an extensive group because the guy who led them had been a member of the political bureau of the Party in Belgium, but I can't remember his name off hand. They started putting out a paper *Drapeau Rouge*, or *Red Flag*. They became known as the *Drapeau Rouge* group. This guy had a big name in Belgium. He had been in the Resistance movement in Belgium and was looked upon as a national hero, quite an influential person, so he was quite effective in establishing a group. But he was very close to Liu Shao-chi, had been several times to China, had met Liu Shao-chi, had conversations with him and so on. The group used to talk about this, and they're not happy about what was happening to Liu Shao-chi. I had some contact with the people in Belgium and somehow or other they had heard that I was going to China and they wrote a letter saying that two of their people were going to China as a delegation and would like to get together with me. But I was gone by the time the letter arrived here. It was sent on to me and got to me in Peking, but I was going to be out of Peking when they were coming in. So I asked the representative of the Central Committee who was in the Hotel Peking, if I was going to be near Shanghai and if I could make arrangements to have them intercepted in Shanghai. They were going to come in a long way around. They didn't want to go through the Soviet Union, so they were coming around through Cairo, Delhi, Phnom Penh and into Shanghai and then from Shanghai to Peking. They would get in touch with the comrades in Shanghai and see about arranging it.

Things were arranged and I had a fairly long meeting — an hour or more — with them. We had several hours to wait before the connecting plane came in to pick them up and go on to Peking. They were preparing themselves to confront people in Peking and they wanted to know what I had found out and what I thought of what was going on. There were these Mao propaganda groups all over the country. There were millions of them. Everyplace you went you would be confronted with this sloganeering, singing songs, dancing. Some of it was quite pleasant. Singing songs and that. My interpreter came to where we were in the private room — which might very well have been bugged, I don't know — and said that the young workers in the airport were going to put on the usual show, which was propaganda and wanted everybody to come. All the passengers that were going to the airport were all herded into a big room and sat down. And, as I mentioned, they were actually naming Liu Shao-chi. They started early on with the slogan "Da Do Liu Shao-chi." I said to the two Belgians. "Do you know what they're saying?" They said, "No." "They're saying down with Liu Shao-chi." They said, "Are you sure?" "Yes I'm positive. I've been hearing it all over the place for the last couple of days. It started on the first of May." "Would you mind asking your interpreter?" "Not at all." So, I turned to Deng. "What are they saying?" She says, "They're saying, down with Liu Shao-chi." They were just shattered because

they knew the significance of it. This was the break. It led to a split in the Belgian group.

The one I mentioned that had been a hero in the resistance movement opposed Mao and his group became the main branch of this Belgian outfit. They remained supportive of the line of Liu Shao-chi. But there was a split, a break, and a new group that was loyal to Mao emerged. The new group were known as the *Clarté* group because they published a paper entitled *Clarté*. Quite a struggle went on. There were a number of Belgian students at the time going to university in Peking and this was how Sidney Rittenberg got himself involved. Big fight between them. The Belgians complained mightily about interference in their internal affairs because Rittenberg was manipulating the Belgian students in Peking, who eventually went home, as a matter of fact, and worked against the main *Drapeau Rouge* group, aligned with the new group, split away. There were exchanges. The Belgians put out a long paper with articles on the "Counter-revolutionary plot of Sidney Rittenberg." Damned to no end.

Rittenberg, incidentally, had become a very important figure in Peking. He was in control of Peking Radio at the time. He was pretty well boss of that. He invited me to come and speak on Peking Radio. They heard me here. It was on short wave. Some people told me when I came back that they heard me speaking on Peking Radio. He was linked up with the group that sacked the British Embassy. This was the group also that changed the names of streets. Like the street that the Soviet Embassy was on they renamed Anti-revisionist Street. They wanted to change all of the traffic lights, or at least change the system, that the traffic would move on red and stop on green. They wanted to rename China the People's Commune. There was a big discussion. This came out of Shanghai, incidentally. A big discussion about this and a big fight for it. The powers that be were giving explanations. We can't do that because if we do that all of our diplomatic relations are involved. We'll have to change our contacts with other countries and so on. They put a whole big legalistic argument up about changing the name of the country. Later on, Rittenberg himself came under attack. He spent some years in jail.

Rittenberg was originally with the Red Cross. He went to China and he was in Yen-an. He was in Yen-an at the time of the retreat from Yen-an. He just simply stayed there. He was there, so he was there representing the American Red Cross, but stayed on in China. He had no radical background. He was not a radical when he went there. He became radicalized when he went there and he married a Chinese woman, had a family, three or four kids. Just simply stayed there. The funny thing about him was that when they started attacking him, they came up with the far-out statement that he wasn't Sidney Rittenberg at all. The real Sidney Rittenberg had been killed near Yen-an and that this was a CIA agent that had infiltrated and took Sidney Rittenberg's name. So he landed in jail and spent a few years there. Crazy times!

I was in Peking on May Day. The big celebrations in the centre of the city. All of the guests of the International Liaison Committee were up on top of the wall of the Forbidden City, at the gate into the Forbidden City. There were two levels of us. Tables were arranged. Four people could sit. You drank tea and ate cookies the

full length of the time. We were on the lower level. One was about two feet taller than the other. On the top level, there were all these Chinese dignitaries up there. Chu-teh was there. He was sort of in Mao's black books at the time, but he was there. Deng Xiao-ping was there. A whole number of them. Some of them that were more or less out of it. Mao came along and I saw him talking to Chu-teh. We were all seated. The foreigners were all seated on the lower level. Could look out over Tian'anmen. People were gathered. A tremendous group of them. There was a space open, the full length of the square, maybe about fifteen feet wide. And lines of People's Liberation Army men keeping people back. The whole idea was that all of the dignitaries that were coming down, led by Mao, were going to come down in jeeps. They were gonna drive down through this open space to the front entrance of the Forbidden City and come up to the top. It's of course already dark. It was after nine o'clock at night. They're gonna have fireworks. They're waiting for darkness. The lights of the jeeps start showing. The people saw it and they began pressing in. Again, the people on the outside want to be on the inside and there was pressure. Pretty soon this open space started disappearing. More PLA men came out on the run, but couldn't hold the people. I wouldn't be surprised if some people were killed that night. I saw a number being carried out of the crowd. Crushed. There were lights there. It looked like being at sea on a moonlight night. The crowds were really fantastic. It ended up that Mao and the rest of the dignitaries had to come around the back way and sneak in the back way in order to be able to get there and come up on the top.

It was really a rather, in my view, frightening experience. Seeing such mass hysteria develop around one person. It's really fantastic. Mao came up and he came down. He stopped at all the tables and spoke to various people, guests there from abroad. The young woman who was my interpreter, this was the closest she'd ever gotten to Mao Tse-tung and she was close to hysteria. A young woman about twenty-three or twenty-four. An unnerving experience for her. She could hardly speak. No use as an interpreter at all.

That's the time that I met Mao. Chao En-lai was there. And Lin Piao who was still riding high at that time. Down at one end of this long gallery there was a big space and there was a group of navy women, a choir, who had been singing some music and I sort of went by that way behind Mao. These women knew he was coming. They didn't know, however, that he was there until he came into sight and they just went crazy. Talk about young women here over rock and roll stars. This was an exhibition of it. Mao was at the peak of his power then and it was rather frightening. Of course, it was partly, undoubtedly, reflecting an opposition to a bureaucracy that had become entrenched and that it appeared that he was unseating at the time, particularly his call to bombard the headquarters.

It had bad consequences though. I remember John Wood wasn't in very good health. He died before he was forty. He died a couple of years ago. He was getting sick and one day he had to go to the hospital for an examination, get some pills for some pains in his back. He went in the hospital. They knew he was coming, but when he came they told him he'd have to wait because the doctor was out putting up his big character poster. This was all the rage all through China at the time, put-

ting up big character posters saying what you wanted. They were piling one on top of the other. You couldn't see the walls. It was exciting, but it was also frightening in some respects.

We went to Stone Family Village, where Bethune was buried. He was a Party member and I knew him. There were people in China that knew that. They made it known that I had known Bethune and this was a big thing. When I got to where he was buried and where the Bethune hospital was built, there was to be a ceremony. The hospital was set a way back in from the street. There was a long road with a life-size statue of Bethune sitting in the middle of this driveway and the driveway curved around the side of it. I didn't notice it at first. We drove up to the gates and the gates are closed. Rather strange. We got to get out and walk for a change. Sometimes, Christ, you'd think they were gonna drive up the steps of the bloody building with the car and take you in. All of a sudden I realize that they've got all of the patients who were able to walk, all of the nurses and doctors, out there lined up in the driveway. The goddamn lineup is about a quarter of a mile long. I've got to walk up between the two lines being greeted like a bloody hero. Completely out of character for me. I complained about it. "Well, the comrades want to show appreciation for you coming here." I knew bloody well, the comrades were told to turn out to greet us and they did. I think they enjoyed being there. It was really a terrific reception.

Two or three things happened like that. We were to go to a Chinese opera one night in the auditorium. Putting on *The Red Lantern*. The only time I heard a Chinese opera sung in those high-pitched voices which was common in that area. I enjoyed the opera, as a matter of fact. I rather liked it. There were several of these Peking operas that came out in the Cultural Revolution that I liked. You don't see them anymore. Some of them I liked the music that went with it. We were having our dinner before going. We're sitting in the dining hall having dinner. I kept saying, "We're going to be late." "It's alright. There's plenty of time." Of course, what they were waiting for was everybody else to be there. We come in from the back, and, again, everybody else is there waiting for us to show up. Everybody's on their feet clapping. We had to parade down to the front of the theatre and sit there to watch the theatre. At the end, we went up on the stage and met the cast. Photographs of meeting Mao and others. When the opera's finished, everybody has to stay there until we leave. All standing. This is bothering me to no end. Something that I just don't care for at all. There's nothing about me that deserved it to start with. I just felt rather embarrassed, but this is what happened all the way through.

One time we had been outside of Shanghai and we were riding back into town in a mini-bus. Two people from the International Liaison Committee were responsible for my safety. We're riding back into Shanghai along the Bund. This was the time where there's a big strike in Hong Kong and there was a big fight. A lot of people thought that the Chinese Army was going to march across the border at any time. It wasn't going to happen. There was a lot of bitterness in China about the way the Chinese were being attacked by the police in Hong Kong. It was a nonentity of a strike to start with. It happened that about a dozen employees producing artificial flowers went on strike, were attacked by the police, and the whole bloody

colony was tied up in no time. Bitter battles being fought in the streets. There were big demonstrations going on all through China in support of Hong Kong workers. They were painting slogans on the side of the British freighters. I remember seeing one slogan, "Hang up Wilson." Wilson was Prime Minister in Britain at the time. "Hang up Wilson." That's the way it translated. The British sailors weren't at all happy because they knew that once they got to sea they were going to have to go over the side on a bosun's chair and paint all of these slogans out.

Anyway we pass by what was the British Consulate. It's now the Seamen's Institute since they took it over, but then it was a consulate. There's a picket line at the British Consulate. I said, "Is this a picket line on the British Consulate? Stop the bus. I want to get off. I want to go picket." They did stop the bus, but a big argument went on. The Peking people didn't want any part of it. They were responsible for my safety. The Shanghai people were all for it. It finally wound up that they decided that I could go on the picket line for fifteen minutes.

It was when I was in Peking that I saw firsthand the divisions within Vietnam. In PW we had our contacts in Paris with Madame Binh and we also had contacts in Peking. There were two representatives in Peking, one from the Provisional Revolutionary Government and one from Hanoi and North Vietnam. They had separate embassies. I told the Chinese that I wanted to go to both. We went to the North Vietnam embassy first and were told that they would not recognize any group that was not sanctioned by the Soviet Union. I didn't stay there very long. We went to the Provisional Revolutionary Government people and they knew about us, about resolutions we had passed and money we had raised and so on. Very warm reception. They gave me a bunch of reproductions of sketches, which I still have up on the wall. There was one significant statement they made which stuck with me. "We are defeating U.S. imperialism with only half of our people committed." In other words North Vietnam is building up its highly trained army, well-armed, supported by the Soviet Union, but the real fighting is being done by others. And yet it was the North Vietnam army that marched into Saigon and took over. They were really quite bitter about the whole situation. It was obvious that there were very serious differences between the PRG and Hanoi on the way to conduct the struggle. That was where I got the movie that we used in Canada.

Mostly the Chinese wanted to talk about anything I knew about the outside. I particularly had contacts in England and, most particularly, in Ireland. Knew about the United States, of course, and about Canada. They asked questions about all of this. They had a problem. They were cut off. The embassies were closed down. They had a few contacts around, but they didn't have any real contacts to know what was going on, what was going on in the left and so on. So they had to ask questions of people if they were to get information. "What's happening here. What's happening there. What's the development in the labour movement." They were very anxious indeed to get parties that were along their lines. They figured that it was enough for a few people to get together and have a chairman and declare themselves a party and this was it, which we totally disagreed with. It would have been easy for us to get the China franchise. They would have given all kinds of help to get it going. They made it quite clear. If you want any help, it's there. But

we always had a very solid position on this. We would survive in Canada or we wouldn't survive at all. That was it. We wouldn't accept any help. We gave more help than we ever accepted. Raised more help for people like Vietnam and for other groups. Never took anything.

When I was there a leading figure in an Australian breakaway from the CP looked me up. The group was headed by a guy named Hill and he was spending more time in China than he was in Australia during these years. He was a lawyer. He had been on the central committee and the political bureau of the Party and broke away in a dispute that was a pure break on the basis of supporting Peking as against Moscow. They were a very small group, very insignificant. The only thing that made them important was the way China treated them. They treated Hill as some kind of an important figure from a foreign country. The secretary of this Hill group was in Peking for medical treatment and he sought me out. Wanted to talk to me. He asked me how we functioned in Canada. "We function normally. We got clubs and we put out propaganda and so on and hold public meetings." "And how do you sell your paper?" "We have subscriptions and we go on the streets and sell." "You go on the streets and sell?" I said, "Of course. People complain if we're not there on time. People who buy regularly on the street corner rather than subscribe." That was true. People used to come down to the street corner. If we were a day or two late, "Where the hell were you? I was here two days ago looking for you." He said they had one guy in one of these cities that sold on the street corner, but if somebody came regularly to buy they always suggested — because there might be somebody watching, seeing him — to them to take a subscription and get it through the mail. I laughed. We had a subscription to the Australian *Vanguard* and I knew how it was packaged. I said, "You have a very distinctive wrapping. The people in the post office don't even need to open it. They can see it going down the conveyor belt. Ah, ha, the *Vanguard*. All they have to do is look at the address and write it down." He said, "You know, I never thought of that." I said, "If you want to be that secretive you better think of it."

They had groups that were no bigger than three. If it got to be four they split. Some people who they felt were extra sensitive, they never put in a group at all. They said they'd have somebody meet them on the street corner for twenty minutes or so. This guy told me that the members were beginning to drop away. I said, "What the hell do you expect. What kind of Party life is that. Why don't you act normally?" "Well, we expect reaction. We're going to be underground." "You are underground. You put the cells underground. You've got to use democracy while you've got it." Just paranoia. I said, "Well they're not going to operate like that. If they catch up to you, that's too bad. I guess a lot of us will go to jail if that's what they want, but in the meantime, we're accepting the fact that we live in a democracy and we're gonna bloody well use it to the utmost."

It was the young people that were the ones who were on the move in China. In a way it wasn't that strange, except the extent of it, because that's the period when youth all over the bloody world were breaking bonds, were storming all over the place in groups. The difference in China was that there were people in high places who had their own axe to grind encouraging this. Mao was encouraging this dec-

laration, "Bombard the Headquarters" and all of this business. The young people were taking this as a licence to rebel. And rebel they did. They were pulling down statues. In Shanghai they pulled down a statue of Beethoven. They got run into a cooler and given a lecture that they were not to do these kinds of things. That was not their property. It was the property of the people. But they were doing all of these kind of things.

There are always individual quarrels on any concrete event. The Cultural Revolution gave a lot of people the golden opportunity to avenge themselves against real or imagined grievances they had against other people. Many people got beaten up and so on because of these individual grievances. It was not party policy, not state policy, but the attitude of those that were dominating the state sort of gave this kind of a licence. All you had to do was denounce somebody as a capitalist roader and you could mobilize a bunch of characters who were quite willing to come out and beat the hell out of them. That was one very bad feature of the times. There may have been just a few isolated instances but it was done and people were killed, a lot of people were permanently maimed. A great many suffered not for any political reasons at all, but because of individual grievances against them by someone who could utilize the storm that was there to strike against them and do away with them or maim them in some way. That was certainly one of the extremely bad features of the Cultural Revolution.

You're torn in two ways, at least I was in China. On the one hand there was a great deal that was going on, like the stirring of the youth. The marches, their readiness to come out and raise hell with bureaucrats that had been ruling for a number of years. They would go and seize trains and travel from one end of the country to the other. It was a glorious opportunity. They had never seen their own country before. Like the young woman who interpreted for me was born in Taiyuan not far from Peking and had gone to Peking and went through the Foreign Languages Institute. The first opportunity she had to travel in China was because she went with me, travelled with me. For the first time she began to see some of her own country. This was an opportunity to get around. They were storming around. It looked like a gigantic hippie movement, if you understand what I mean. Some of the parts of that were good in the sense of youth that were prepared to rebel. You felt good about that. On the other hand, what disturbed me more than anything else was the tremendous personal power that Mao appeared to have, the sway that he had over the multitudes. And he had it. You could see the response of the people to him. He had this tremendous personal influence of being able to move millions of people. That scared me. That disturbed me. That I did not associate with socialism.

Of course, I always argued with the Chinese that what they have is not socialism. You can't come out of a backward society like that into socialism. They're fighting their way out. There were these disturbing things about it. You were sort of being torn two ways. What is good and what is not so good. There were not classes in the schools. Young people went to the schools, but all they did was learn quotations from the Little Red Book. Everybody except Mao carried a Little Red Book. This was funny to me. You always had to have one with you. If you didn't, you were naked unto the multitude.

It was funny the way Deng handled it. We always discussed, in my room in the morning, what we were going to do and where we were going to go and so on. We'd leave the room and we got out in front of where we were — the hotel or a guest house of wherever we were staying. She never asked me in the room. She'd wait until I was outside. She'd say, "Have you got your Little Red Book with you, comrade?" Inevitably, I would have forgotten the damn thing. "I'll go back and get it." "It's alright. I have an extra one." I had a whole stack of these damn things. I continually forgot about it and she had an extra one to give me.

Lin Piao was the one who promoted this. He wrote a little introduction on a slip cover of the second edition. He promoted the Red Book. If you could just quote this you were alright. At meetings, they'd be waving. I used to get a kick out of Chou En-lai because he waved his Red Book down here by his waist. Lin Piao — he was a little short guy anyhow — he was reaching up as high as he could with his Little Red Book, making sure everybody saw him waving it.

The Red Guard started in Shinhua University, actually among university students. I've got four Red Guard bands. I was inducted into four different Red Guard groups. I asked one of the people in the Party, "What's going to happen if two of these groups I belong to get fighting one another? What am I going to do?" I'd be in between because they did fight one another quite often. I've still got the bands. And buttons! I'd stripped down to one in the morning, but by the time I'd come home at night both lapels would be covered in buttons. Every group had their own Mao button. You'd be going around and each group would be pinning a button on you. I had a whole collection. I must have given several hundred away and I'm sure I've still got at least a hundred more buttons in the house yet.

But it wasn't just students who were in the Red Guards. Workers were caught up in it too. Amongst the young people particularly. In fact, it was taken advantage of in Shanghai by the mayor who was an old veteran of the Party. He had been on the Long March. The way they used to talk about him was that it was unfortunate an old revolutionary had gone off the path. Apparently he had. He became quite a high liver and so on. This, of course, was where the Cultural Revolution had its beginning. Right in Shanghai. When I came in on a flight from Canton to Peking the plane still stops in Shanghai way out in the airport and you have to come down the ramp and walk to the airport building. I came down the ramp of the plane. This young woman is waiting there. She says, "Are you Comrade Scott?" I said, "Yes, that's me." She said, "Well, you have to wait a couple of hours to go on to Peking. I have arranged for you to have a meal in the airport building." So we went to the airport building and I walked across the tarmac. It's a long building with long steps up to the entrance. She's walking a couple of steps in front of me. She gets up on the front step and I'm behind her and she turned around and she's all excited. She says, "You know we just seized power in Shanghai today." "Oh," I said, "what happened in 1949?" This is part of the Shanghai Storm, so called, you know.

There had been a real uprising there. I had a funny experience there. Wood and I were sitting at a table and there was a guy sat at a table behind us. He had been on the plane and I heard him speaking in very good English — sounded like university English — to the waitress. I turned around and I said, "You're English." He

said, "No, I'm German." I said, "You sounded very English. Would you like to sit with us?" So he came and sat down. He sat there and we were talking. He was a businessman. He went to China every year to buy things, carvings and so on. He was telling me about how terrible it was. His customers wanted little old men with long grey beards. He said, "They're not making little old men with long grey beards anymore. It's this other revolutionary art now and what you get from them is it — that's what you get. Take it or leave it." He was leaving and going back home. I thought he was making a mistake. Some of the pieces are good carvings and really beautifully done on a revolutionary theme. I told him, "You know, you're really missing a good bet, because there's a lot of rich people in Germany would buy them and put them on their table as a conversation piece." He said, "Maybe you're right." But he was on his way back home.

This was on my way in and I got the word that things had definitely changed, at least the way the young woman felt. In Shanghai, there were some very bitter street battles that were fought. I mean battles with guns. The mayor had come under fire as a capitalist roader and he was pretty well under house arrest. They told me, there's nothing happening to him. Sometimes they have to come out and report on how they degenerated and so the militia goes down there and brings them out and makes them appear before the meeting. "Nobody does them any harm." I said, "What do you mean they don't do them any harm. I'd rather you stand me up against a board and bloody well shoot me than go through all of this goddamn nonsense. Every time the masses want to hear me make a confession, you drag me out and stand me up in front of them. No way." This turmoil was still going on while I was there. I was in and out of Shanghai several times.

The mayor, before he had been deposed, had told the young workers that students were getting money to travel around the country and go by train. "You should have it too." So he gave them the municipal fund to divide amongst them to finance traipsing around the country, which disrupted production and completely broke the city financially. He did it in order to win support for himself. It didn't do him any good. He lost out in the end anyway. A lot of the young people, young workers in Shanghai, took off. Mostly it was students elsewhere that were travelling the country. There were very few workers travelling with this exception. Quite a few thousand young Shanghai workers took to the roads and the railways and did some travelling around, spent the municipal fund, had a glorious time to themselves.

I think I mentioned that I was supposedly invited by the Trade Union Federation which actually didn't exist. Like most organizations, it had been done away with. It was just provisional revolutionary committees that existed. When I got into Peking, two of them met me, two that had been in the old China Federation of Trade Unions. They met me and they greeted me and saw me into Peking and had lunch and then they disappeared. I never saw them again until my last day in Peking. Like I said before, I had been in and out of Peking a number of times and I never saw them. When I was leaving Peking for the last time, they came and gave me a banquet and saw me off on the plane. So, I saw them when I went in and saw them when I went out.

All told it was quite an experience, quite an adventure. You don't get to see a

society in motion like that often. Even if I was torn both ways on it, it was not something I would have wanted to miss. It was quite an introduction to China.

19. CHINA IN THE 1970s

Kuo Chin-gan came out to Vancouver. He was the one who was thrown out of Canada for passing money to the Indonesian Communist Party across the American border. He came out and asked me if I would like to go to China again, to see what was happening. He saw my wife and asked her if she'd like to go. He gave her a specific invitation, didn't just ask me to bring my wife along. She was really too sick to go and I figured she wouldn't last much longer, but I never thought of her dying in China. She wanted to go and I wasn't about to stand in her way. When I got the invitation it also said that I could bring along two or three young comrades if I wanted.

What it was, I think, was that the Chinese were very interested in the things that were taking place in the 1970s. There were all kinds of groups springing up and I had contacts with them and they knew this. They had an embassy open in Vancouver and they have people on the ground, see that I'm going backwards and forwards across the country, speaking at all kinds of places and at universities. This is what they were interested in and that is why this invitation came I suspect. Their contact was with me and, for whatever reason, they looked on me as the interpreter of the left in Canada. I never tried to convince them of this, but they convinced themselves. I wasn't in any way surprised at them coming and asking me to go.

So I got these people together, which made five of us altogether. Janet Hall, Al Birnie, and Ken Hansen came along. We headed out in 1974. My wife didn't travel that much with us. Once we got to Peking she stayed there and we went up to Manchuria. We went to Shenyang, the main city in Manchuria, and to a couple of big steel mills in Anshan and we came back on the train. On the trip we were talking about the experience of Manchuria with the Russian army. We started an argument between the Chinese themselves about the attitude and work of the Russian army at the end of the war. We took a position that was critical and one group of them took a position that was supportive even at that late stage of the Soviet army. Another group took a position of being highly critical. They argued. We finally left them and went to our own little car and went to bed. I don't know, maybe they argued all night.

Coming back we had to go through a tunnel from the tracks to get up into the station. Go through a tunnel onto the tracks and up into the station and onto the street. They wouldn't let anybody go through the tunnel until we cleared it and they saw us. There are people who don't want to wait and they're running across the tracks, they're crawling underneath cars on the tracks, you know. They don't want to stand around and wait for a bunch of bloody foreigners to get out of there before they can leave the station. I remembered Janet Hall and I rode in the big limousine with two leading officials. Janet was the one who opened it up. She started giving them hell for this business of clearing, not letting people come through the tunnel. She claimed this was a lot of bullshit in so many words. I chimed in in support of her. I said, "You know, you're supposed to be wanting to promote friendship be-

tween us. If foreigners came to my country and we were treated like that, being cleared off the streets so they could go by, I'd throw stones at them." So they said they would take our criticism into consideration. I'm sure they didn't do a goddamn thing about it. A lot of the people at this time who are going there were middle class people and so on and they thought this was alright to treat them like that. But we're workers. We just don't go for this bullshit at all. We noticed several times that they were clearing people out ahead of us and we were very upset about it. I never saw this before in 1967 when things were a lot tougher. They wouldn't have got away with it in 1967. The Chinese would simply have fought back. The young people would have fought back at that time.

When we got back to Peking, my wife was very sick and she finally had a massive heart attack. I stayed in the hospital with her. I had a room in the hospital. They had all of the best doctors available in Peking. Christ, they had a whole bloody swarm in there. I finally was complaining to them. They had her on machines, you know, as long as they could get a little tick on the machine. "Christ, just leave her alone. Let the woman die. She's not alive." "Well, there's a little bit of a pulse in there." Finally after arguing all night with them, at noon they finally declared that she was dead, so they came and asked me what I wanted to do. If I had said I wanted the body brought to Canada, they would have shipped it to Canada, you know. I said, "Well, there's no point in doing anything about taking her home." I wanted her cremated there. Scatter her ashes somewhere in China. In fact, I thought of scattering them out on a little lake out at Peking University. They said, "Well, do you want us to arrange things?" I said, "It would be very good if you did." Jesus, what an awful bloody business. Laid the corpse out and they went there and they had a service there and they played "A Hymn to a Fallen Comrade" and a whole bunch of people there. A lot of women there all crying. Really, you know, a whole emotional affair. I didn't feel a bit up to it. They took the body out to the crematorium and it was cremated there and the next day we go out to Paopaoshan, the cemetery for the revolutionary martyrs at Peking. A whole number of people were there as well. We go out there for the placing of the ashes. They were put in a little hand-crafted box and they photographed the front of the box and it was installed in a special place.

I was told before we went that my interpreter Deng wouldn't be there because she was in England with a group of students. A group of exchange students had gone to England to study the English language. When I got off the plane in Peking, who's there to meet me but Comrade Deng. I said, "I was told you were in England, you weren't going to be here." "Oh well, I came back specially to be here for you." I talked to her afterwards. And I asked her about England. "Oh very strange place. Very strange place." She wouldn't talk about it. I found out some time later — in fact, I found out at Peking University — that one of the students in England had defected and all the rest of them came back home right away. Doesn't happen anymore. They're expecting defections these days. It doesn't disturb them much.

I wasn't there as a Party guest on this 1974 trip. I was there for the first time as a guest of the Organization for Friendship with Foreign Countries.

Things were a lot more settled down, were more controlled in 1974. We all

went to the October banquet. There were a couple of people from Switzerland who sat there with us and Party people that we were with, of course. That was one of the times when Deng Xiao-ping surfaced briefly. He walked right by the table we were sitting at. That was, as far as I know, Chou En-lai's last public appearance. He spoke at the banquet. He came from the hospital and was already dying of cancer. Things were a lot calmer. There wasn't the turmoil that there had been. It was sort of the calm before the storm. It was after the storm started and the factional struggle took place. I stayed in Peking for a few days after Hilda's death and the rest went out. The Chinese weren't too anxious for me to travel. I think this was the first time that a foreign guest of the Party had died on their hands in China.

I was just moving around Peking, not doing much. "Is there someplace you'd like to go," I was asked. I said, "Well, let's take a ride out to the Great Wall." I should have had more bloody sense than that. I have low blood pressure. I was born that way. Ever since I was a kid. I couldn't go on swings. I couldn't go on roller coasters and things like that because the blood would just leave my head and I'd get dizzy and I'd get sick. It's more normal now. As you get older you're inclined to get high blood pressure. I simply got back to normal. Well, the road out to the Great Wall is like a bloody switchback. Just like a goddamn roller coaster. I should have considered it a little more carefully. I'm not feeling so hot by the time we get out to the Great Wall. Had a bottle of pop and I started walking up the wall. It was really windy. There's a strong wind blowing in from the Gobi and I'm going up this sharp incline, up the part of the Great Wall where there are a lot of tourists around. I get maybe half-way and I feel like I'm gonna collapse on my face. Just not feeling good at all. I'm just gritting my teeth and keeping at it, because I know if I fall, Christ, there will be alarm bells going all over the place. An ambulance would be there and I'd be off to the hospital. We get about half-way up and one of the guys with me said, "Well, Comrade, don't you think we should take a rest?" I looked at him quite calmly and coolly, and said, "If you're tired I don't mind taking a rest with you." I really needed it. I needed it a hell of a lot more than he did. So, we stopped and rested and I managed to survive and get back into Peking without too much trouble.

We did have discussions, questions, and criticisms. Some centred on politics and history, like the argument I mentioned about the role of the Russian Army. Others related to how the society was being run.

We went to Peking University where we met with all of the Canadian students except maybe a couple and some of the Chinese who were in the political science class. One of the Chinese was a PLA officer and there was one other young guy there who I considered finally to be a pretty bloodthirsty young character. Anyhow, we were discussing politics and I had a slight touch of diarrhea so I had to cut out and go to the toilet in a hurry. Ken Hansen, who went along on the trip, was still very enamoured of Stalin. He was a great leader. Him and I had many differences of opinion. Not hostile, but disagreements over Stalin's role in the world. I guess Ken thought that I'd be gone longer than I was and it was a good opportunity to find some aid and comfort in his beliefs about Stalin so he raised the question.

This young guy, by the time I come back, is really hammering on Stalin, what

a great guy he was and so on. I listened him out and then I challenged him. From there on for about three hours, it's one on one. Him and I arguing over the question of Stalin. I argued that you've got to place Stalin within the historical context of the Soviet Union. It's thirty years of Soviet history, not just Stalin is a bastard, which I was quite prepared to agree to. It would have gone longer, only they had to get out because they had to be at mealtime at a certain time and if they didn't get there they were going to lose out on their meal, so they all had to rush off and that ended it as far as him and I were concerned.

The Canadian students told me afterwards that the next day it was raised in class and they told the professor they wanted a lecture on Stalin. He said he would consider it. It took him a week. I guess he was discussing it with some high-powered people. After a week he came in and they said he started out with Stalin as a great Marxist-Leninist, and then he proceeded to say many of the things I had said. He didn't say all of them, but he said many, which convinced the students that probably I was right. The young guy there, he was quite bloodthirsty. He said that the people that Stalin killed needed to be killed and there were more that could have been killed. Something terrible.

In the centre of Shenyang there is a huge very imposing statue of Mao in the big square there. Janet said she wanted to take a photograph of it. It's made of some material that looks almost like bronze but isn't. They said we could come back tomorrow and take a photograph. So the next day we drive down that way and we got out and there's a whole crowd of Chinese around then. They all moved back and Janet's gonna take a photograph in front of the monument, but wants some Chinese in it. She is trying to coax them. No. They were standing way back about thirty feet. Finally, one little kid who couldn't have been more than seven or eight years old, came marching out. A little boy. Real courageous you know. Stood beside us. That broke the dam. Everybody started running in, gathered around us. Got a photograph with probably a couple of hundred Chinese in it. Until the little boy broke the dam they weren't about to. This kind of thing would disturb us, this shyness, staying away from foreigners.

At Anshan we're having a discussion about conditions. We were in a big blast furnace, big smelter area, big steel making area and they also make steel rails and things. The rails would be sliding down a big embankment there and the noise was terrible. Just awful. Nobody is wearing any protection for their ears. I'm nearly deaf from working in the bloody shipyards and not wearing any ear protection. I have a hearing aid. I never wear it. I had it with me then. Once in awhile I wore it. I had it in my pocket. When we got out to where we could hear, I started into them about the safety and health and protection of the hearing. They said the workers won't wear the ear protection. It's uncomfortable, they don't like it. I said I knew that but you had to campaign. Have to campaign all the time in Canada on TV, on radio. Protects the ear. It really doesn't matter. "The workers get used to it." I said, "Sure they get used to it. They get used to it by going deaf." I pulled the hearing aid out of my pocket. I said, "This is what happens. You have to wear one of these damn things. I know what it is because I got it." They're pretty bad on safety.

In Shanghai, they took us in to show us people who had had accidents at work,

had limbs off. One guy had lost a thumb on his right hand. They had taken his small toe off and made a thumb out of it. It's bad to lose a thumb. It's better to lose a finger than your thumb. So, they gave a thumb made out of a small toe. Another had a hand cut off and it was re-attached. He was showing us this and showed us some movies of operations being performed. Quite remarkable alright, although it's not only being done there. It's being done all over the world. At the end, they said, "What do you think?" I said, "That's fine. You've really done remarkable things, but what are you doing in order to make it so that you don't need to perform such operations, about safety on the job?" "Oh well, we're looking at that." They were very bad on safety. I've always criticized them on their safety in various plants.

In Anshan when we were having a discussion, we used to ask what wages people were getting because we were taking the position that we expected there would be a gap in wages. We were concerned about how wide the gap was between the lowest and the highest, and, even more importantly, was the gap widening or was it narrowing. Really nosy as hell. Going around the circle, asking each one what they got. There was one old guy there was getting a remarkable sum of money. Vastly different than everybody else. "Why is he getting so much?" "Well, he's an old revolutionary that we consider should get more money than others." Our position was that precisely because he was an old revolutionary he should be getting less, not more. They didn't think so. He should have been getting less than he was getting. It was really a remarkable difference. Many times the highest salary was being paid to anybody. This was the answer we got, "Because he was an old revolutionary." Not because he was more skilled, or doing better work or more productive. Because he was an old revolutionary.

We found out at Anshan there were seven different wage levels. There could be quite a difference. That's in the industry. Within the Party, there were something like fourteen different levels. Between the bottom and the top there would be quite a sharp difference. There was a bit of piecework being done in the factories in 1974 but not that much.

There was very little of a private market operating in 1974. There was some, but private plots in the countryside were fairly small. What they had on their private plots they could sell and some stuff was being sold. It was less organized than it is now. They would come in on street corners or around some area where they knew people gathered and they would sell there. There was nothing regular set up, stalls or anything like that. A peasant would ride a bicycle in from the countryside with what he could carry on the bicycle and sell it to people around. There wasn't all that much to be sold, obviously. Most of it was being consumed. They couldn't raise much. It's quite different now, I think. There was a bit of it there. If the peasant had something to sell, he could do it, he could sell it. During the Cultural Revolution you couldn't see any of it because they would be hounded out of the streets as capitalist roaders. By 1974 they were back to peddling a certain amount of stuff.

It obviously wasn't the best visit for me, Hilda having her stroke and all. I saw some changes and could tell it wasn't the same China as I had seen in 1967, but it was all just too harrowing. I went to Shanghai, but then I left the others. I would

have stayed with the group and gone on with them, but my hosts in Peking were rather against me pushing it too hard. They didn't want another death on their hands. Just upset them to no end. So I kind of shortened my visit up a bit. I ended up being there more than two weeks, which isn't too bad, but it was not as much time as you expect to spend on a journey of this kind. I went to Tokyo and then flew home.

Two years later, in 1976, there was a great deal of discussion in North America about Chinese foreign policy. Mainly it centred on the Chinese position that the Soviet Union was now a capitalist, imperialist power and that it represented the main threat to world peace, American imperialism being secondary. This had concrete ramifications in terms of the Russian-Cuban involvement in Angola and their support for the MPLA. Bill Hinton had made some speeches that were quite disturbing in as much as he was saying things in such a way as to imply that the Chinese were advocating a U.S.-Chinese alliance against the Soviets. I forget all of the details, but Hinton had come back from China and had made speeches that raised a furore on the China friendship circuit in the United States. Hinton was going around saying these things and claiming that this was his interpretation of what the Chinese had told him, and then the Chinese were leaving him hanging out on a limb, refusing to support what he was saying at the time. Both the *Guardian* in New York and *Monthly Review* got their backs up around this and there was a lot of speculation going around. Finally some left groups in the Vancouver area suggested that I try to go over and ask some questions and find out what the situation was, get some concrete answers.

So when I went to them in 1976 with this request to go there was no problem. They asked me who I wanted to talk to and I told them I would like to see the people in the Party that I had talked to before. They said they would check on it. I told them that I would pay my own way this time. I knew they would never let me pay for anything in China, that they'd never take money from me. And people here raised money to help me go. So I got my fare to Hong Kong.

I had never asked before for a trip to China. They had come and asked me to go. Often they saw it as much for their benefit as mine, although we could have discussed the same things here in Canada with people who came from China. When groups and delegations started coming over there were several times when I was invited to meet them and discuss things. Particularly labour history and the development of the trade union movement and so on. Still, they seemed to like to get me over there, partly I suppose as an opportunity to return favours.

That was the one year that I really saw Hong Kong. I spent several weeks in Hong Kong. Travelled all over, went to the outlying islands and so on. Went along with some people from Hong Kong University. I had told them, well, I was going in at the end of April, beginning of May, and I didn't want to get to Peking on the first of May because there are characters from all over the world. You've got a hell of a time cornering people by yourself, so I wanted to go in after the first of May. I told them, I'd make my own arrangements after I get to Hong Kong, when I want to cross the border. I actually went across on the fourth of May. I had arranged to stay with Graham Johnson, a professor at UBC who was on sabbatical at the time. He had a place out in an old Chinese village, but he came to Hong Kong to meet

me. A couple of days before I was going over, I told Johnson, well, I'd better go and make arrangements at the China Travel Service.

That's precisely the time too when the industrial exhibition is on at Canton, which is a big thing, twice a year. We were over on Hong Kong island. They have a secondary office of China Travel Service there, so Johnson said to drop in there and make my arrangements. I told them I wanted to cross the border, wanted to get my fare on the railway and so on. They said, "Have you got a visa?" I showed it to them. They began to bring out a lot of paraphernalia, badges and one thing and another for the fair. I told them I wasn't going to the fair in Canton, just going over to visit some people. "Just give me a fare, a return fare on the train to Canton." They stated a ridiculous price. They were charging the foreigners going there about thirty or forty times what it cost the Chinese in Hong Kong. I said, "No. Give me the one-way fare to the border and I'll walk across the bridge, and make my own way across the border." They thought this was rather queer, but I finally got them to come across and got my ticket and we went off.

Later on that day we got home where we were staying out in the new territories. There was a phone call waiting. There was only one phone in the village. There were two levels in the village. I was up in the next village and clean at the other end. One phone. I was supposed to go and call this woman at the China Travel and Johnson said, "I'll run up and see what they want." He went up and he phoned them. They wouldn't talk to him. Wanted to talk to me. He comes running back and gets me and I go up. It's this woman I had made arrangements with. "Mr. Scott," she said, "I made an awful mistake. You're not supposed to pay anything. The word is here from Peking. We're not supposed to take any money from you." I said, "That's alright. I'm paying my own way." "No, no. You can't do that. You're not to pay anything." She said, "Your money will be returned to you at the railroad station when you go to get the train." I said, "Don't worry about it." She said, "how are you going to get to the station?" I said, "My friend, Dr. Johnson, is going to take me." "Are you sure? We'll send a limousine." "Don't bother. Johnson will take me." They gave me back my money in the morning when I went to get the train.

I got into Canton. There was the riot at Tien-an-min just two or three days before I got to Canton. Word had just got around. It hadn't been broadcast in Peking. The foreign students, the English students in Shanghai, had got the word on the BBC and told the Chinese students. The Chinese students wouldn't believe them. They said it was imperialist propaganda and nothing like that happened in China. The word began to get out. I went into Canton. One of the first questions that some of my friends asked me, what's happening in China. I said, how the hell do I know. That's what I came to find out. Not getting any word. The leading person in Canton came to see me. I was in the guest house. He said the comrades in Peking want you to go on this afternoon. I had thought of staying over a couple of days in Canton first, but I went on into Peking. They insisted on paying me back my plane fare. I was refusing it, but when they're insisting there's no way. Finally, gave me Canadian cash, gave me the money back for my fare.

I had a number of discussions. I was there to talk about foreign policy. I presented a leading person in Peking who was a central committee member and on

the International Liaison Committee with a list of fifty written questions, some with sub-questions, which brought the total to sixty or sixty-five. This took them by surprise. We spent about ten days talking and didn't quite get through the list. There were some side activities as well.

One of the things that was happening was that there was a big discussion about Lin Piao and Confucius. They were linking them both together. Big discussion about Lin Piao's role as a Confucian and so on. He was dead. So was Chou En-lai, and this was also a thinly-veiled attack on him. I didn't raise the question at all, but one afternoon it was rather strange because here I am talking to top people about what the hell's their relationship with foreigners in the Communist movement abroad. These people out of the Central Committee, the International Liaison Committee have jobs talking to foreigners, and somebody tells me that tomorrow morning we're going out to Hsinhau University where I was to be briefed on the campaign against Lin Piao and Confucius. I couldn't have been less interested really. I said, "What the hell, OK" The next morning they drove me out to the University where there had been one terrific battle. There was one building there totally destroyed. Two groups of students on separate sides of the Lin Piao-Confucius question and fought it out. One group had barricaded themselves inside the building and the other group had assaulted the building. Huge building about eight storeys high. Totally gutted.

There was a leading student there doing the briefing. They were carrying on an attack against the head of the university. So-called leftist group in there at this time carrying on an attack against the head of the university. People who came with me from Peking sat there and never said a word. They let the student do it and they sat by while he did it. They said nothing at all. It was apparent that the Central Committee people didn't want to touch this at all, too much of a hot potato.

One of the people who was with me was one of the Party experts on agriculture and I was asking some questions about the division of land and so on. The thing that struck me was that I wasn't getting satisfactory answers, at least not satisfactory to me and I was pressing. Finally, one of the other cadres who was with us finally spoke. He said, "Look, why don't you tell the comrade the truth." So he started telling me some of the problems they were having in the agricultural area. But things were pretty closed generally.

Of course things weren't quite as closed and secretive as the Party would have liked, as the story about the official telling me of the agricultural difficulties made clear. In China people were very good at telling all kinds of things about you by the clothes you wear, how many pockets are on your tunic, the colour of your outfit. These kinds of things. They know exactly the position of the cadre. When I was taken out to Peking University to meet with the students this was borne out in a small way. I had arranged after the briefing to drop in on some Canadian students who were staying at an old Russian-built place which is now called the Friendship Inn. We had to make special arrangements because universities in China are not like they are here. You can't just walk into a university and go to the library. Not there. Guards on the gate.

Anyway, I drove off up there and the students are waiting for me. Neil Burton

and his Japanese wife and some others are all there. So I got out of the limousine and the guard doesn't pay any attention to me. He can see by the way I'm coming that I'm not to be interfered with. My interpreter, Deng, had suggested to me that I not tell anyone there whose guest I was. As soon as I got out of the limousine, Burton is pulled aside and told that I'm not to be sent back to Peking in the taxi, which is what I had intended, but that they are to call and a limousine will be sent out for me. Well, when I had finished talking to Burton and the others and was walking to the gate, Burton tells me they were all waiting to see what kind of limousine I came in so they would know who my host was. "You don't ride in a red flag limousine unless you are a guest of the Party," he noted. So they knew right off. It was quite funny.

I was disturbed by some positions in particular. There was one position which was fundamental that affected Chinese foreign policy a great deal, and there was a shifting policy. At one time, in the early stages, and particularly during Vietnam and before that the Korean War, China was still more or less friendly with the Soviet Union. I could understand that China didn't want to be caught between two enemies. They didn't want both the Soviet Union and the United States pushing upon them, so they wanted to follow a policy that would more or less allow them to fight one enemy rather than two. A strategy that's really understandable. Of course, when China began to have problems with the Soviet Union and still had existing problems with the United States, it became a question of how you adjust so you at least get one of them off your back. That explains, without going into a great deal of detail which obviously does need to be discussed, China's efforts to establish relations with the United States, some arrangements.

They had a god-awful way of explaining this. They would say, the enemy of my enemy is my friend. Of course, my rejoinder to that was, you know, if the enemy of my enemy is a bastard, he is not my friend. You know, you might follow a policy to keep any eruption from taking place when you've got somebody else at your back door. The guy at the front door, you might try to pacify him a bit, but don't consider him a friend. This explains much. The kind of approach explains much of China's policy in foreign affairs, though they don't seem to always follow it exactly. On the whole, I could understand why they followed the policy. I wasn't always in agreement with the way in which they approached it. I was rather critical of too much friendship with the United States.

There was a beginning then, too, which became much stronger in 1977 and 1978, of looking for foreign investment to start to help the drive for industry. When I got back to Canton, Pat and Roger Howard were there. They were there for two years teaching at the Foreign Languages Institute just outside of Canton. They had told me on the way through that they wanted me to speak to the faculty, or at least a part of it in the Institute. I agreed. They had a little house, so they told me when I came back that they had arranged for a meeting where I would speak to the faculty. I was prepared for it by this time. It was funny. Two people with me from Peking had arranged for me to speak to the faculty and answer questions they had and so on. The two people from Peking invited themselves along and made copious notes while I was speaking. I concentrated on the point of Canada's historical experience

in foreign investment, first with Britain and then with the United States, pointing out the danger of too much reliance on foreign investment. It can distort your development and leave you where you eventually come under the domination of the strongest power. They're gonna start draining off those investments, either take them home or invest them in some other more lucrative market that comes up at the time. The host country of the investment begins, after a time, to suffer because investment is drawn out rather than coming in. I deliberately spoke on that because of the policy that was really coming in. I never did oppose the question of utilizing foreign investment. It's just how it was used, how much control you would be able to maintain over it, and what, in fact, you were getting out of it in return for what will happen down the road. They were quite interested in discussing this. They asked a lot of questions and the people from Peking had nothing to say. They were just sitting there writing notes. I suppose reporting what I had spoken on. I found a great deal of interest in it.

After my talks in Peking and discussions in Canton, I decided that I wanted to take a bit of a holiday, to have a rest. I was going to Kweilin which is a very nice place, good weather. I figured I'd go and lie around there and take a trip down the Li River and enjoy myself. I could go to Shanghai and on from there, passing through Changsha. The Chinese said, "While you're in Changsha you'll have to visit Shaoshan." This was where Mao was born, and had been turned into a shrine. Thousands visiting it.

They kept insisting that Chairman Mao was in good health, but he wasn't. He died soon after. The place was already turned into a shrine. I went to Changsha. I was in a guest house there in the middle of a big park. That's where they had the body of the woman who had been buried for two thousand years. The body was still in perfect condition. There is a museum there where the body is laid out and you can go and take a look at it. We drove to Shaoshan, stayed overnight and we came back. We had a banquet. Every place I went, I had a banquet. They were giving banquets for themselves. There was only me and there would be twenty of them, a couple of tables. Lots of booze.

I remember a night at Changsha I was the only one that could walk straight when we got up from the table. Toast after toast after toast. The next day we went back to Changsha and stayed over another day. I'm leaving the next night. Of course, another banquet. The young guy that had gone out to Shaoshan with me was quite a boozier. He's sitting beside me and there would be toasts going around. He's nudging me. "Make another toast." Wants an excuse to have another shot of Mao Tai. "The hell with you. Make your own goddamn toast." I proposed a toast. "Come on. You can drink. I saw you last night. You're able to drink." "I know I can drink, but I don't want to." "You propose the toast." He kept nudging me. He kept nudging me all the bloody night. I think there were eleven banquets in three weeks.

In Shanghai, they took me out to one of the satellite communities. Shanghai was getting so dense and it was still expanding, so they set up satellite communities where they could establish industry and have the people living out there and so on. They took me out to one of these about thirty or forty kilometres outside Shanghai.

Amongst other things, they took me to visit the hospital and had a discussion afterwards. The leading person there was a male and there were a number of women doctors and women nurses and we were discussing various things about the hospital. At one point, I asked this male doctor who was doing all the talking what percentage of the nurses were women? "One hundred per cent." As it turned out there was actually one male nurse in the place, but he couldn't express it as a percentage so he just said 100 per cent. "What percentage of the doctors are women?" I think if I recall properly he said 40 per cent or something like that. Less than half. I said, "That's interesting. Why the discrepancy? Why are 100 per cent of the nurses women and only 40 per cent are doctors?" "Oh well," he said, "women are much gentler and more charitable than men so they become nurses." I said, "I accept that. But then why aren't 100 per cent of the doctors women?" The guy who came out with me said, "You got him." Quite put out. There was a bit of male chauvinism around there alright.

The way out there was a young girl came and she took my hand and walked out with me and walked down the steps and she was telling me, you know, "I'm having an awful lot of trouble." She was just out of school. She says, "I want to become a barefoot doctor." They don't go around in their bare feet, incidentally. It's sort of a paramedical group. They're more than nurses, but not quite doctors and they are well-trained. She was telling me that she wanted to become a barefoot doctor and she was having a lot of trouble getting permission. I told her, "Keep on fighting. Don't let them keep you down."

Looking back on it this was a pivotal time in China's development. It was shortly after the death of Chou En-lai. Although the public front was that Mao was in good health, it was obvious to anyone who caught a glimpse of him that the old man was completely out of touch with reality, and not long for the world. The so-called "Gang of Four" were holding precariously to the reins of power, and Deng, who had lost the protecting shadow of Chou, was being discredited as a reactionary, driven into exile in the countryside. It was obvious that forces were gathering for a struggle over policy and leadership, and the foreign policy questions that I had gone to China to discuss were really only the tip of an iceberg. There were quite a few in high places trying to make sure their asses were covered, whatever the outcome of the struggle. Given how volatile things were it was rather amazing that I was dealt with as openly as I was by the Chinese comrades.

I went in on the 4th of May and stayed just about a month. I came out at the end of May or the beginning of June. I stayed in Hong Kong for about three weeks with Johnson after that. He had lived there for three years and I saw what Hong Kong was like and made some friendships in the Chinese community there.

20. NEW LEFTS IN MAOIST DRESS

One reason the Chinese were interested in talking to people like me, as I mentioned, was that there were all kinds of groups springing up that they were interested in getting a line on. They knew that I had belonged to one of these groups and that I had contact with others, knew what was going on. They had an embassy open by this time and have people on the ground. They see that I am going back and forth across the country speaking at all kinds of places, at universities and to specific groups.

Some of these organizations were out of this world. Making a lot of imposing sounds. They were sounding big and to people who didn't know, couldn't see the inside, some of them looked really very authoritative and very big indeed. You didn't need that much money. If you had a few dollars and a press, or a mimeograph machine or something like that, a few people willing to work their asses off, you could put out material and look really big and this is what some of them were doing. A lot of them were sending their documents to the Chinese embassy, you know. Apparently bent on having the Chinese understand that they were about to have the revolution any day. So the Chinese were interested in all of this.

I remember I was getting very imposing documents from a group in Toronto and so I made arrangements to go and meet this group on one of my trips. Hundreds of pages of documents, pamphlets — they were pouring the stuff out. No end. I go down to a house in Toronto, expecting to see something really impressive. Three people. One of them bilingual in English and French. One of them bilingual in English and Spanish. One of them unilingual in Spanish. This was the group. They were putting out documents on how they were going to define all of the problems in Canada from a Marxist-Leninist perspective. I could hardly contain myself. After I came back home, a month or two, I get a final document from them, which concluded that since they were unable to reach any basis of unity amongst themselves, they had decided to dissolve. Three people. Couldn't find a basis of unity. No wonder. They couldn't understand one another. Had to have everything interpreted in Spanish.

It was quite funny in some ways. The groups that wouldn't talk to one another, I could go and talk to. Very often they'd commission me to carry a message from one to the other. Ridiculous.

I knew most of these groups, including the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist), which was led by Hardial Bains. There are a lot of mistaken ideas about Bains and some of this stems from Avakumovic's history of the Communist Party of Canada, where he sort of gives the impression that Bains's outfit was a split from Progressive Worker. He mentions about internal problems within PW and in the same paragraph he mentions the emergence of the Internationalists, suggesting that they became one of the greatest challenges to us. There is a hint that Bains's Internationalists were a breakaway from PW. It's not true. Bains was never in PW, never in the CCFA.

Bains was in the Communist Party and remained so until quite late. He went to India for a trip and then he went to the Soviet Union and he met with Canadian Party people who were in Moscow to discuss things. Very much in the CP. During the Sino-Soviet border dispute the CP went around to the Sikh community raising money for Nehru and the Indian government, assisting them in the fight against China. Bains, who was also a Sikh, was one of the people who helped organize that. That was all done through the CP. All very secret, with clandestine visits from Indian Sikhs and all. Bains was working on his Ph.D. in microbiology. He got a two-year contract to go and study and teach at Trinity College, Dublin. I can't for the life of me remember what bloody year it was, sometime in the mid-1960s. During the time he was there a lot of the Maoist slogans became big. "It's right to rebel" and so on. My friends in Ireland told me that instead of teaching microbiology, Bains about half-way through the academic year started telling his students that it is right to rebel and get up and fight the state and the powers that be. At the end of the first year, he's back in British Columbia. Married a Jewish girl and they had a daughter.

He went out to UBC and took up with the Internationalists. They were a student group at UBC. Sort of leftist. Mostly they were students from abroad and they met in the International House, which is how they got their name, not from any politics to speak of. They came into existence in 1963, not long before the emergence of PW, and just after the start of the academic year. Bains tore them apart. Kept only two of them. He went out there and broke the whole thing up on the basis of turning it into a Maoist organization. Out of the whole thing he only got a few followers, a guy in the law faculty named Cruse who had been a conservative on campus and was going to follow in his father's footsteps as a lawyer, and a fellow named Woolsey.

I remember I got word what happened. Some of our people had told me, knew what was happening. I was working up in the Pender and *PW* was coming out. I had the habit of going early. We had our typographical machine in a place at the back of China Arts and Crafts. I used to go in and check and see if there were going to be any empty spaces in *PW*. If there was I would sit there at the machine and write some kind of an article to fill it up. So I had been in to check how the paper was coming and if there had been enough material. Then I came out and I was carrying my lunch bucket. I was on my way to work. I didn't have far to go, of course, from China Arts and Crafts to the Pender. I just came out and turned down the street and I run into Bains. Bains said, "I want to talk to you about some developments that have taken place." I said, "if you're talking about the business at UBC and if you're looking for support from *PW* for what you did, forget it." I said, "as far as I'm concerned, you won't get my support and I'm pretty sure that you will not get *PW* support. You broke up a good student organization, for no good reason." Him and I were at loggerheads.

Bains went back to Ireland for his second year, but he carried on as usual. Of course, that was the end of his contract. There hadn't been any thought of renewing it, as far as I knew. He simply had the two years and that was it. He always claimed afterwards that he was blackballed in the university. Said he couldn't get

a job, which was not true. He never even tried to get a job in the university. He left the whole thing behind him. A bit later, when his stay in Ireland was played up, I got a bit of a kick out of it because it was reported about some of his stay there how Bains had gone and spent two years in Ireland to teach the Irish how to make revolution, which I thought was rather like carrying coals to Newcastle. He didn't get many Irish students. He was stymied from the beginning because he did collect a few students together around him in Dublin alright, but they were English students, which is the last thing you want to sick onto the Irish people. There are two or three other eastern students there as well. He got one recruit in Queen's University in Belfast and he was an East Indian. That's all he got.

Mind you, he brought out a paper. He had a group of Punjabis in London and they brought out a paper there. He brought out a magazine called *Words International* and then they brought out something else. They were great for putting out propaganda. They poured out all kinds of stuff.

What upset us in the first place was the way he broke up the student group at UBC which there was no necessity for doing. He was gonna turn it into some kind of Maoist organization. He ended up taking Cruse and Woolsey with him when he went back to Dublin. He left them in London with a group of Punjabis that he had in London. They stayed there for I think about three or four months. Something like that. He sent them back to Montreal to rent a house. He had then determined that he was going to go into politics full time.

He always had lots of money, always had all kinds of money. I don't know where he got his money. I really don't know. There was lots of talk about where it came from. One guy told me, one guy who had been in with Bains told me — a little unbelievable — that Moscow was giving him money just to be a disruptive element and to make the Chinese look ridiculous. A little hard to take. Anyhow, he sent guys to Montreal to rent a house and set up a headquarters and start laying the basis for when he would be through at Trinity and he would come back. So that's where he quartered himself when he came back, in Montreal. And started out to organize. It wasn't called the CPCML at the beginning. It went through a couple of phases. Just the same as the Workers' Communist Party. They went through a couple of phases and then finally called a convention to set up the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist). That convention was held somewhere near Toronto or Montreal.

Several times he'd sent word that he wanted to talk to me. Sometimes it was really funny. Somebody would meet you at some odd place and take you by a circuitous route to meet Bains and if he was going someplace he'd go with somebody. Always concerned about security. Down Alberta Street, where we had a house, there was a group right next door to us and he used to come down to talk to them. That would be by the time that I was thoroughly at odds with him, before he set up in Montreal. He'd drive by there and he'd have a couple of the guys with him — his body guards — and one of them would go in and check out the house to see that it was safe before Bains would come in. Bloody nonsense. The only people that weren't safe were the people that these bastards were going to beat up.

Coming up to this convention, they sent people around to see me. I was living

on Forty-eighth by that time. They wanted me to go to the convention. They said they wanted me to be chairman of the Party, organize the Party. I said, "What the hell are you talking about? Organizing a working-class party — the chairmanship is not yours to give. Only the workers can give that." They wanted me to go. They gave me a return ticket to Montreal by air. I said, I don't want to go. Take it, maybe you'll go. I returned it to them after because I didn't go to the convention. Reports came out of the convention. I hadn't seen any of them. They had elected the entire committee except the chairman. We read about it on Forty-eighth. We all had a big laugh. We said, "Well, they're gonna be around here offering the chairmanship again." Sure enough, they came after the convention. They had left the position open for me. I'm not taking it. It wasn't because they really wanted me. I was the road to China for them because I was the one, for whatever reason, that the Chinese recognized, I was the one who was going to China. Obviously, Bains was willing to accept me so he could establish relations with China and then, at some other date, they could easily get rid of me once that was established. I absolutely refused.

We really got into battles. Bains really had it in for me. And there were others he didn't think much better of. Varma in Montreal was one of them also. He's a professor at McGill, a Punjabi. One of the people in India from the Naxalite peasant rebellion. The leader of the Naxalites had been killed. By this time Varma had broken with the CPCML and somebody remarked to him about this guy being killed. He said, "It wasn't before his time anyhow." Oh Jesus, this really put him on the shit list. Hari Sharma was another one was on the list. He had been in the CPCML and left.

They beat the shit out of some guys. They almost killed a guy in Edmonton. They did here too. It was a guy with a French-Canadian name. What the hell was his name. Lived out in Burnaby. There was a group in the United States. The Labor Party of North America, or whatever the hell it was. It was run by the guy that became real nuts, Lynn Marcus. Used to be in the Trotskyists, then he left the Trotskyists and denounced the Trotskyists and then he formed this group. He later wound up with the FBI and became a real right-winger. They had a little group in Burnaby. Bunch of nuts. They came up to see me. Got me out of bed one Sunday morning about six o'clock in the fucking morning to talk to me. They had a couple of people here and they had this French-Canadian guy in Burnaby. There was an election that came up and they ran him as a candidate in the election. In order to conduct an election campaign, they had to bring people up from Seattle to work. Anyhow, they put out a leaflet on Charlie Boylan. Boylan was with Bains by then. Boylan used to live in the house with us. They called Boylan Mama's boy. They went down the line of all the things that were wrong with the Bains outfit. One night CPCMLers got this French-Canadian in the dark. They put him in the hospital. They almost killed him. Nobody was ever arrested about it. The police, more or less, said they weren't going to bother. They said this was an attempted political assassination between two left-wing groups.

I had known Boylan for ages. He had been on the Central Committee of the Communist Party. He was editor of a really glossy youth magazine that the Party put out called *Scam*. Only three or four issues appeared, very bourgeois-looking

thing. Boylan was accused of taking off with the funds with the magazine and the Party threatened to sue him. He took off at the time of the Czechoslovakian turmoil in 1968, taking *Scam's* subscription list with him. One of a bunch that left.

A great many people left the Party out here at the time of the Czechoslovakian uprising. They couldn't cover up in 1968 the way they had in 1956 with arguments about anti-semitism and reactionary politics. There was a great upheaval in 1968 in the Communist Party of Canada, far more than in 1956. Johnny Boyd was representing the Party press at the time in Prague and he wrote a series of articles that were really quite critical of the Soviet Union. He got recalled and eventually broke with the Party. There were plenty of resignations out here. At least three members of the Provincial Executive quit, including the Provincial Organizer. Members of the Central Committee left. Jim McFarlane, who was on the Central Committee and a leading figure in the Teachers' Federation, walked out with a bunch of teachers. They were all in support of Dubcek and so-called democratic socialism, which I never really endorsed. I opposed the Soviet invasion, but refused to either support or oppose Dubcek. That was for the Czechoslovakian people to decide. Anyway, Boylan was one of these that left at this time.

At the time Boylan was working on his Ph.D. in English literature out at UBC. After he left the CP he ended up at McEwen College in Edmonton. He was out of politics, not in any organization. He was around the university group of radicals there, however, and when I went out to a conference on poverty there in 1973 Boylan had asked that I be put up with him. I didn't care one way or the other. I thought it was rather strange that Charlie wanted me to stay with him, though, because when he was still a member of the Party back in the early 1960s, on the Central Committee, he had jumped all over me. What a terrible Maoist I was. Anyway, I got there and stayed with Boylan and his wife, Sharon.

The first night there, Christ, we're up until four o'clock in the morning talking and Charlie is bemoaning the fact that there is no organization. Got to have an organization. I said, for Christ's sake, Charlie, there are over twenty million people outside your door. Go on out and do things and something is bound to happen. "Well, you've got to have an organization to direct you." I remember afterwards I came back and my description of Charlie Boylan was a political foetus in search of a womb and he wanted me to start something up. Re-start Progressive Worker or something like that. I said, "No way! Let somebody else get something going and I may or may not join depending on what direction it's taking. I'm not getting back into the resurrection of a dead body. No way!" He was pushing real hard to begin something.

He came back later to Vancouver to live, him and Sharon, and we had a house on Forty-eighth at the time. He asked if he could move in with us. We used to have everybody get together and discuss it. He was invited to come to dinner and we would discuss whether or not he could come and move into the community house. This was maybe a couple of weeks after he got to Vancouver. Him and Sharon came over for dinner. He changed his mind. He stayed for dinner but he didn't want to come into the house. He had some other things in mind. The next thing we know Charlie's working with CPCML. He didn't get in right away. He was too much tied

up with the revisionists, so he had to prove himself and one of his proofs of his loyalty to CPCML was to write a very lengthy denunciation of me, which anyone that knew me had to do before they could get in for membership. A rambling tirade more than a full page in *People's Canada Daily News*. He denounced me. This was kind of funny because he had just recently got over apologizing to me for the denunciations of me when he was in the central committee of the Party. He would never do this again, he said. He had been all wrong. He was back into it.

Of course once he joined CPCML English literature was out, a reactionary thing to be studying. He gave most of his books to Stuart Rush and Stu mentioned to me once how happy he was to get all these books from Boylan. "That's a hell of a thing he gave you," I said. "You know those books are dangerous to the mind and that is why he let you have them. That's no friendly act." Bains literally insisted on people being nuts and Boylan adapted well.

He came up into Spartacus Bookstore one day. He came up deliberately to see me. He knew I was there. Just a raving maniac. Assaulting me no end. I told him to get the fuck out, leave the place. On his way out, he was talking about what they're going to do to me. I said, "You know what Charlie. I'm not worried because if you ever do get power, which I hope never happens, I'll be long gone anyhow. I'm too old. I'll be well away before you ever get power." He said, "Yes, that's what we're worried about that you'll get away from us before we can get you." He was out of his mind, you know. He's still with the CPCML.

Sharon, unfortunately, committed suicide in Toronto. Sharon comes from an old CP family. Her father was Ray Stevenson who was around the Kirkland Lake area. He was a Party organizer for years. She was having a bit of a nervous breakdown, actually, and Boylan wouldn't have anything to do with her. I'm not surprised. It would drive you up the wall in the bloody CPCML. They have their criticism sessions and they are just screaming affairs. She was having these problems and they called her into a meeting — Bains, and, I suppose, Charlie — and told her she was sick and she wasn't able to do anything for the movement any longer so she'd better go back to her parents. She had nobody to go back home to. Her mother and her father were separated at the time and she did go to see her mother. That's where she had her bottle of whisky and got drunk and took an overdose of pills and killed herself. Rather really unfortunate. She wrote some pretty good poetry.

A lot of people that went in around the CPCML were mental cripples to start with. Brian Sproule was one. He lived with us on Forty-eighth until finally some of the people in the house asked him if he would please move someplace else because he was so difficult. To add to his problems he was working at the post office and he used to ride to work on a bicycle, and one day he was hit by a mail truck. Had his skull fractured. He had to have a plate set in his skull. One way or other, they were all more or less mental cripples that Bains gathered around him.

They were a thoroughly dangerous group. You had to watch yourself. There was a meeting. Sharma's group were having a meeting one time. It was when I was still living in Burnaby and they were having it down at what was then the court house. Georgia Street side. We were going. A bunch of us were gonna go to the

meeting. Cathy Walker said the meeting was at noon. I said, “No, it’s at one.” “No,” she said, “it’s at noon.” I was sure it was at one o’clock. Finally I convinced her and she was right and I was wrong, so we got there late and she parked the van down at Hornby Street and we were walking back towards the court house when — we were still about a block away — we see a whole bloody squad of police pouring out. The RCMP used to have an office there in the basement. They were pouring out of there and around the front of the court house. Something was wrong. One young woman, who belonged to the In Struggle! group at the time, came walking toward us and got up to us and she told me, “You’d better not go in there.” She said, “They’ll kill you.” The CPCML had come down there with their usual placards on two-by-fours which they used for weapons. They beat the shit out of a couple of guys. Went to hospital. They went up to Sharma and Sharma had a guard around him and got the hell out. I didn’t go any further. I took her word for it. That wasn’t a safe place to go. The same as what they did when one of them picked up the microphone stand and hit Yuri Oja over the head with it at the British Columbia Organization to Fight Racism rally a few years ago. Fractured his skull and paralyzed his arm. They were a vicious bunch of bastards, still are.

I just simply got to the point, finally, when I wouldn’t talk to them. It seemed everybody that got into CPCML had something mentally wrong with them, one way or the other. I remember when we were running the *Advanced Mattress*. Jamie Reid and his wife used to come out. Jamie was a pretty good poet. He lived in a flat down near the Pender where Pender runs into Georgia. His line at that time was, get the whole world smoking pot and you will change society. He was down at the *Mattress* one night shooting his line. Bains popped in, got on to Jamie and his wife, and the next thing they have disappeared to Montreal. Gone about ten days. They come back confirmed Marxist-Leninists. They were gonna tell everybody what the proper course was.

Jamie had had a grant from the Canada Council for a volume of poetry which he had to complete and give to them for publication. In the meantime, before he had finished it, he has joined up with Bains, but he still has to go through the process. When he finally presented it he also wrote a foreword to it denouncing himself as a bourgeois poet. He was selling *People’s Canada Daily News* one time on the corner of Granville and I ran into Al Purdy near where he was and Purdy told me that he had just run into Jamie. “What the hell’s the matter with him?” he exclaims. “He’s become a crashing bore!”

This is what Bains did all the time. Got these kind of people to sit down with him, spent days with them, day and night, hammering them with propaganda and he would finally win them over. It was all pro-Mao. Reading *Peking Review* at the time was bloody awful. Really hard. And reading the Bains paper, *People’s Canada Daily News* was no relief. Had the language down exactly.

One time I was speaking at Dalhousie University in Halifax. We had quite a big meeting. When I came out of it here is a bunch of Bains’s people selling the *People’s Canada Daily News*. They had tried to disrupt the meeting but couldn’t and so they were selling after it was all over. Mostly young girls, hardly out of diapers by the looks of them. Quite young. Yelling, “Read how Jack Scott criticizes

Comrade Lenin.” Terrible. Then they later denounced me for criticizing Mao, which was rather funny when they turned around and became great Enver Hoxha supporters and were promoting Albania as the only socialist country on earth.

One thing really knocked them for a loop. There were a couple of people here with *Hsinhua News*. They were the first people here before there was ever an embassy. One of them had sent the material that they had culled from CPCML publications and set it out and it appeared in *Peking Review*. Oh, there were a lot of people concerned about it. They didn’t name CPCML, but it was all their line. It was totally ridiculous. It was supposed to be describing Canada. So I sat down and I took this goddamn article apart paragraph by paragraph. Every single paragraph in it. And explained what was real and I sent a copy to *Hsinhua News* and a copy to the central committee of the Party. Well, apparently, what happened was that this representative of the *Hsinhua News* had told Bains that he was going to have five articles published in *Peking Review* from CPCML sources. Bains’s outfit was going around Toronto telling people there were gonna be five articles in *Peking Review* on their position. Only the one appeared. Weren’t any more. Were they ever mad at me. They found out that I had written this rejoinder and critique and this probably had some effect on squashing further CPCML-influenced articles.

On one trip when I was in China I was out at Peking University and the Canadian students told me that the only paper that they got from Canada was *People’s Canada Daily News*. Horrible. How they could pawn that off on the students I don’t know. The students complained to me and asked me to raise the matter with the Chinese. I said, “I’m not gonna go and tell them that they can’t sell things. That’s up to them, but if the opportunity arises I’ll mention it.” I was going to leave Peking and the deputy head of the International Liaison Committee invites me to a dinner and we’re having a conversation during dinner. He introduces the CPCML, mentions the CPCML. I said, “I’m glad you brought that up.” I told him about the students, the Canadian students complaining at *Canada Daily News* out at the university. He said, “Is that so?” He asked how many copies of that paper come in here, and I told him I had no idea. I just knew that the Canadian students complained about it. “Well,” he said, “that will end. We know that the CPCML is not a Marxist-Leninist organization.” That was that.

Obviously they weren’t going to go anyplace. Of course, they always blamed me in their attack. When anybody joined them that knew me — like when Charlie Boylan joined — they wrote a denunciation of me. Anybody that knew me. Part of their initiation ceremony was writing an article denouncing me. This is funny. They used to write denouncing me in Ireland. They had a paper coming out in a little group in Dublin, coming out in Ireland. I’m pretty well known, especially around Cork. Quite well known. My friends over there used to tell me about this and they used to laugh about them putting out these denunciations. Politics are rough in Ireland. Three of them came down to Cork from Dublin, from Trinity College and were putting out material around Cork and some of the guys from the Cork Workers’ Club rounded the three of them up, took them down to the headquarters, lined them up against the wall, took their guns out of their holsters and said, “Now look, we’re giving you the opportunity to get the hell out of Cork and back to Dublin. And don’t

ever come back. If you do, you get shot.” This was how they treated them. I always got letters from them if I wasn’t over there and they would tell me about the attacks that Bains was making on me. What the hell for, I don’t know. I’m not in Ireland.

Of course, CPCML wasn’t the only game in town. There were all kinds of groups springing up. Some, like the Red Star Collective in Vancouver, were local, but others had national pretensions. In *Struggle!* was one, another was the Canadian Communist League, which later became the Workers Communist Party. These were entirely new groups. Bains had come out of the CP, virtually all of Progressive Worker’s members were former Communist Party people.

By about the 1970s this was changed. Only rarely did you run into people who had been ex-CP members. Even in the Red Star Collective itself, there were very few that had belonged to Progressive Worker. I think maybe you could have counted three or four that had belonged to the Progressive Worker Movement. Many of the groups that came into existence after Progressive Worker came into being largely under the influence of the turmoil in China and were taking positions say on the side of China as against the Soviet Union, China representing the right to rebel and all that kind of thing. As I pointed out earlier, the Progressive Worker Movement came into being on the basis of the debate over the role of the socialist revolutionary movement in Canada and only afterward related itself to the international dispute. That is not to say that domestic events did not influence the rise of the new lefts. They certainly did. But the influences were largely international.

Some contradictions arose. Particularly if you look at *In Struggle!* which after it had been in existence for awhile began reexamining its position and trying to relate particularly to the struggle within Quebec and the national struggle there. There was a rather peculiar development there because *IS* related itself to the Quebec movement in a very big way and in the fight for independence in Quebec and so on, while the *WCP*, presented itself as more of a national movement, that is Canada-wide. Yet I would argue that it was *IS* that enjoyed the greater influence throughout the country. Not in the sense of actually organizing in other areas, although they did some of that, and particularly out here, but in the sense that people looked to it as a very dynamic movement. The *WCP* was more anxious to grow on a national scale, but had more difficulty growing. Partly, I suppose, that was because of the more or less dramatic background of the *IS* which was related to the *FLQ*. Actually the people who launched the *IS* were people who had been with the *FLQ* in the earlier days. People like Charles Gagnon, for example, who spent a number of years in jail as an *FLQ* person. They were more dramatic.

There was a fair bit of activity out here in Vancouver at the time of the *FLQ* crisis. There was an ad hoc committee set up at the time when the War Measures Act was declared, and it included pretty well every trend of politics locally with the exception of the CP and the CPCML, although Charlie Boylan, who later became hooked up with Bains, was in there. D.J. O’Donnell, who was a young woman who was nutty as could be, and who also joined CPCML, was also there, sort of on the periphery. It was called “A Free Canada, A Free Quebec Committee.” There was a group involved that was one of these passing things that put out a journal that lasted maybe seven or eight issues and it was called the *Yellow Journal*. The

committee used their journal to publish in both French and English and we distributed it all around, showing our solidarity with the FLQ, publishing its Manifesto.

At that time the mayor of Vancouver was Tom Campbell, quite a character. When the War Measures Act was declared, he came out quite correctly and said that when you declare the War Measures Act you can't declare it for one province. The whole country. Some wanted to round all the hippies up and put them in jail. Seven people got picked up by the police distributing the *Yellow Journal*. They were only in jail a couple of hours and they were let go because the word came through, "Lay off." They didn't want to draw the rest of the country into the thing. They wanted to concentrate on Quebec and, in fact, get the passions of the rest of the country directed against Quebec. We carried on propagating the ideas of the rights of Quebec and opposing the militia.

There was a group also at UBC called the Left Caucus. A guy by the name of Dick Betts was running the movement. They decided to hold a meeting out at UBC. I was supposed to be the only speaker. D.J. O'Donnell insisted on speaking. She was then with the CPCML women's group, the Women's Liberation Army, and they were far-out. Betts let her speak for about five minutes. It was bloody awful provocative. I was to be the speaker really and Betts was to make a sort of introduction which he did. Sharon Stevenson, who was still in the CP at the time, chaired the meeting and got expelled for it. She got expelled because she chaired a meeting that I spoke at. Didn't even have a trial, just expelled. I was boiling. She committed suicide in Toronto later as I said. A very nice person. It's rather unfortunate her death. She chaired the meeting and I spoke in a ballroom at the student union building at UBC. It was packed. There were a lot of mad liberals there. There was a discussion afterwards. A lot of heckling in the meeting, but I spoke. There was no way they were gonna scare me off. The press had me as chairman of the Progressive Worker Movement, but PW wasn't functioning then. Also had me being arrested under the War Measures Act in World War One. I think maybe they mean World War Two, but they would still have been wrong.

I took the stand that I was there to protest the use of the army in Quebec. I wasn't going to, at that point, discuss the rights and wrongs of the killing of La-Porte and the holding of the hostages. I said I would leave that to a time when passions were less high and we could discuss it more calmly. The Free Canada, Free Quebec Committee didn't have any real representation there, although they turned out and occupied the first couple of rows of seats, which was a good thing. I might have been assassinated otherwise.

We decided in the Committee to publish something on our position on Quebec and our support. There were six people going to draw up different papers and bring them. I was one of the six, the only non-academic of the lot. We kept going for several weeks. I immediately went to work. I had to polish up my knowledge of Quebec and write something out. Several weeks of this, and busy as hell with meetings and everything. The others had been busy, too, and couldn't prepare anything. It wound up that I was the only one who wrote anything. It was all written out by hand. It was fairly long. At one point they went at it and discussed it and they

thought it was good but they never did anything with it. I don't think I kept it. I don't think I have it in the house. I think I put it into the archives at UBC. I only ever had the one copy that I had written out in hand.

Turner came here to speak. It was one of the high points of the Free Quebec, Free Canada Committee. He was in the position of being the minister who was responsible, although Trudeau was the one who called the policy. Nevertheless, Turner was responsible for ordering the army in, giving the formal order. So we had a meeting and talked about what we were going to do. It was the Vancouver Club that was putting on this discussion, an elitist group out at UBC that organized these kinds of discussions. Turner was going to be at UBC, so we decided, we'll go out and we'll heckle Turner. If we get enough support at the meeting, we won't let him speak. Our slogan was to be, "No free speech for Quebec, no free speech for Turner."

We had quite a hot discussion in the committee about this. Of course, frankly the Trotskyists were opposed to going out there. They never went. The League for Socialist Action never participated. Their argument was that they were going against us because we were preventing Turner from having free speech. He had a right to speak, they claimed. We pointed to our slogan. If you give free speech to Quebec, Turner can have it too. They wouldn't have it and they didn't come out to the meeting.

A bunch of us did go out. It was a big meeting. The place was packed. I remember, I went out with a guy by the name of Dave Jette, a character himself. We went in and we sat near the back of the hall and, being a person of experience, I sat on a seat by the aisle. I wanted to be able to manoeuvre when something started happening. Jette sat right beside me on the inside. After they had pretty well filled up, there were three empty seats next to us. There were already people standing and there weren't more than half a dozen empty seats in the whole place at this time and who walks in but Frank Ross, former-Lieutenant Governor, stepfather of Turner, and his wife, Turner's mother. They go to go in and Jette said, "Sorry there's only one seat here, the other two are taken." They had a bit of a confab for a minute and finally Ross moved in and he took one seat and his wife went and got a seat somewhere in the body of the hall further down. The seats weren't taken. Jette keeps his eye out coming in. A young couple came in. Just about the scruffiest hippies I ever saw in my life. I don't think they had washed themselves in a month. Unkempt hair, clothing, queer clothing and looking dirty. Jette spies them, "Are you looking for seats?" "Yup." "There are two right here."

The chairman of the meeting finally opens up and speaks. Nobody said a word. The meeting was quiet. This is going out on the radio, incidentally, as well. Introduces Turner. Turner steps up to the microphone. "Ladies and Gentlemen" and it broke over his head. "No free speech for Quebec, no free speech for Turner!" We were amazed at the support we got. We had put out the word about going to the meeting. It was apparently quite a mobilization that turned out. Turner never got to speak. He would retreat. The chairman would come. As soon as the chairman came to the microphone everything went quiet. We'd listen to the chairman and then when the chairman introduced Turner again and Turner would get up and get

out, "Ladies and Gentlemen" that's as far as he got. There was an editorial in the *Vancouver Sun* the next day about these goons denying Turner his right to free speech.

It was a real ruckus. People getting wacked by passionate liberals. Mort Briemberg got a bloody nose. Mark Warrior was sitting with Al Birnie over to one side. The guy behind Mark would be eighteen inches higher up, approximately. The guy who was behind him was Gordon Shrum, who incidentally died a while ago. Shrum was a big man, well over six feet. Husky man. Of course, at one point, Warrior is on his feet yelling his bloody head off and Shrum was up on his feet indignant. He got quite angry. He brought his fist down — you know Warrior is a short guy, already eighteen inches lower, and shorter by more than a foot than Schrum — smashed it right down on Warrior's head. His knees just buckled and he went down. Him and Al Birnie went over to the RCMP people on campus there and laid a charge of assault against Shrum. It came up in court. Shrum claimed it was an accident. He'd been waving his hands around and accidentally one ended upon Warrior's head. The magistrate dismissed the charge. He agreed with Shrum that it was accidental. But Turner didn't get to speak.

Frank Ross just sat there. Can't do anything. Of course, his wife was somewhere else. I don't know what she was up to. They were very indignant, of course, Turner getting handled in this way. They went to the back of the stage and had a confab and they talked out of hearing. The guy from the radio was there and they talked into his microphone and it went on the radio. I don't know what the hell they said. They called the meeting off. He never spoke. They caused a great hullabaloo about it. When things quieted down, the Free Canada, Free Quebec Committee was just one of these ephemeral movements that went out of existence again.

Something that lasted a little longer was the Red Star Collective, which started out as the Vancouver Study Group. It was quite large, must have been about fifty people in it. Really packed. We used to meet in houses and apartments and that and the bloody places would be packed. People sitting all over the floor. A lot of the types involved had got some beginnings as professionals. I'm not sure there were actually lawyers in it at the time, but several of them became lawyers after. Mainly it was a study group, although there was also the odd activity and a few public meetings.

Of course there were a series of arguments. I got bored with it at times. It was rather unusual for me, for I'd often go to a meeting and never say anything because it just didn't appeal to me, what was going on. Sort of like how many angels could dance on the head of a pin? Arguments about the finest details that really didn't matter a goddamn. If you were really out in the struggle, out battling, these kinds of things were inconsequential. But to students and some middle-class types, I suppose, they were important.

Some of the discussions got dogmatic as hell. I remember that they literally drove Cathy Pike out, and I was quite put out about it. She was anti-Stalin as hell and there were pro-Stalin people in there. This often became an issue and Cathy kept carrying the discussion back to the old question of Lenin's ideal of organization. She claimed this was Stalin's roots, in Lenin's theory of party organization. I

was quite sympathetic to some of her argument, and this didn't do me much good in the group. Anyway, Cathy went to Mexico and I lost touch with her.

The Vancouver Study Group was supposed to allow people with differences to get together and discuss and argue, but with other groups on the scene — particularly IS and the WCP — things got more politically polarized. Pretty soon there were groups within the Vancouver Study Group that were aligning themselves. Some pulled toward IS while others gravitated to the WCP. The WCP based themselves on a group that called themselves the Wednesday Night Group that didn't belong to the Vancouver Study Group. At most they had five people that met on Wednesday night. IS attracted more people from the Vancouver Study Group and it appeared that everybody was becoming more political and there was a need for people to do more than study.

It was at this point that the Red Star Collective came into being, sometime in the mid-1970s. As people in the Vancouver Study Group were breaking away toward more formal organizations the group that remained around the original study group decided that they would become a collective on the road to being a party. They looked around for names and decided on the Red Star Collective. They opened up discussions with Mort Briemberg, Teakle, Steve Garrod, and Barb Caword, a group that had gone with IS.

There were papers flying all over the place out here. A group would issue a document, and everybody else would jump into it. Dogmatic as hell, really, and often quite uninformed. I remember Teakle wrote a paper in 1976 that went through a whole criticism of the Progressive Worker Movement and all the things that were wrong with PW. Not that I minded PW being criticized, but this really incensed me. He didn't know anything about PW, nothing about its history and development. There were all kinds of things to criticize PW about, but he was totally wrong. I only had a few days as I was about to go to China. I sat down and dashed off an outline of the history of PW in which I was indignant as hell. I really blasted the hell out of him. I never had time to really polish it up or anything like that. I left it with the group. I said, make some copies and put them around. They did. I took off for China and they did put a few copies around. I intended when I came back to do something about it, but I never did. Polish it up better. Teakle then admitted that there were a whole lot of things in there that he knew nothing about. I gave him to understand that when he started to write about something he should at least attempt to know something about it, even if he failed to find out the details he should at least make the effort, just not sit down and off the top of your head you're gonna condemn somebody because that's the thing to do.

This milieu soon became dominated by the contests that raged between the Collective, IS, and the WCP. Both *In Struggle!* and the Workers Communist Party established people in Vancouver. The WCP got a small group, linked to this Wednesday Night Club, but then parachuted in half a dozen people from outside, and they outnumbered the locals. It recruited, but very few really. It remained essentially a group that was under the control of people at the centre, which was located in Montreal, although one of them had been born out here in White Rock. John Price was born here and he was sent back together with his wife and another

couple. Price had been a student, and was one of the group that went for implantation. He worked in a factory in Montreal. Then after a while, of course, he was no longer in implantation. He was working for a living. A lot of them are caught up that way. Price is out here now. He's married and got a youngster. He was back a bit at university for awhile polishing up his Japanese. He spent a couple of years in Japan, Tokyo. His subject was Japan and the Japanese language, and he was able to make money conducting Japanese tourists around, translating for them.

One time the Red Star proposed to set up a liaison committee. Nobody wanted to be unified into one group because each group separately claimed the truth, the real programme that was going to bring the revolution in Canada. So you weren't gonna unite with anybody else. In order to get around that, the Red Star Collective put out a proposal that a liaison committee be set up representing all the groups. It would meet fairly regularly and discuss issues and try to see if there were some things that all the groups could work together on, while they still maintained many of their differences. This was condemned as revisionism of the worst kind. You should have seen some of the papers they came out with. Arguments flying back and forth about the need to have demarcation. The revolutionaries have to clearly demarcate themselves from the revisionists and there has to be total war. Sometime afterwards, a couple of years afterward, someone admitted that a liaison committee at the time was a good thing really. At that time the groups were beginning to break up. It was already too late. They're all! beginning to disappear.

I worked with all of these outfits, participated and all, but I never really thought of joining with one as opposed to the others. If I joined one outright, I would have had to break with other people. As it was I could talk with all of them, sit down and discuss things with all of the people involved. So that was one reason for not joining a particular group. Another reason was that I found something wrong with all of them, things that I just couldn't cotton to. If there had been only one group that probably would not have stopped me from joining, for I had always had differences with every group that I was in. But when you are confronted with a number of groups then you have to make a decision for one and against others and I wasn't prepared to do that. I spoke to them all.

The IS organized a huge conference in Montreal and I spoke there. It was a huge affair, a meeting of about two thousand. At the same time while I was staying there I went and had discussions with WCP people. I had contacts with an IS group in Halifax. I was eventually carrying messages between the two groups. Never got to anything, and while I had lots of discussions I was never able to bring them together.

The problem was I never had the bloody sense to say no to people. I was going here and doing that, speaking across the country and responding to invitations and questions. Getting mixed up with all sides. I reached the point where I finally told the people in the Red Star Collective, "I'm retiring. I'm going into hibernation. I've had it. I'm getting tired." They just laughed. This would have been around 1977. I told people, "Look, I've never had a birthday party and my birthday is coming up and I am inviting my friends and I am going to announce my retirement from politics and that is gonna be it. No more laughing." At the time I was living out in

Burnaby. Ralph Stanton and some others had bought a house and I was out there with them. I told people not to bring anything, but they did. They brought liquor and food and everything else. I didn't invite people individually, just put out the word that I was having a party. About sixty people came. The place was packed. Party went all night. I said, "That's it. I'm calling it quits."

Two years later the Red Star Collective had another party for me. My birthday is on the 12th of May and they decided that they would put on a May Day affair, combining the celebrations with my birthday and some acknowledgement of my fifty years around the left-wing movement. They put it on out at the Swedish Hall. It was the biggest bloody May Day in the city. People that I hadn't seen for years showed up. They put the word out. Joyce Cameron did a lot of the invitations. The word got around and there must have been four or five hundred people there. Biggest May Day in the city. The WCP held their May Day Party at the Orange Hall and they drew thirty or forty. IS, CP, the trade unions all had their affairs as well, but none of them were as large as this one. People I hadn't seen for years showed up, including some old PW types. Gave me a present. I had to make a speech. That was about the last act of the Red Star Collective.

21. WRITING LABOUR HISTORY FOR NEW STAR

Throughout this period of political groups coming and going in the 1970s I was trying to write labour history a lot of the time, as well as speaking at universities and debating academics. I retired just before I was sixty, which would have made it in 1969, when the Progressive Worker Movement was winding down. When the Communist Party sold the Pender Auditorium I decided I wanted to do something besides slave for a pay cheque. I wanted to give my time to some research and writing, and I decided I simply wasn't going to chase down any more jobs. So I went on a Veteran's Allowance. Went to the Department of Veteran's Affairs and it is pretty well automatic that you get the allowance if you are sixty years of age. I was close enough to sixty that they didn't bother with sending me for a medical examination. That is what I began to live on. As long as the wife was alive I could also get the old age pension to cover her, but after she passed on I was getting more than the limit and all they give me now is medical coverage plus the allowable limit from Canada Pension and Veteran's Allowance. If I was really pressed for something I could go and get assistance for it, so I've been able to get by.

I had been reading labour history for ages of course, and writing for *Progressive Worker* and lots of other things, and speaking publicly on aspects of the historical development of the workers movement. But the guy who finally put me into actually writing some labour history in book form was Steve Garrod, who I've mentioned a couple of times because of his involvement in *In Struggle!* He had quite a history.

I was living on Alberta Street at this time, in the early 1970s, with Birnie and John Wood and a few others. We had an old beat up three-storey house there. Right next to us was a house where Garrod and Barb Caword were living. There was a young woman in there called Annie Ratel and they buggered around with her name to come up with a name for the house, the Rat Hotel. They had a letterhead, Rat Hotel, proprietor, Annie Ratel. They were some group.

Garrod was the head of the student movement at UBC. He was president. Dave Mole was there too. He's in economics at the University of Toronto or at York. He was the secretary of the Student Union. What a couple of characters — straight out of the hippie period.

The Queen and Philip and Princess Anne came here. It would have been sometime in the early 1970s, I can't remember the exact date. The *Britannia* came here and they were sailing around in the *Britannia*. They put into port here and of course there was some huge dinner planned. A lot of guests to come on board the *Britannia*. One of the people that got invited was Garrod, head of the student association at UBC. What a carry-on they had. Got a small truck and put a rocking chair up on it and draped it in red, a mock throne. Little steps up so that Garrod could walk up into the truck and sit on his throne. He had long hair down to his shoulders. Dressed up his hair, and decked himself out in a red velvet suit, flat top hat, and a flowing cape. A big sign on the truck declared, "Steve for Queen." Then all this took off to

the dock with a motorcycle escort. When they got there they wouldn't let him on the dock. Some character up on the boat sees what is going on and comes dashing down, finds out Garrod is an invited personage and starts berating the cops for stopping one of Her Majesty's dinner guests. So Garrod proceeds on to the dock and boards the ship. Nobody else passed through of course.

The next day there was a real indignant editorial in the *Vancouver Sun* about the obscene language that was used within the hearing of Princess Anne who was supposed to be a pure young girl that had never heard anything untoward before. What had happened was that Philip, who presents himself as being a big advocate of physical fitness, sports, and exercise, made the colossal error of walking up to Steve and saying, "Well, young man, what do you do for exercise?" And Steve replies, "Oh, I fuck a lot." This was the cause of the editorial. Improper language used within the hearing of Princess Anne.

Garrod was involved in the *Western Voice*. He was part of a group that appeared after the demise of *Progressive Worker* but before the emergence of the Vancouver Study Group, IS, or the WCP. I just couldn't see the program. A strange outfit. I wrote a few things for them, lengthy book reviews and that kind of thing. They had a big format and some of the stuff I did took up a full page. When they were going to break up, they had internal discussions and they came out with the final issue of the *Western Voice*. Good God Almighty it was fantastic. All of the political differences that they were dealing with.

Garrod went from there into New Star Publishers. He was one of the three or four that actually started New Star. When they started publishing they mostly put out poetry and some short pieces of prose. None of it immortal literature, I assure you. The whole thing started out as a study group really and most of the people involved had been students at Carleton University, caught up in the student movement, left university and ended up in Vancouver.

Like everybody else they ended up getting politically embroiled in the controversies of the 1970s. They published some things jointly with Red Star. They were behind the call for some kind of attempt to forge unity in the later 1970s. They published a couple of pamphlets I did.

One of them was on my report from the trip to China. It appeared under the title "Discussions with Chinese Comrades." There was something else they published. I'll be goddamned if I can remember. I did have, incidentally, a thing published that I did on China which was done under the auspices of the Canada-China Friendship. It was called "Two Roads: The Origins of the Sino-Soviet Dispute" and New Star put it out. Actually the thing I did was about twice what was eventually published. I had some funny run-ins about that. I knew that some people had taken some to China and it was known in China. Of course, I had been to the embassy and to the consulate. I never took any in because I was saying things, taking positions that were not in total agreement with how the Chinese viewed the split. Since my baggage would never be searched, I wouldn't carry any into China. I wasn't about to sneak things in that I knew they were not in favour of. I knew some had been brought to China. When I was there in 1976 I was out with one of the cadres and he said, "I understand you wrote a book." I said, "I wrote several books. Which

one are you talking about?" He said, "The one about the split between China and the Soviet Union." "Oh," I said, "that's a pamphlet, fair sized pamphlet. 'Two Roads'." "Yes," he said, "that's it." He asked for a copy. I said, "Find it somewhere else. I'm not gonna carry them in. It's not in agrèement with the Chinese position. I'm not gonna sneak things in. I do know there are copies in China. Get a hold of one that's here." "I would like to have one for myself. Will you mail me one?" I said, "No." He was really anxious to get his hands on it and see what I had been writing.

I had some connections in Ireland that related to my writing as well. There was a guy who came out here, Sean Daly. He has since returned to Ireland, but I met him by accident in a second-hand bookstore, the Busy "B". The guy that ran the store told me that there was an Irish fellow who kept coming in looking for books, and he suggested I meet him. He was working for the CN in telecommunications. He was really up on it. Had a truck, doing repair work, installations, and things like that, fixing up telexes in offices and so on. He used to spend hours in second-hand bookstores because he had all kinds of time on his hands. He was great on the Irish question, and had acquired a tremendous amount of material.

In the 1950s Daly had been with the IRA. It was the period of the so-called Border Raids. He used to organize these raids across the border into Ulster. He was working for the post office in Ireland, which meant working for the government. Did a lot of repairing. You know those little tents that they have up there working in the rain on the wires? Quite often Daly would have an automatic rifle or something up there that he had to pass on to someone who would come along and pick it up. He finally got caught and he was in jail for a couple of years. He got fed up. Hunger strikes every once in awhile. Going around with no clothes on and getting doused with ice cold water by guards and so on. The whole thing was utterly ridiculous; pissed him off. So he asked to see the governor of the jail and told the governor, "Let me out of here." Which meant that he wasn't going to be active anymore really. That's all they wanted. The governor started asking him some questions and Daly said, "No, I'm not talking. I just want to get the hell out of this crazy outfit." The governor agreed to let him go but he's screwed. He can't work for the government. He's not going to go back to work in the post office. He's on the outs with the IRA because he left. So he came out here. He had relations around Edmonton, and got a job with Canadian Pacific and then found his way out here. He was up around Prince George, as a matter of fact, and he met a school teacher who was divorced. She had an Irish background. She wasn't Irish herself, but her grandparents were Irish. And they got married and came down here. She taught school here and he worked. He was doing quite well working for CP, but he was never happy. He never would become a Canadian citizen. He would have become a Canadian citizen, but he wouldn't take the oath to the Queen. I told him he was being ridiculous.

Daly never belonged to PW but he worked with us. He used to help us with the paper and so on. When I got a camera, he used to help do the camera work. He was quite good and we started making our own plates. Doing all our own camera work and everything. He started an Irish paper which was distributed in Ireland. Had a

group, Cork Workers' Club, that he had contact with. He used to make the plates here and send them to Ireland. The whole thing was covered up so it wouldn't appear that it was coming from here. He asked me several times to write for the paper, which I did. I wrote under the name of Aobh McIlroy, which is an Ulster name, Ulster roots. I wrote for that as well as *Progressive Worker* during the 1960s.

Never being happy here, Daly wanted to get back to Ireland. Went back to Cork. He decided he was going to start a bookstore. He had a fantastic library of his own. Of course, there was him and his wife and there was no such thing as divorce in Ireland. No such thing as being a Catholic and marrying a divorced woman. They applied to the Irish Embassy for a spouse's passport for her. You had to get a marriage passport before you ever saw your goddamn country. They were a little concerned about what was going to happen because she was divorced. They figured they weren't going to get it, but they did. Never said a word about the divorce and they gave her the passport. So, he took off. She went later when he got over and got established. Started a bookstore. He's still got it. On the south main street of Cork, Tower Books. He went from there into publishing. Books. Does all his own print. He's got his own word processor and his own photographic equipment. The only thing he doesn't do is the book binding. He does a hell of a good job. He's doing a lot of things. Old Irish material that has been out of print for a long time, as well as his own books that he writes himself. Anyway, I wrote stuff for Daly back in these years as well.

I was writing stuff for other things as well and getting in public debates with academics. At one time, back years ago, I used to be in great awe of academic people until I got debating with a few of them and found out that they didn't know too much. A lot of them did, but there were a lot of them didn't. It finally got to the point that I was daring enough to take on any of them and find out what they knew.

A case in point was a debate I had with Martin Meisner, a sociologist at UBC. Sometime in the early 1970s some students out there came to ask me if I would debate Meisner, whose specialty was industrial sociology. I knew they deliberately set the guy up. He wanted a liberal image, but he was in a conservative faculty and the students went and told him that I had been a trade union official, and so on, for decades. I guess Meisner got the idea that he was gonna be at a forum with a guy who has been a union bureaucrat for fifty years and he has nothing to worry about. He had an international reputation, had written a lot, and so on.

The topic was sociology and the working class. This was funny. It was supposed to be a noon hour affair to last about half an hour. It actually went till three-thirty. We had to adjourn out of the classroom and go to another hall with those that still wanted to stay. There must have been over a hundred that stayed until three-thirty in the afternoon when we finally called the whole thing off. The funny thing about this was I really nailed him. He was in bad shape because he came there expecting something that wasn't there, running into me. I don't know why he didn't know me because I was well enough known in UBC. Apparently he didn't. He expected something entirely different. Most of his faculty were there, so he's caught between the devil and the deep blue sea. He wants to maintain his liberal image in front of his students. Most of his students were there. In fact, one of his students

who was, in that period, what they'd call straight, you know, nice dress, nice clothing, finally ended up siding with me and arguing with him. But he's trying to maintain that liberal image at the same time he has to be sure not to isolate himself from this very conservative faculty brotherhood that all turned out to the meeting. Of course, I'm giving him shit up there from the far left of the field. He was just having a miserable time.

I argued that even if sociology was of any value to the working class they couldn't understand it because the academic sociologists talked in a language that workers couldn't understand. He said there was an academic language that you have to adhere to and the working class would just have to learn it. That's one of the things this young woman got after him about. She said, "Why can't we talk in a language that the workers can understand." Meisner claimed the workers were generally satisfied with the jobs they had. I said, "How the hell do you know. You go there with your collar and tie and you ask these guys questions. They think you're trying to find out something for the boss. They're not going to tell you the truth. Go and tell them there's a better job down the street with better money and you'll see how loyal they are to the boss." I pointed out the lesson of the Ford strike in England where sociologists had gone in and found out how happy the workers were with Ford in England and three weeks after the report came out the Ford workers are on the street carrying placards denouncing the Ford company as a bunch of bastards, attacking the foreman.

Another amusing thing about this was that at one point — and this was bloody deliberate — the *Ubysey* photographer out there took a photograph across from the side and Meisner was making a gesture that looks to all the world like he's thumbing his nose at the audience. I thought that was really funny so I saved the damn thing.

Another item I saved from the newspaper came from just about the same period. The *Vancouver Sun Weekend Magazine* ran an article about me in June 1973. It was written by Ian Adams, author of *The Poverty Wall* and, much later, of *S: Portrait of a Spy*. I met Adams in Edmonton at a week-long conference on poverty. He was one of the speakers and so was I, the students there having invited me because of my radical politics. Homer Stevens was there as well. Homer had been out of the Party and was at this time back in it. I was reminiscing with the students and so on and Adams wrote up this article in the magazine and then worked it all into *S: Portrait of a Spy*. Adams got sued for that by the guy in Australia and maybe I should have sued him too, because I'm obviously referred to, though not by name.

I hadn't read *S*, not being much of a fiction reader, and Adams's book is certainly fiction, with some fact worked in. I ran into a friend on the street one day and one that I figured didn't know me all that well. There are people who know me a hell of a lot better than her but she asks, "Have you read *S: Portrait of a Spy*?" I said, "No, I don't read fiction." She said, "Well you should because you're in it." She recognized me. If she could recognize me anybody could recognize me. I got a copy of the book then and I went through it. I must say that I didn't really read it very carefully, but I was looking for where I was in it. And sure enough I was there. Some of it would have been material that Adams didn't personally know about, but

when that book was started it was actually begun by Tom Haslett, who I mentioned before was a reporter for the *Province* here. He had later gone to work for the *Toronto Star*, was with the Ottawa Bureau, and was the parliamentary reporter for the *Star*. It was him that started the work on what became *S: Portrait of a Spy*. There were things in there that Haslett would have known, that I had talked to Haslett about, but Adams would not have known. They appeared in the book second-hand because Haslett died of cancer and he had already been working with Adams on the book before he died and then Adams took everything over and he completed it. I'm called the old radical, that's the way I am in the book. The old radical.

He speaks of me there having picked up and gone to China when I was seventy years old. That's a little out because the time he was talking about I was not seventy years old. I was fifty-seven. Actually, it was my 1967 trip he'd be talking about. And he said about me having participated in a sit-down strike, which, again, is not true, but he'd have got some material about having been on the picket line at the British Consulate. He also brings up about my daughter sleeping with a KGB agent. I didn't have a daughter. I did have a stepdaughter though and I suppose that's what the reference is to. Maybe she's got some reason for suing because she certainly never slept with any KGB agent, certainly not to my knowledge. Highly fictionalized of course. I got a laugh out of it, as a matter of fact. I'm there in his book.

All of this would have been around 1972-1973. A little later, Garrod, who is now involved with New Star Publications and is putting out this poetry and stuff that is out of this world, comes to me. He knew the writing I had done, including a review of Abella's *Nationalism, Communism, and Canadian Labour* that appeared in the *Western Voice*, and he had heard me speak on the working class at various times. So he knew my positions, and knew that I could write stuff, although I never fancied myself a writer. Oh, I can manage to do enough so that people understand me, and I had been a bit frustrated with only writing reviews, position papers, and articles. Garrod told me that New Star wanted to get into some serious publishing and away from this hippie poetry and what have you. He asked me if I would write something on labour history for him. I told him I would take a shot at it.

That is when I went off and did some research. Spent months out at UBC reading microfilm. Nearly drove myself crazy reading the stuff. This was what came out as *Sweat and Struggle*, which was my attempt to begin a history of the Canadian working class. I wrote it up and handed it to Garrod and told him to read it, edit it, or give it back to me with suggestions on how to polish it up and improve it. I worked about eight months on the whole thing, and I did it in about as much of a hurry as I could. I was never really happy with it, but I considered the thing a first draft. Thought I'd have time to make all kinds of revisions. But Garrod never even discussed the bloody thing with me. Just went ahead and set it up and printed the goddamn thing as it was.

I didn't value it very highly when it came out into print. I knew when I gave them the manuscript that it could be improved upon tremendously. That's what I hoped to do. But, as I say, they just simply went on with publishing in spite of what

I considered many shortcomings. Anyway, it's long out of print. I wouldn't stand for a reprinting of it. It would have to be redone. But, they never suggested it. It was supposed to be the first of a series and I actually intended to complete other volumes and kept on doing some research and did some work.

But I got off on a bit of a tangent because I began doing some work on what would amount to a critique of the role of the American Federation of Labor in Canada. I did a long paper, an outline of what I had in mind. What happened was that I went up to speak to Hari Sharma's class at Simon Fraser University and I took this paper up there. I didn't read it, but I spoke on the material in it and Sharma borrowed the original off me and he photocopied over a hundred copies of the thing. It was around UBC here and Simon Fraser and some copies found their way to several other universities across the country. To Regina and Saskatoon and a few places.

Not being very well disciplined and not being like a student that has to produce a paper at a certain time, you know, I would write when the spirit moved me. Gary Teeple eventually asked me for an article on this for his book, *Capitalism and the National Question*. I agreed. I started to work on the paper and didn't finish it. I drew a bit of an outline and left it aside. Finally, Al Birnie had been in Toronto and ran into Teeple some place and Teeple was quite put out about when he was going to get his article from me. Birnie told me when he came back. I said, "Well, if Teeple sets a deadline, he will probably get his article." He communicated with Teeple and told him and Teeple sent me back a deadline. It was a very short one. Actually, it could have been longer, but I guess he figured, I'd better make it real short to get the goddamn thing. I thought he was serious. In fact, so much so that I rounded up Roger Howard to help write the goddamn thing. I had done most of the research. I had a bit still to do. He helped with finishing up the research and helped with the writing, so it came out as a joint effort. Teeple finally got his article. And it was the same with this larger study of the AFL. This was planned as a book. The New Star people began getting after me: "When are you gonna write the goddamn thing? When are we gonna get it?"

My response was, "Oh, I'll get to work on it one of these days." So I finally sat down and started writing on it. What I figured was, in order to really set out the role of the AFL. I would write sort of an introductory part about its role in Latin America to emphasize the part played historically by Gomper's kind of business unionism. The thing got out of hand, this introductory part. When I came out with the completed manuscript, I gave it to New Star and it was too long. They told me to divide it up and do a little more on Latin America and they also argued about doing something on the role of the AFL in Vietnam which I finally agreed to do. The thing became two volumes instead of one, a book on American unions and imperialism in Canada and in the Third World. That was the thing on imperialism in the trade unions. This was the basis for it. The drafts were out several years before the books were completed.

I got a lot of suggestions and so on from people who read the original paper. I had difficulties. I couldn't go to the United States to do research, because I was banned for life. I'd have to write for the stuff. I had some of the professors, par-

ticularly out at UBC, write away as professors for material for me, getting microfilm and things like that to work on. It makes it a bit difficult. I would have liked to have gone to Minneapolis and to the University of Michigan where there are huge collections that I would like to have looked into. I had to limit myself and write from the stuff that I could manage to get. Some stuff I got through University Microfilm, bought it. The time I was working on this microfilm was a lot cheaper than it is now. I could write to them and get my own copies. All that I had, or most of it, anyhow, that was of lasting value, is now in UBC, in Special Collections, the research material that I had. I just put it in there.

These studies of American unions in Canada and Latin America appeared in 1978, the one under the title, *Canadian Workers, American Unions*, the other called, *Yankee Unions Go Home!* I seemed to have poached on some academic turf. Robert Babcock criticized the Canadian volume on the grounds that I used secondary sources improperly. He practically accused me of plagiarism. I can accept the complaint about reliance on secondary sources up to a point, although this was far less true about the book on Latin America. The thing that made me a bit uptight about the review that Babcock wrote for *Labour/Le Travailleur* was that in attacking me for virtually plagiarising his own work, which eventually was published as *Gompers in Canada*, he had no idea of the extent to which I was forced to rely on secondary sources, and no idea of the history of my own project. I got as much of the original material as I could and I had read Babcock's thesis on microfilm before his book was actually published. I got it from University Microfilms. I used his thesis like I used a lot of books. I would go through a book, note the sources used that I wasn't aware of, and then I'd check those sources that I thought were important. I don't think there is anything wrong with that. Babcock ended up being quite nit-picking about some of this stuff. I remember when I read the *New York Times* on microfilm and quoted directly from it and Babcock criticized me because I didn't tell the name of the guy who wrote the article. I suppose I ignored it because it was a newspaper article, but I thought this was pretty small potatoes.

I always thought there was a bit of a story behind Babcock's review. There had been a review essay in *Labour* on a number of books on Latin America. My study hadn't been reviewed and Thurston Taylor immediately wrote to Greg Kealey, who was the editor of *Labour*, to complain that all these works were written by American authors and my book on *Yankee Unions* was done by a Canadian with a Canadian publisher and it wasn't even mentioned. Kealey wrote him back — a very cursory note really — that arrangements had been made to review Scott's book. He went on to add, in any event, that he didn't think much of the material that was published by New Star. At this point, Thurston came and told me and he showed me the letter he had sent and the one he received in reply. I said, "Well, you've done it. It's gonna be a nasty review." Kealey and I never did really get along. When I would go to Dalhousie he used to go around telling everybody to beware of Scott because he was a terrible Maoist. I always respected Kealey's ability as a labour historian, but we certainly weren't on very good terms. So I was waiting for this review and here it comes out by Babcock.

If I had been able to go to the United States to do the research, which I couldn't

do, I still would have had to have raised a lot of money. I tried once to get a Canada Council grant, but got nowhere. Again, I made enemies. Made one enemy in particular. I was associated with an application for money that went through the Canada Council, a granting agency that gave support specifically to non-academic people. I got turned down and there were four professors that gave opinions. Three of them signed their names and one of them didn't. The guy who didn't sign was John Crispo, and I had gotten myself on the outs with him because I criticized his work for the Canadian-American Committee, where he was paid to write a report — which later came out as a book — on the American Federation of Labor in Canada. It is quite defensive and very bad. My critique of him was quite nasty. I felt put out about him really doing that kind of job for pay, getting money from a Committee to defend the AFL in Canada, which I thought had a history that was indefensible. I was quite harsh. He obviously took umbrage at that. The three others had the decency to sign their names to their reports on why the grant should not be made. Not Crispo, who obviously took umbrage at what I had said about him. No doubt his attitude was, "Who the hell is Scott? He's a nobody."

I wrote a fair bit of material on the national question and American domination, much of it never published. Most of the papers are up in the archives at UBC. Many were papers that I wrote to present to various groups and to university classes. The Chinese consulate organized a group of about eight or ten Chinese and I wrote quite an extensive paper for them on the question of the domination of the Canadian economy. I read a fair number of papers at the University of Regina, where there was a fairly hard core group of faculty that were anti-American. Most of them were originally from the United States, but they became more Canadian than the Canadians. And I wrote lots of reviews, like the attack I did on Steve Moore's and Debi Wells's study of imperialism and the national question in Canada. I thought that was really a terrible book. Very bad. They did a poor job of defending their position.

I remember there was a meeting held in the name of the Committee of Socialist Studies out at UBC. Phil Resnick was chairing it and Norman Epstein, who was an anarchist, and I were the speakers. There was an American who had come up, a great friend of Mort Briemberg, and he had made a statement about Canadian imperialism and he was really laying it on. This was at the time when the Vietnam war was still going. Briemberg was agreeing with this guy and I wasn't about to take it. I said it was obscene for an American to come up here with the war going on and attack Canadian imperialism. Resnick agreed with me, Epstein with Briemberg and his friend.

But I never thought of myself as an ardent Canadian jingoist. I hope that I wasn't. I saw American domination of the Canadian economy and the Canadian trade union movement as a fact of life that had to be addressed because it was distorting the development of the country and having an adverse affect on the political life of the nation. But I hope that I am not associated with the really far-out nationalists like Perly and his Canadian Independence Movement and that.

The thing that I liked writing best was *Plunderbund and Proletariat*, a short little book that came out just after *Sweat and Struggle*. It was a history of the In-

dustrial Workers of the World in British Columbia. I had to pad it out because it was quite meagre material. So little had been written on the IWW in British Columbia and while McCormack's *Rebels, Reformers, and Revolutionaries* had a chapter on them he was dealing with all of Canada and I was only taking British Columbia into account. The only time I went out of BC was when I talked about the delegation that went to Calgary from BC to stop strike breakers from coming through in one of the strikes. I dealt with the background of the experiences in the railroad camps and so on to flesh out the history.

I finished that in 1976 and I was about to head off to China. I gave the manuscript to New Star and told them it needed some editing, that they should edit it and go ahead with the publication. No need to wait for me to come back. When I returned from China it wasn't out. There was a whole list, about thirty or forty suggestions for improvement. So I had to sit down and practically write the thing over again. There were a whole number of good suggestions that were made. Birnie read it and David Mole and his wife, Gilles Malnarich. They had gone over it and they sat down and discussed it with me. I put a piece in the book thanking them for their assistance. I was surprised at some of its reception amongst the American syndicalists because I didn't go out of my way to make heroes of the American syndicalists or the IWW. I think there were more American syndicalists bought that book than anybody else as a single group.

Tom Wayman and Mark Warrior and all that group were out at UBC at the time and they ran a week out there they called the "Week of Martyrs" dealing with some episodes of militant labour history. They asked me to come out and speak at noon hour which means maybe thirty minutes. There's not a hell of a lot you can say. I agreed to go out and I had a piece written out because if I have a limited amount of time to speak, I have to write the bloody thing out because otherwise it might take forever. BC labour martyrs. They published it. It was just a little bit of a thing. Another time I did a thing for them also very small, "In Aid of the Civil Power," which was on the use of the militia against the people of British Columbia. They published that along with the martyrs piece. Five hundred copies of each. I think they pretty well became collector's items now. A lot of them went out of the country to syndicalist groups in the States and in England and France. They republished the two of them together under the title of "Martyrs and Militia." It was still a very small thing, and got very hard to get.

I did a tremendous amount of research as well on the coal miners of British Columbia. There's been a pretty good work done on that called *Boss Whistle*. But there's a lot more that could be dealt with. It would require a huge book. There is a tremendous amount of material. I planned to do something but never got around to writing it. Again, I let the thing go and then finally there was no money coming into the publishers. It was getting difficult. It's even more difficult now. The Socreds have cut off all grants for any serious work at all. They will only grant now for fiction and poetry. That came about, I think, as a result of both Stan Persky's political writing and the efforts of some others in writing books that were critical of Social Credit. They're not about to finance books that are critical of them. *The New Reality* was the last straw. Persky had written a couple of other things: *Son of*

Sacred and The House that Jack Built, which was aimed mainly at a former mayor here in Vancouver.

I had no illusions about myself. I never considered myself an academic writer. I was working on the bloody docks before I was fourteen. I had no education. What I got I had to get the hard way. I never considered myself much of a writer. I could put a few words together, but beyond that I never had any illusions about myself. There were other people who had more illusions about me than I did about myself, about my ability to state a point, to write about it. I never had those kinds of illusions, but I liked doing it, writing. I suppose there's a certain amount of egoism after all attached to it. If you think you've got something so important to say that you go out and write it down and people are not only going to read it, but they're gonna bloody well pay for the privilege to read it, you've got to be something of an egoist in order to do it. I really didn't have any illusions about my competence. I just personally enjoyed it.

I had to enjoy it. I never made any money out of it. It cost me money. Never got any pay for what I did. It simply was costing me money. I was getting help from some people to pay for some of the things that I needed. I went over to Victoria for a couple of weeks. Friends in Victoria put me up and I got some money to help pay for expenses and so on. Spent a couple of weeks in the BC Archives and the Parliamentary Library. Otherwise I would not have been able to do the research on the miners that I did do because a hell of a lot of material that's in the BC Archives in connection with that is available no place else. Only one copy. I got a lot of help from the Archivist there digging out material.

I read one paper on this stuff. I was invited to speak by CAIMAW when they were having a series of lectures on labour history. I wrote up a paper that took me about an hour to read. It was clearly a substantial paper. I called it "Class War on Vancouver Island." I used my material to deal with some of the history of the coal miners on Vancouver Island. There's copies of that that's kicking around. CAIMAW photocopied some copies of it and they went the rounds.

There were several really interesting points. Really I should get off my ass and write about them because they're not in *Boss Whistle*. The Vancouver Island Coal Company was British-owned in the late nineteenth century. John Galsworthy, the famous British novelist, got involved because his father was one of the investors, was on the board of directors, and he ostensibly sent John out to do an investigation of the mine. He was in his early twenties. It was simply to get him the hell out of London because he was going around with a Welsh singing teacher who wasn't considered acceptable to Galsworthy's family. This is what moved Galsworthy to start writing. *The Forsyth Saga* and a number of short stories are based entirely on his experiences on Vancouver Island around Nanaimo. I came across that by accident. Somebody had been investigating some general economic history and examined all the records of the Vancouver Island Coal and Land Company. He was a well-known historian. Again, the name slips my mind. His attention was drawn to the fact that Galsworthy had been on Vancouver Island and there was some mention of his experience in *The Forsyth Saga*. He wrote an article for the *Queen's Quarterly* on the Vancouver Coal and Land Company and this footnote referred to

the fact that Galsworthy had been on Vancouver Island and had mentioned it and of course I saw that. I made sort of a mental note about it and thought, well, if I get around to writing this, it will make for an interesting note that Galsworthy was there.

Then when I was on Vancouver Island doing research I came across a typescript by a geologist. I get mad at myself for not being able to remember names. Quite an outstanding geologist. Worked for the government and he had a typed paper and he had a copy in the Archives. Only about a dozen pages or so. It was dealing with this remark in this article in the *Queen's Quarterly* about Galsworthy. He said that it went much further than that. A number of works by Galsworthy were based on the Nanaimo and Vancouver Island influence. The only thing is that in order to discover them, a person would have to know the personalities involved in coal mining in Vancouver Island and he didn't have the material at hand. This is precisely what I'm researching at that particular time. I thought, well, I'd better look into this. Maybe it's a little more than I thought. I'm no fiction reader, rarely read it. But now I've got to read Galsworthy's books. I get books about Galsworthy. I must have read between works by Galsworthy and works about Galsworthy — biographies and critiques of his work — thirty-five or forty volumes altogether. At least half a dozen of Galsworthy's earliest short stories are based entirely on his experience on Vancouver Island and his original works when he first started writing are based on Vancouver Island experiences. Nothing else. In the first volume of *The Forsyth Saga* you can find material that's obviously rooted in Vancouver Island. I wrapped it up, a thing on Galsworthy in the Nanaimo area. I should actually get to work on it and do it up as an article because I think it's interesting enough that a writer like this begins to reflect something of Vancouver Island in his works.

I also read a lot of coal mine manager material. One was called a diary. Actually they were day books. That's what they really were. It's where they entered in the book the details from which they could make reports to the company in London. This is where I got some really important insights into how race and class operated in the mines very differently than the traditional stereotype of white miner militants and Chinese strike breakers. It was in Mark Bates's day book that I got the reference to the Chinese making demands on the white coal miners for more money, indicating Chinese combativeness and the place of the white worker as a subcontractor. Bates remarks that the Company has got to support the white miners against the Chinese labourers. Incidentally, Mark Bates was the first ever Mayor of Nanaimo. It's real good solid material. I read the newspapers of the time as well on microfilm. Old papers with very poor print. I nearly drove myself up the bloody wall.

And I've never written it up. I wrote other things. I once sat in with a group of students from UBC's Asian Affairs program. Graham Johnson was leading this lot and they were all writing theses on different things from a Marxist point of view, earning credits towards their Ph.D.s. I was invited to join the group. All of them aspiring professors. I wrote a paper which was discussed but I'm not getting bloody credits for any Ph.D. These are the kinds of things I got into, places where I didn't bloody well belong. I could do serious research, and certainly spent a lot of ten-hour days pouring over microfilm, which is no fun. But I'm not disciplined. If you

have to produce a paper for a university and the professor is breathing down your bloody neck and you're past the date already that it's due and you've got to get it out, then you sort of get discipline. I never had them breathing down my neck. Until somebody did and New Star started leaning on me to produce or when I was asked to speak somewhere and went down to the last minute and then had to work like hell to get a paper together so I wouldn't look more bloody stupid than I naturally am — it wasn't until these things happened that I would work like hell.

My biggest failing as far as any kind of extensive writing is concerned is this lack of discipline. I would need to plan. I actually needed someone to plan my time better, to do a certain amount of work each day and get the thing so that I didn't have to crowd the thing into one short period of time. I never really succeeded in disciplining myself. You learn a different kind of discipline when you've got a boss on your back all the time looking for you to produce in the shop and your idea is to produce less than he wants you to produce. And that was my experience. I often felt bad about it later on that I never really got through all of elementary school, never got to high school, never got to university. I suppose there are advantages and disadvantages to that. I suppose if I had got to university and ended up being some kind of an asshole of an academic I wouldn't have liked myself a great deal. I don't know. But I often regretted that I never got to university, and that I didn't get the kind of discipline that you have to acquire to be a writer.

Trying to write books you end up reading a lot of them as well. You are either reading them or writing them it seems. By the mid-1970s books were getting pretty expensive. There was a bunch of university students out at UBC and they were complaining to me about the cost of books. I said, "Well, you know, we could get together and form a company and order books just for ourselves and sell them back to ourselves for cost plus 10 per cent. The 10 per cent would give us a little bit of a plum for postage stamps and paper and what have you." So they thought that was a good idea and they got together. Roger Perkins, at that time, had been dealing with second-hand book dealers. He was a rather indiscriminating buyer, he'd pack anything in. I remember one time when I was living on East Twenty-second and he was living up the street from me in a flat there. I was getting reports which came out daily from China. I had stacks of this stuff in the house. Perkins was in one day and I was then preparing to junk all of this stuff. It was all going to the garbage. Perkins said, "Oh no. Don't throw it out. Give it to me." I asked what the hell he wanted it for. It's junk. It's all just news releases. "I'm not gonna give it to you. Sylvia will kill me if I give that stuff to you to take home to your flat. You're already crowding her out of the goddamn place with crap." "Well, she's away for the weekend. I'll sneak it into one of the closets while she's out." So he takes all this goddamn junk. He didn't start anything up really. It was Perkins who adopted the name, Spartacus Books. When he was ordering stuff from catalogues then he would order it in the name of Spartacus Books and he would get the trade discount, even from the second-hand book dealers. He heard about our scheme of starting something up and he said, well, take over the name Spartacus Books. It's already in operation and known to some publishers. That's how we got the name.

We took over from Perkins. Actually, we ran the outfit from the basement of

his house for eight months before we got a store. What happened was he would do the ordering. If we knew some books we wanted, we'd tell him, but he would also order books, particularly remainders from the remainder lists that were coming out. He put them out on the shelves in his basement and we used to go there once a week. We used to go there on a Sunday morning or afternoon. We'd look over what was there and we'd take what we want. We'd pay the cost plus 10 per cent. After the store was opened we had a working membership and a general membership. The working membership for quite awhile still got at cost plus 10 per cent. Maybe for a couple of years and then they changed that. Now the working membership gets the books at 20 per cent off. It costs them a bit more than it used to. I forget who started the store on Hastings Street up on the third floor of the building. Most of the customers were, still are, from around the universities. We were non-partisan, carried a wide range of material. We carried books, as far as we could, that people asked for. We always maintained our non-partisan position. There was a Trotskyist group — Gary Cristall and a few others — at one time that sort of tried to take control of the board and we had a big battle and fought it out and won. We remained non-partisan. Some of the Trotskyists quit. Not all of them. Still some of them around there. They agreed with the position of remaining non-partisan. They had their own store anyhow. Why they would want to gain control of another one is rather ridiculous. Of course, the CPers never did come in. They had their own store. They were more intent on putting us out of business than in coming in and taking over. After a couple of years in the store I quit going to directors' meetings. Really became quite bad. Students there would talk all day long and all night. Discuss the finest little details. I finally got really pissed off.

Bernard Curtin was the worst. He was on the board of directors at the time. The landlord had informed us about a rent increase. There was no question. We had no alternative. We had to look for another place. It was just too much. There was nothing to discuss. And they're discussing and discussing this and Curtin finally got me mad because he's sympathizing with the bloody landlord. "Well, you know, landlords get problems." I kept saying, "Bernard, it's not a question of the landlord's problems. It's our problems. We cannot pay. We've got to move." "Well, the landlord ..." I finally said, "For Christ's sake, Bernard, we used to shoot landlords in Ireland and you're bloody well sitting here defending them!" We did used to shoot landlords in Ireland. I got fed up. I stood up and said, "I'm leaving." I'll still be with the store, I'll still do my shift, but I will not attend any more board of directors meetings. I have never attended a board of directors meeting since. That must have been six years ago at least. Never been at one since. I just go and do my shift and that's it.

22. PERSONALITIES AND POLITICS

Over the course of the years I came to know a lot of the people who played a leading role in the Communist Party in Canada. If you had to name one who was central to the history, I suppose it would be Tim Buck. Buck was the best survivor of all the Party leaders in the entire world, including Stalin. Stalin, of course, died before they bounced him out of the Party. But he got condemned afterwards. Buck survived and remains eulogized. He survived Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin. He was almost bounced out over that. Aside from any political problem, Buck was a likeable guy. He was great fun at a party. There weren't too many leaders that could mix at a party and be fun and sing songs and get in the spirit and get drunk. Browder wouldn't do it. He was a very standoffish guy, and had his own circle of friends he mixed with. Anybody else almost didn't get to speak to him. Buck wasn't that kind of a person. I was at many house parties with Buck. For about a better part of a year I was Party organizer in Ward Six in Toronto, which is where Buck lived. His wife was in one of the groups. She used to drive me up the bloody wall. Right in the middle of a meeting, she'd be carrying on a private conversation and in quite a loud voice too with somebody else. I used to tell her off about it. I found Buck an extremely friendly person. He would always remember everybody he ever met. He'd remember their names which is bloody well more than I can do. I'm terrible on names. He'd remember where he met them, their families and everything.

He was the kind of a guy who could talk to anybody and establish a good friendly relationship. You have to see Buck largely in that way because that's why he could survive. People liked him. People in the Party and people outside of the Party simply liked him as a person and it was certainly this more than his ability to give political leadership that helped him to survive.

He also had a very good memory. He could quote at great length, quote Lenin or quote Stalin or whatever was called for. I never was much into that. I'm happy to be that way too. Learning too much by rote I don't think does much for one's credibility or for one's independence of thought. Buck could always quote people at great length. And he was a good speaker, a very good speaker. Tim was very firmly entrenched with Moscow, too, which didn't hurt.

He was a machinist and was in the machinists' union before he was expelled at the time when they were expelling Communists out of a lot of the international unions. Malcolm Bruce was expelled as well. Buck originally came from England, from Surrey, I think. His father owned a public house, pretty well owned by breweries, and he handled the brewer's beer. That's his background.

The policy was, and it was deliberate policy of the Party, to build up a reputation for the Party leader. Of course, they told things about Buck that simply were not true. He was supposed to have been at the first founding convention of the Party and he was not there. He was in the United States, working as a machinist. I didn't know this for a long time. The more or less newcomers would not know this. But the old-timers knew because they were around. Maurice Spector brought that out

long ago, about the myth of them having met in a barn outside of Guelph and Buck being there and fighting for the Party lines. Spector pointed out that just was not true. They met in a house in Guelph. They didn't meet in a barn. Buck was not there. Spector told that. I don't know why they went to all the trouble of doing that. The guy was in early as it was. When he came back from the States he was in. And he was in pretty well on the ground floor. What was the necessity of establishing a myth that couldn't survive. There were too many people that knew that it just wasn't so.

Buck didn't need this mythology anyway. He had what is generally referred to as charisma in his own way. People would get awful pissed off at Buck, but they never actually came to the point that they disliked him. Norman Penner, for example, denounced Buck and led an attempt to depose him after the Khrushchev revelations, but I rather question if Norman ever got to the point of really disliking Buck. I don't think he did.

There was the mess around Buck's autobiography, a real furore. The Party had already published their version of Buck's life, larger than life. Oscar Ryan wrote it and Kashtan wrote the foreword. It was nothing more than a eulogy of Buck, a recounting of how everything the Party did under his leadership was perfect. Utterly ridiculous and just not true. That is the kind of thing they wanted when leadership was being discussed. The book was called *Tim Buck: A Conscience for Canada*. And published by the Party of course. Then a few years later *Yours in the Struggle: Reminiscences of Tim Buck* appears. It is based on interviews, edited by Phyllis Clarke, daughter of old J.L. Cohen, and William Beeching, and a lot of Party members were involved in its publication. Barbara Cameron was involved on the periphery and Buck's mistress was also involved. There was a big blowout in the Party. Beeching was thrown out. I expected to see Barbara Cameron get the axe. She hasn't been kicked out though. What was really at issue was that when you go through the book from cover to cover and Buck is telling what they did at various points in time, he is often talking about how they were wrong on this and that, here and there. Oops, we were wrong there. We made a mistake on that one. What you end up with is an account of a whole series of bloody errors. If you make so many mistakes the question becomes how can you claim to be the bloody vanguard? All these fundamental blunders call into question your credibility.

I mentioned that Buck's mistress was involved in the book. It was her that was with him when he died in Mexico. His wife was not there. Buck never travelled with his wife. Alice was always left at home. I guess Buck felt that she was not the type that you took into high-class gatherings with high-class people. She was very proletarian. A woman who raised a family. And in spite of being married to the leader of the Party, she was quite naive politically. Never did master politics as an art. A lot of people did not know what was going on, but most in the upper echelons of the Party saw it plenty. If Buck was going to Europe he'd go to New York and pick up his mistress and go off with her. When he went to China it was her that went with him. I was talking to Kang Sheng in Peking in 1967 when I was there and of course Buck was out on the hustings defending Moscow against Peking. He called Buck all kinds of a bastard. He said, "He comes here, we give him the best

of everything, and he doesn't even bring his wife. He brings some woman he is not even married to!" I'm sure that given Buck's mistress's involvement in his autobiography she is now out of the Party.

One guy I really liked was Joe Salsberg. He was one of the guys that got thrown out of the needle trades and went to work in a sweat shop, which him and several others immediately proceeded to organize. That actually eventually became the basis of the Workers Unity League, laid a firm basis. Joe was Jewish working class. When you saw him, he often didn't look like it. He used to go around dressed in plus-fours quite a lot. Looked like he was going to a golf game all the time. But Joe was solid Jewish working class, fairly down to earth. I remember the convention in 1937, the Party convention in 1937, which was in the Masonic Hall on Davenport Road in Toronto and I was close to Joe at the back of the hall. There was something not that consequential that came up and Joe got up and he made a motion on something or other. There was a lot of argument about it back and forth. For about the third time Joe is on his feet and he's going to speak and there had been no seconder for the motion. A.A. MacLeod finally awoke to the fact. He said, "I'm sorry Comrade, I can't allow this to go on any longer. The motion has been made, but there's no seconder." Joe said, "Oh, is that so Comrade, Chairman. Well, I second the motion." MacLeod says, "OK, now the motion can be discussed." I just sat there and laughed. MacLeod had lost track of the whole goddamn business. Joe was pretty sharp. Stewart Smith was a pretty sharp individual as well, but I didn't think so much of him. He had been to the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute when he was still quite young. He was almost expelled from the Party in the World War II period because for the second time Stewart had taken over the leadership of the underground Party. Buck was off in the States and several others were scattered here and there or hidden. Smith was given the leadership. He finally arrived at the conclusion that after twice leading the Party underground he was entitled to be leader of the Party, so he was going to carry out a coup to unseat Buck. He got dragged up on the carpet for that. He was almost expelled.

His father saved him by appealing to them not to turf him out. The old man was highly respected. The old man was the organizer of the Canadian Labour Defence League and worked in that for a number of years. Everybody liked the old A.E. The biography that was done of him, incidentally, was supposed to be written by A.E. It was not. It was written from the old man's notes by Stewart. A.E. first came in contact with the left when he was around Nelson. An IWW guy, Charlie Johnson, had come up through that area from the States and the IWW for a brief period was quite strong in Nelson. They had a hold of Nelson, organized it at one point. Charlie Johnson came up there and he talked to A.E. and got A.E. interested in labour. Later A.E. was in Manitoba, moderator of the Methodist Church in Brandon. He was there in that period leading up to the Winnipeg General Strike. When the Labour Church was started in Winnipeg, A.E. started one in Brandon. He of course had run-ins with the Methodist Church. Just about tossed him out on his ear. From there he gravitated into the CP and became active.

I remember when the hullabaloo was raised about the riot at Kingston, when Buck was shot at in his cell. There was no question about it. He was. Smith brought

this up at a public meeting. R.B. Bennett was in power and old A.E. Smith was charged with treason. He was actually charged. There was a trial. There was a big meeting before the trial in Maple Leaf Gardens. The place was packed and A.E. was a good speaker. Of course he was trained as a minister. He's really going after Bennett. At one point he quotes that phrase from Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, "Who is this Caesar?" Just brought the bloody house down. Of course he was acquitted in this treason trial.

In his more advanced years he was something else. He must have been about seventy when they sent him off for a trip to the Soviet Union. Went by boat. Went with a group by boat to the Soviet Union. I was in London, Ontario when he came back. He came down there to speak at a couple of meetings. I arranged for a hotel room for him to stay in the Hotel London. Got a nice room for him so he could be by himself, not be bothered with anybody. When he came in, I go up to his room. I take him there and we're sitting and talking. He pulls a pack of cigarettes out of his pocket and starts smoking. I said, "Christ, A.E. when did you start smoking?" "Well," he said, "we were going over on the boat and the young people were all smoking and I wanted to be one of them so I did as well." Seventy years old and he starts to smoke. He was quite a likeable person. He was never in the leadership of the Party really. I don't think he was ever on the central committee. More of a figurehead that could be used effectively. Stewart, though, was right in the middle of things and he was pretty smart. He spoke a number of different languages. German and French and Spanish and Russian. That was one of the things that helped him after the war after he got out of the Party. He went into business. He was around the area where the immigrants were. They could come in and he could speak to them in their own language. He was selling washing machines and refrigerators and appliances. They were in short supply and I don't know how the hell he was getting all the supply anyhow. He became a millionaire before he was through. When he got out of the Party, he first made a move toward organizing another different group. I can't even remember what he called the group now. It didn't amount to anything.

I knew Stanley Ryerson as well. He had been in France. He contacted the Communist Party when he was in France. He married a French woman. Simone, I think her name was, if I remember right. She was a member of the Party in France. But I first had personal contact with Stanley after he had come back from France and they posted him as leader of the Party in Quebec. Of course he was quite fluent in French. He's also a guy who speaks a number of languages. He was at the 1937 convention of the Party and that's where I first actually met Stanley, in 1937. He'd been in Quebec already for a couple of years before that as the Party leader. He was fairly popular in Quebec. Again we have a guy who was a fairly good speaker. The Party, I guess, was most active and strongest in Quebec at the time that Ryerson was the leader there. Mind you, the bulk of the Party there was Jewish at the time, but they also had, I think, more French Canadians there than they ever did at any other time before then.

The only possible exception would have been a short period when the Proletarian College was big in Montreal. Camille Dionne came out of there. He

stayed with the Party right through. Became a real dogmatist. Fortin talks a lot of him in his book, *Life of the Party*. There were a fair number of French Canadians also that came from the Proletarian College, but they didn't stay very long. They were in and they were out again because a big fight came up. The Catholic *syndicats* were in Quebec at the time and, of course, they were set against the international unions. About every local *syndicat* had a priest attached. That was one of the rules. The leaders of the Proletarian College argued, well, it's true that they're priest-ridden, and quite close to the church. But radicals should be working in there. The Party's position was that they had to be destroyed. They had to be brought into the international unions. And Stanley would be pushing that position at the time.

So the Proletarian College people, with the exception of a few like Dionne and his wife, just simply quit the CP. Actually they were proved right. Their position was to get in there and fight for change. Eventually the Catholic *syndicats* became the basis for the CNTU. For a period it was the most militant union movement in the country. They threw the priests out. Down a different road and the Party never could see this. I think, if I remember right, that Buck mentioned this but mostly in a footnote in his *Thirty Years*, the alleged history of the Communist Party of Canada. I think he deals with it, but mostly in a footnote about the Proletarian College.

When there was the big upheaval in the Party during the Khrushchev revelations and Hungarian crisis, Stanley was right in the middle of the heavy-handed suppression of the opposition. Penner went in and put a motion before the political bureau that Buck, with all his coming and going to the Soviet Union, must have known about what had happened and that he should therefore be removed as Party leader. I don't think Norman expected to get much support, but to his surprise he not only got a seconder but the motion passed with only two votes against it. Not surprising — Buck and Morris were opposed. This was when they brought Stanley back from Prague, where he had been.

Ryerson came back to mobilize a special meeting of the central committee bent on overturning the decision of the political bureau. The aim was to maintain Buck in his position and this all came off according to plan and Buck was rescued. Survived again. It was Stanley that organized all that. Fortin mentions Ryerson briefly in his book, recounts how Ryerson called him a traitor for not being behind Buck, spitting on the ground. That was in a period when there were very tense relations at the top leadership. Among the lower leadership there was something of a rebellion as well. Salsberg quit, as I mentioned. There were a bunch of Ukrainians that were disturbed about reports they were getting that had come out of the Ukraine. Buck had squashed some of this opposition, but then it flared up again. A lot of French Canadians packed it in as well. Stanley was the consummate Party loyalist through all of this.

Stanley was always in the east and I was here. Sort of a wide gap. Stanley stuck to the Party long after I was out. When I lived in Trail and Stanley was making a tour, he came through Trail. He stopped at my place. Had a few days discussing things. Later on when I came out here there was a UBC symposium that Steele, Mathews, Chartrand, Ryerson, and myself were all a part of. I remember walking over from the Student Union building to the Buchanan Building and I was walk-

ing with Stanley and he was still in the Party. I asked him at the time, "Stanley, why do you hang around? There's nothing there any longer." He couldn't answer. In fact, he was out soon after that. He told me at the time too that he hadn't run at the convention for central committee. What he told me was he was worried that he would get elected.

After awhile in Montreal Stanley eventually resigned. Anybody in his position, of course, the Party couldn't stand for them leaving, so they put out a notice in the French language paper *Combat* that Stanley had been expelled from the Party. Since that time, I've seen him. He's been out here a few times, mostly to speak at some symposium or other. Of course, he was out at the time that the Learned Scholars Conference met in Vancouver. I talked to him a few times then. I have never been that closely associated in activity with Stanley.

Malcolm Bruce, of course, was one of the founding figures of Canadian communism. He was involved with the CP from its beginnings and was in jail with the central committee members and so on. He finally quit the Party and joined up with the Trotskyists for a while. Became a member of the League for Socialist Action here in Vancouver. He disagreed with them on some policy or other and he left. For some time the LSA were quite reluctant to make anything public about his split from them because they had made so much of Malcolm being one of the early founders of the Party. They kept it quite quiet and initially even denied that Malcolm had quit. What isn't very well known is that he left the LSA and he joined *Progressive Worker*. He wasn't very active. He was an old man at the time and we didn't expect him to be doing all that much. He didn't last too long but he was an actual member of PW.

I remember we were organizing forums and we had Malcolm speak at one of them. Somehow or other — I don't know how it happened — we had Gordon Martin over from Nanaimo to speak at this same forum. This is Lilian Martin's father, a lawyer. He died of cancer a few years back. It was really funny. Gordon was very pro-Stalin even at this late date. And of course Malcolm is totally the other way. What an argument went on at that forum! Really good and lively discussion. Malcolm was pretty lively, even though he was quite old. He wrote one or two things for *Progressive Worker*, but as I say he was not all that active.

I don't know whether I'm saving the best or the worst till last, but it is hard not to say a lot about Harvey Murphy. Watching him in operation was something to behold. I had known him since the 1930s in Ontario, where he and George Harris were involved in the unemployment struggles. His real name wasn't Murphy at all. It was something else, I can't remember, but Murphy was Jewish and his real name was something quite different than Murphy, that I do know.

Buck told me a story one time that relates to this name business. Murphy was about sixteen at the time. Just a youngster. There had been a street meeting or a park meeting or something like that and there had been a fight. A number were arrested. Buck and Murphy and some others and they were up there and they were charged and they were remanded to appear again. The day they were to appear in court everybody turns up except Murphy. The inspector came to Buck. He says, "Where's that young Irish lad Murphy? He's not here." Buck says, "He's just slept

in. That's the way he is." The inspector was an Irish guy. "Well," he said, "Mr. Buck, I'll stall things for awhile. Do you think you can get him here because you'll be in trouble if you don't get him here. I can stall things." Buck said, "Oh yes. I'll send somebody to get him out of bed and get him here." The inspector stalled the court case as much as he could until they got Murphy there. They thought Murphy was an Irishman. Funny. He looked anything but Irish, Murphy did.

Murphy and Harris were a pair. Murphy was also quite a gambler. Poker and the race-track. I used to like gambling. I gave it up. It's a fool's game. You simply don't go anyplace. I remember one night we were playing poker and drinking. We were out in New Toronto at somebody's house and we played till about two o'clock in the morning. We had been drinking. We weren't feeling so good. We all retired to a steam bath. About ten of us, I guess. We put in the rest of the night in a steam bath. Bullshitting about this and that, politics. Got ourselves sort of straightened out a bit.

In many ways Murphy was like an overgrown school boy. He'd get himself in trouble. He'd dig a hole for himself and then pat himself on the back for being able to get out of the hole that he had dug. That kind of approach. The things Murphy was capable of getting himself into. He was in hiding during the early part of the war when it wasn't our war anymore. Hiding out with Munie Erlich, I think. Both hiding out and hanging out together. They decided one night that they wanted some recreation and that they're gonna go to a show. They pick a theatre on Yonge Street, of all places, and both of them get nailed going into the show. Off to the prison camp they go. Murphy spent a bit of time there.

When he came out they sent him out west to start organizing at the mines and smelters. He got a job temporarily as a plumber in a mine. He started to organize the small mines which was fairly easy. Got them off the ground and into the Mine-Mill organization and then finally managed to break into Trail. He did the organizing work. Mind you, he had a lot of help and a number of people around the mine industry in the Party or close to it were mobilized to get things moving. Murphy sort of came to have the idea that he owned the whole damn operation because of being in on the ground floor of it.

There used to be a joke told around Trail about Murphy. It was about a young boy that saw some guy floundering in the Columbia River that was near to drowning. The youngster got in there and dragged him to shore and when he come to he thanked the young guy for saving him. He says, "You know I'm Harvey Murphy. Anything I can do for you, just let me know." The boy said, "Well, Mr. Murphy, there's one thing you can do for me." "What's that?" He says, "Don't ever tell my father that I saved you from drowning or he'd kill me." That's a joke that was going around all over Trail.

I remember a true one. Again, he was drunk. There was a couple that had lived near us in Trail. A young couple. Les Bogie and his wife. Les was at work. Murphy got drunk. They had a bit of a garden. Piled up. Murphy was going up there. He'd had a few too many and apparently got the feeling that he would like to go to bed with a woman. He started chasing Bogie's wife and she was running madly away and their boy — he'd be about seven years old, I guess, at the time — came

to me where I lived. Running up he says, "Mr. Scott come quick. Mr. Murphy was chasing mommy around the manure pile and Mr. Murphy fell in the manure pile." He did. Alice is running madly around the bloody pile of manure and Murphy staggering around after her and finally collapsed into the bloody pile of manure. I had to go and drag him out.

Bogie lived up a hill on Spokane Avenue. It's almost straight down. Bogie's got a little car. He was a small man, his wife was a small woman, and he had a small house and a small family and a small car. Everything was small. He had been somewhere I think. Maybe up at my place. I lived up on Mountain Street for awhile. The very last street at the top of the bloody mountain there at Trail. There was none behind us. We were the top one and appropriately named: Mountain Street. I think that's where he'd been and Bogie decided to come down by way of Spokane Street. It's almost straight down. Murphy's in the back seat. A little Volkswagen. You're trapped in there. The bloody car has got brakes that might stop you in a hundred years if you really stamp on them heavy. We're rumbling down there and there's Murphy, "Stop this thing. Let me out of here." Scared shitless going down this hill. Bogie's laughing at him. He had to stay there. He couldn't get out. He's too fat to get through the window. Stuck in the bloody back seat.

Murphy was always big on the infallibility of the Party. After I was out I was having an argument with him about some matter of Party policy. I'm arguing contrary and insisting that I am right. Murphy comes back at me, "What makes you think you can be right against the Party." His argument was the Party has got to be right. He was really dogmatic that way. Of course if the Party policy changed to the opposite of what it had been, the Party was still right as far as Murphy was concerned. His advocacy of the Party always had to be put alongside of his own role however. Murphy's position was sort of, "The Party is right and I am the Party." I never knew anybody out here even suggested that Murphy should ever be disciplined. He was a power unto himself. Everybody thought he was just great. People like him and Bill Stewart in the Boilermakers and a few others were in positions in the trade union movement of considerable power and they could do anything they goddamn well pleased. The Party leadership here was scared of them. They needed them more than these guys needed the Party. And so they catered to them and Murphy and others got away with murder. They did things that nobody else would have ever got away with.

In Murphy's case the prime example was what happened in 1948 when the British Columbia Federation of Labor held a banquet in Victoria as part of a protest against the provincial government's labour legislation. Murphy gave the Federation, which was in a kind of Cold War frenzy to crush out so-called "Communist-dominated" unions like Mine-Mill, the opportunity to come down with both feet on the Party's trade union activity. It's part of the whole thing I was dealing with earlier, of how the reds beat themselves in BC.

All the unions were to meet in Victoria, protest some offensive legislation, and have a banquet. There were going to be speakers and a head table. Mine-Mill was supposed to be represented at the head table and Murphy, as usual, has got himself pretty well plastered. Kenny Smith talked it over with him and he had Murphy con-

vinced that he should stay away from the banquet. Kenny was going to speak for Mine-Mill in his place. They started assembling for the banquet and Murphy, fortunately, is not in sight. Kenny thinks everything is going to work out alright for a change. The banquet gets underway and then in staggers Murphy.

He is bombed out of his mind and insisting that if anyone is going to speak for Mine-Mill it will be him. Of course there are representatives from the Steelworkers there and they are in the BC Fed and there is a lot of in-fighting between them and Mine-Mill and generally hostility between CCFers and CPers in the labour movement. Murphy takes over from Smith, he's going to do it all on his own. The speeches start and up gets Murphy, obviously drunk. He makes his famous remark that there are some people that when they are asked to kiss the boss make only one condition: that he take his underwear down. A lot of other stuff was said too. Funny no doubt, but not exactly tactful. All of the Steel delegates got up and walked out as one man. And it was this that the right wing in the trade union movement used to suspend Mine-Mill, which was a real victory for the anti-communist forces. And did anyone think of disciplining Murphy? Good God, no!

Murphy's final act was to carry out the Party decision to turn Mine-Mill over to the Steelworkers in the late 1960s. Years and years Murphy had been saying they were never gonna make an agreement with Steel. When it finally came about, Mine-Mill was in extremely bad shape in the United States. In Canada, however, it was still a viable organization. When word got out that Mine-Mill was merging with Steel in the US, Murphy is going around saying that they have to make that kind of decision in the United States, but it would never happen up here. Finally he got the message that it was a Party decision, and then that was that.

In any event, there was a signed agreement with the Steelworkers, which stipulated this and that, dotted every i and crossed every t, including what kinds of pensions Murphy and the boys would have. The ordinary workers got nothing, but the Mine-Mill bureaucracy was taken care of. Murphy put in three to six months and then was pensioned off. Al King worked for a number of years, but many of them just put in a modest amount of time. Bill Longridge had a year to go before he was of pensionable age. He spent the year sitting in the beer parlour, drawing union wages paid by Steel. They didn't want these guys active. If they had to be involved they were sent to Siberia. Kenny Smith got shipped out to northern Saskatchewan, along with the Sudbury Mafia, Nels Thibault and Mike Solski. I guess they would all be pensioned off by now. They did mighty well as far as what they got out of Steel.

There were only a couple of places that resisted the takeover. Up in Yellowknife they became a local of CASAW. Aluminum workers at Kitimat formed CASAW by breaking from Steel and then Yellowknife followed. When they were talking about Communist domination in Yellowknife after I went in there it was certainly nothing compared to what Steel had in store for them. They had been long enough on their own that they didn't stick around too long. And then, of course, there was the business of Falconbridge, which never did go in. There was quite a battle there, because there was about a million dollars worth of property in the Sudbury area that belonged to Mine-Mill. Steel was supposed to get all of this in the merger, but

Falconbridge maintained their own local. The guy that was head of that local was an uncle of Gary Teeple. I can't remember his name offhand. He was also a member of the Party. He refused to go along with the whole thing and the Party was very unhappy with him. He was out for a time, but I am sure that he's back now. Anyway, they kept the property, insisting it was Mine-Mill that owned it. And they maintained that they were what was left of Mine-Mill. It went to court and the Supreme Court of Ontario agreed. Ruled that when Mine-Mill merged with Steel it did not follow its own constitutional process and therefore the merger agreement was not legally binding. The only entity that had legal status was the Falconbridge local of Mine-Mill. They had a right to the property — a holiday camp and three or four halls that are in the area of the mine sites — as well as quite a bit of cash. So Steel didn't quite get everything. But they got enough, and Murphy goes down in history for delivering it to them. He's dead now.

23. REFLECTIONS ON SOLIDARITY

The rise of Solidarity in British Columbia in 1983 was one of the most impressive upheavals that I've witnessed in the recent past. It was a spontaneous explosion of resistance, ignited by the reactionary policies of the Social Credit government. It didn't end too gloriously for the workers and in looking back over it people like myself have the advantage of hindsight, which is probably a little better than the emotion of the moment. In considering what Solidarity teaches us I suppose I start from a different premise than a great many people do, because I don't hold that there was or could have been a general strike. And there is no question that some people, a lot of them, in fact, were taking that militant stand.

Of course I have no quarrel with those who condemn the leadership. The potential of Solidarity was frittered away by the leadership, by their failure to respond. They began scheming how to stop it from getting out of hand. When movements like Solidarity come to the kind of sorry end that we all saw on TV in November of 1983, it develops pessimism in the ranks of the working class, no question. You can't do anything sort of business. You try to do something and it gets broken up by your own leaders, is what people see, and they draw the lesson, "What the hell." Nobody wants to do anything, so they sit on their ass and let things happen.

There was, in my view, real potential in Solidarity. There was an opportunity to take a real political position and develop Solidarity along political lines, for the simple reason that Bennett and the Socred government were making every issue a political issue. They were dragging the entire population into the political arena whether they wanted to be there or not. What the leaders of Solidarity were doing was trying to keep the goddamn thing out of politics instead of mounting a political challenge. And they succeeded and they destroyed the potential that existed.

I don't want to underestimate what happened because the demonstration at Empire Stadium was a very impressive thing. On a working day. It was really something to behold. A well-disciplined march, a well-disciplined demonstration. The demonstration on the Saturday at the time of the Socred convention at the Hotel Vancouver was equally imposing. In fact there was about two and a half times as many people turned out there. Of course you didn't have to walk out of the plant which was rather significant when you discuss a general strike. It was a non-working day so more people turned out. There is no question there was tremendous resentment across the province among working people at that time. And there was undoubtedly a great many people that were in favour of a general strike, but I would argue that the majority were not. And I think that one of the things that can be pointed out is that the Transit Workers' Union of Greater Vancouver, for example, which walked out to a person, took the workers to work in the morning before they walked out and then they went back to take them home at night, which is rather in contradiction of the idea of a general strike.

But it was, nevertheless, a very impressive demonstration. One of the best I've seen in many years. Quite effective, from my point of view, as was the Saturday

one at the time of the Socred convention. I would still hold, though, that when it comes down to the issue of a general strike, you're not just going to walk out for one day. You're going to tie up the entire industry for a protracted period of time, which is what a real general strike should be, not just a one day demonstration, a one day walk-out or what have you.

I think a great many people, and myself undoubtedly from the beginning of the fightback as much as anyone else, were caught up in the emotion of the moment. "Let's go — it's time to start fighting back," which indeed it was. The issue, however, was not a question of to fight or not to fight, but what weapons to use. This was a strike to compel a government to change a policy. It wasn't a strike for wages. It wasn't a strike for conditions in a plant, although that was involved. That was not that far removed from the issue. But this was a strike to force a government to change its policy. What would have happened if in fact the general strike had taken place? I think anybody who looks at it calmly, analytically, coolly, will conclude that the Socreds would have gone to the country, held an election, and would have won re-election. They would have got a sweeping majority, especially with the NDP standing completely out of the struggle, hoping that some of the backwash would touch it.

Not only was the NDP not taking any leadership, but it was not voicing any concern about what was going on one way or the other. Hoping that nobody would notice that they were there, more or less, while the strike was in progress. And they're supposed to be the political arm of labour. The NDP would have been wiped out. Figuratively speaking anyhow. Been reduced to ten or twelve seats that they might have held in solid working-class constituencies. I would estimate 60 per cent or more of the votes would have gone to Social Credit. It would have been one of these real emotional affairs. Bennett would have carried the people. "Who is going to rule the country? Us or the unions?" Let's not kid ourselves about what would have happened.

Then, after that, supposing there was a general strike. What then do you do. Do you tell the government, well, we're not going to accept the government that was elected by the people. They're not fit to rule. Are we going to seize power. You pass then from a general strike for a change in policy to what essentially becomes a revolution. Socialism in one province. I think not. I think that you have to start from that point of view, that there was not going to be a general strike. No hope of having one. Indeed it might have been rather a disaster if there had been a general strike. It might have been worse than what happened.

As I see it, the responsibility of the leadership of the trade union movement is not the betrayal of a general strike, which wasn't there to be betrayed. It was rather a total failure to give any kind of leadership. What they should have been able to do in the very beginning was look at what was happening, analyze what was happening, and direct the emotions of the people, the preparedness to demonstrate, into effective channels. But they were not giving any kind of leadership. Instead of coming out and discussing the issues with the workers, and saying, you know, "Let's hold up, let's look at what we're doing, let's look where we're going, let's look at the effective means of struggle that are available to us in order to achieve the ends

that we want to achieve.” Instead of doing that, they go behind the backs of the workers and try to get some kind of deal which would possibly save face for them without exposing themselves and their own failure of leadership.

It was a deal that couldn't be made. Bennett knew that he was in a stronger position. He wouldn't make any deal. Surely that should have occurred to anyone. This is my criticism of the leadership. Failure to give leadership and then having failed to give leadership, failing also to confront what could be disastrous. It may well have been a disaster. Instead of being honest with the people that they were supposed to be leading, they tried to make a back door deal to end the general strike. In fact they came out and they told the workers, “Well, we've got a deal, let's go back to work.” The fact is that there was no deal which Bennett immediately agreed to.

What was missed was the political potential that was there. I think that everything was political in those days. You couldn't make any kind of a move without finding yourself in a political position. I thought there was real potential for building an independent working-class political movement that could have brought in allies. They were sick to death of Sacred rule. That kind of political movement could have been built out of that struggle. That was lost. Nothing like it. The NDP are still there. Still as ineffective as they were at that time and before. This, to me, is the potential that was lost. Not a general strike that couldn't happen. The potential for a political movement that could have been built. That to me is the tragedy. That opportunity was frittered away.

In explaining why this happened leaders are important, no doubt, but I would have to begin with the rank-and-file. I would have to say that you have to have a different kind of working-class movement that creates a different kind of leadership in order for that to be achieved. If you started from that end, that kind of rank-and-file movement was not there. I think there was the opportunity to start the building of that kind of movement, you see. That's what's missing. A rank-and-file movement that starts from the bottom and creates the kind of leadership that can win this kind of situation. As long as we have the kind of movement that we do have, we'll have the kind of leadership that we've got. There's a failure of leadership there, that's for sure. It's a failure that can lead to catastrophe for the working class.

24. CHINA'S 1984

1984 was the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the Canada-China Friendship Association and there were some exchanges. There was a group had gone over earlier on. There was a banquet given here by the consulate for the executive of the Canada-China Friendship and there was an exchange of greetings between here and China on the anniversary. Some of the people, particularly Graham Johnson, were taking up the question with the consulate that they should invite me to go over on the twentieth anniversary. I wasn't pushing, although I was interested because of the changes that were obviously taking place. Finally, one of them came from the consulate to see me and ask me if I would like to go. I said, "Sure I would like to go." They asked me, "Well, can you go alone? You don't need anybody to go with you?" "No," I said, "I'm quite fit to go alone." They said, "Well, we'll get back to you."

They proposed I go in July. It turned out to be blistering hot. The coolest that I had was in Peking and that was thirty-five degrees centigrade. Wuhan was forty-five degrees and beyond. Fantastic. This time I was invited by the Friendship Association, so I didn't have the same political discussions, although I met top-level people, particularly in the sphere of economic development. There was less political discussion except to the extent that economics affect politics, which, of course, in China it does. You don't completely escape that. The discussions were centred around the objectives being pursued at the present moment in China. Industrial development. How they were going about it and so on. I had discussions in the various communities that I went to which were mostly industrial.

I went in on the train to Canton. I went in on the non-stop train. Right through. You didn't have to stop at the border. They check through on the train where you were going. I spent a day or two in Canton. Looking over what was happening there. Went to Shanghai, to Peking, to Sian, to Szechuan province, Chungking and then back to Canton. I came down the Yangtze River in a boat, incidentally. A couple of days travelling. It was a terrible trip, but interesting. The scenery was beautiful and all that, but the conditions on the boat were bloody awful. It was overcrowded. The section that was there for foreigners was actually set up to accommodate forty and there were eighty on board. I got a cabin that was supposed to be for two by myself. But they don't have the bloody room. There was a group on there, all Germans that were settled in Brazil. They brought one of these around, a woman that I would figure was in her fifties, single woman. They were gonna bunk her in with me. I didn't mind, but she was having no part of that. They switched around somehow or other. I wound up sharing my cabin with a Mexican and I think that the German woman from Brazil probably shared a cabin with the Mexican's wife. That German woman wasn't having any part of sleeping with me. No way. I thought that was kind of funny.

We came down to Sian on the boat and then went back to Canton and then I went to Shenzhen which is the new economic zone that was established on the bor-

der. I spent several days there looking over what they were doing there before I went back into Hong Kong on my way home again.

My whole object at that time was to find out the process of economic development, industrial development that was taking place, what they were doing about it. I have something drafted, actually, that I was thinking of polishing up and maybe getting a little pamphlet or something published. It was really quite interesting.

When I went into Canton, I stayed in a new hotel there that was put up by Hong Kong capital. It was run by Hong Kong. Talk about bourgeois opulence. Man, oh man. It was a twenty-six-storey hotel right on the edge of the Pearl River. I was on the twenty-second floor. Little balcony I could go out. Could look east and west along the Pearl River and look over at Canton across the river. Beautiful place. You go in the dining room and there are two hostesses there to take you to your chair, dressed in long velvet gowns which were split up to the hips. Showed plenty of leg. Sit down and a guy almost appeared from under the table. He'd pop up in front of you with these warm cloths to rub your hands and face which was usual throughout the east. Then he would go off and the waitress would take your order and some little assistant maitre d' would — they looked actually like little penguins waddling across the room with their white vests and bow ties — take the order to the kitchen. The order would come out of the kitchen, brought out by somebody, and would go to the waitress who would look it over and then set it on your table. Very expensive. I don't know just what it cost, but really an expensive place to stay. It wasn't costing me anything. The Friendship Association was paying for me. They had a breakfast place there. The main dining hall where you eat at noon and at night, they had Chinese food. In the breakfast area, mostly it was western food. You eat your breakfast and you could sit there and look out the window and look across the Pearl River. It was almost like you were sitting on the water, you were so close.

We were in an area which was the old French settlement in Canton. The French had dug what you could only call a moat. It went from the Pearl River and around and back into the Pearl River, which turned this area into a sort of island. I suppose there were central bridges across to the main part of the city, and one time it was undoubtedly easier to defend that way. You came down to the hotel on a causeway and pedestrians were not allowed, although I saw pedestrians from the hotel walking there. I think the main idea was to keep the Chinese from the city from coming down and coming to the hotel.

If you went out a back door, you stepped out into this old French concession. All of the old houses had now been turned into Chinese residences. There were all kinds of families, just swarming with Chinese. It was really a slum area. I went there. I walked through the whole area a couple of times. It was really quite run down. It began just across the street from the back end of the hotel. There were security people at the door there all the time. There were three or four of them on duty always. There were quite a few overseas Chinese that were staying there. Guys that had made a bit of money, probably owned restaurants and things like that, that were staying there. Once I went down and out the back door and saw that two of these overseas Chinese had picked up some old guy in the locality and they were bringing him back and they're going to show him the hotel. Well, you could tell

who was overseas Chinese and who wasn't. The guards wouldn't let him in. He didn't get within twenty feet of the door. Only the Chinese who were working there could get in. Others couldn't see the opulent living that was going on in there. It was a fantastic place. It had a huge lobby area and they had a water fall in the lobby that dropped three floors down into a goldfish pool. They had all kinds of restaurants. You could go to a restaurant and get every kind of food imaginable in the world. American food.

Going around Canton there were a hell of a lot of taxis. A fantastic mass of taxis. I had a special limousine from the hotel that I travelled around in. The people that were with me would ride along and I had one of the leading people from Canton with me all the time. I told him I thought there was an awful lot of taxis and asked if any were privately owned. "Oh no, nothing like that. Oh no."

Later, when I was in Peking, there were articles in the local Peking papers about young students, young people waiting for work. Nobody is unemployed in China, incidentally. There are a lot of people who are waiting for work, but nobody is unemployed. Some of these young people who were waiting for work, pooled the capital they had, got some loans, and started up a taxi company. They were saying that this is a great thing. So they had private ownership, indeed encouraged it.

I should say that you really get ghastly service from the state taxi service. They're in their little booth and they don't give a shit whether they come out or not. Stand there and wait. They're doing nothing. Their taxi is sitting there idle and they don't give a shit. When I came back on the way out, I stopped over at Canton before going on to Shenzhen and I raised this question again with the same guy I talked to before. The Peking papers were saying that there was a private taxi service. He looked at me with a blank stare on his face. He didn't know what I was talking about. He's a leading guy and it was going on under his nose. I'm sure the guy wasn't lying to me. He just didn't know.

A lot of things were happening and in one area it will happen and they don't know in another area that it's going on, so you'll get answers that you'll find are not correct. I was convinced that they weren't lying to me. They were telling me according to what their knowledge was. When I was in Shanghai they had two of the leading people arrange a trip for me down the Whampoo River. I had been down before. You go down to the confluence with the Yangtze and back. It takes several hours. I could ask some questions but it's sort of a sightseeing tour as well. We never got out of the goddamn cabin. I kept probing these guys, asking all kinds of questions. They were a little put out at me at first. I like Shanghai, always liked Shanghai, always had a good time in Shanghai. They asked me if I noticed any difference in Shanghai from the time I'd been there before. I said, no. I was a little bit out really. On the way through Shenzhen I saw far more dramatic changes there than in Shanghai, so this skewed my perspective. I didn't blame them afterwards when I found out because a great deal of support, the entire resources, almost the entire resources of the state had been mobilized to turn Shenzhen into what they called a show window for the world, so it was unfair to compare it to Shanghai. But I didn't realize it at the time.

There was a report that there was going to be a stock exchange go up in Shan-

ghai. That wasn't going to happen, they claimed. I'm not so much convinced anymore that it isn't going to happen. It looks like it might. I also raised the question about selling shares in companies, shares being sold in companies. "Oh no. It wouldn't happen."

Again, they were being honest about it, but when I was in Wuhan they took me to a textile mill. It was quite a good mill. Good work. Beautiful textiles they were turning out. There were something like seven or eight hundred employees in the mill. Again I complained about the conditions. Very noisy. A textile mill can be very noisy and very dusty. It wasn't inordinately dusty, but there was still some dust, and the noise of the machines was quite bad and I was pushing that again. And, of course, the heat was horrible. They had no air conditioning and the temperature outside was 45 degrees centigrade. When we were discussing, over a cold drink, the situation in the plant, they told me that they had made a lot of profit and had been expanding. They made more profit than the total paid out in wages. They were going to expand production, expand the plant. I asked them if they were able to use the accumulation of profit to pay for the expansion. "Oh, no. We're not going to do that." They were going to use the profit and pay it out in wages and bonuses, they said. The bonus system is widespread in China now. Piecework in other words. This is what they are going to do. Take all this profit and pay it out in wages and bonuses and then they're going to sell shares to the workers and get money that way for the expansion.

I said, "Well, you're gonna sell shares to workers. If workers buy shares, they can sell shares." "Oh yes, nothing to stop them." "Well," I said, "you know, things are not equal. Some are earning more than others. Some have less responsibility than others. Some people can afford to buy more shares. There will be workers who need the cash to buy a bicycle or a radio or a television or even just some extra food for the family and they'll sell the shares to get the money. Those with more money will buy them. Anything to stop it?" "Oh no." Not gonna stop it. "So there could be an accumulation of the shares in the hands of one, two, three, four, five people. It's possible. Nothing to stop them. Nothing. So, a few people can become owners of the plant." "Oh no. That won't happen. That's all in the mind. That won't happen." "But, you're not doing anything to stop it." "No." "So it's theoretically possible." "Theoretically possible but it won't happen." I said, "You know, if a bad thing is theoretically possible, you do something to prevent it from happening." But they're not and this is becoming a fairly common practice in China.

I went to a plant in Shanghai which was a joint effort with Swiss capital and they were producing elevators there. Very good, too. Looked quite good. I rode in a couple of them. I'm going around the plant, incidentally, and there's a guy working on a motor. There were not benches. You put the thing down, take it off the crane, you had to work on the bloody floor, bending down. He's got it up about chest level, still hanging on the cable from the crane. He's working on this god-damn thing. And most embarrassing for them, just as we're passing the bloody thing fell loose and fell with a terrific thud on the floor. If it had fallen on his feet it would just have crushed them. They never would have been able to repair them. He'd have had no feet. The director turned to me, "There will be an investigation into

that." I told him there were several things wrong there. One is, there should be benches to work on. You can set a machine down and work on it comfortably. The other thing is that the worker is to blame in that he shouldn't have worked on the goddamn thing as long as it was hanging there. The guy on the crane is also to blame. He should have refused to hold it in the air for him. It comes back to the fact that there should be proper working conditions, although the plant was in fairly good shape.

The bonus system is very widespread there. I have worked under the bonus system. I know what the hell it's like. It's not good even in the best of conditions, when you're trying to make a bonus on top of the wages and you're bloody well killing yourself trying to make this goddamn bonus. But it's not under the best of conditions in China. I investigated it in this particular plant and it seems to be that this was the general way in which it operated. The usual way to handle bonuses is if there is a crew working together, it's divided equally among the crew on the assumption that everybody does an equal amount of work, which is not always true, but you have to assume that because you want the whole crew working together and you want them striving for bonuses. But this is not the way things work in China, because the primary factor in dividing up the bonus is assessing one's attitude to work. A person who has a good attitude to work will get more bonus than somebody else. It's ridiculous. Leaves the whole thing open for all kinds of corruption and favouritism. The directors defend this. "No, it's the best way to work. Then people have a good attitude to work." But they don't have a good attitude to work because one guy in the group is getting more than the others because he supposedly has a good attitude. He's probably brown-nosing the bloody boss and getting more for his good attitude than the rest of the group. Then they take the attitude, that son of a bitch is getting the most. Let him do most of the work. They insisted on treating politics in this way. They were more open in the Cultural Revolution.

Your political attitude is what really counted. They were calling it, at this point, your attitude to work, not your attitude to politics. But your determination to politics was what counted. The director of the plant and the head of the trade union group in the plant both went around with me. The trade union guy had virtually nothing to say. The director was doing all the talking, all the explaining. Even when it was conditions of work and how the bonus was divided up, it was the director that explained it, not the trade union guy. He came in for a lot of praise from the director, that he was very cooperative and very good at looking after the interests of the worker, which I rather tend to doubt really.

It was the same in the agricultural sector too. When I was in Peking there were articles coming out encouraging peasants to go into commerce. This is related to something that sounded rather strange at the time. It was when I was in Shanghai that I got it. They were saying that the peasant is encouraged to leave the land, but not leave his home. Well, you know, that sounded strange because the peasant's home is his land. It wasn't until later it struck me what they were meaning. They were trying to get as many peasants as possible to leave agriculture, but not to leave the area in which they live. They engage in all kinds of small-scale production like making furniture and wicker baskets and things like that. Many of them are going

into commerce. They buy up things in the countryside and bring them into the towns and sell them. They become merchants. When I was in Wuhan they mentioned wholesaling. I said, "Just a minute. When you talk about wholesaling to me that means that somebody is buying at one price and selling at a higher price." "Oh yes. That's it." There were these kinds of merchants. They had these big open free markets in Wuhan. Bigger than in any other area, I think. They were bringing in goods and selling them in these markets and buying them from the peasant and selling at higher prices. I mentioned about how these merchants would take the peasants for a ride and the reply, again, was "Oh no, they broadcast the prices every morning on the radio and the peasant knows what price he can get." I argued that the merchant is the one that is in the position to do the squeezing.

It wasn't only agricultural products. They were also buying goods, manufactured goods, in the plants. Mostly textiles. Some other goods as well. Selling them all on the open market. There was a great deal of pushing for this. For people to get into commerce and get working. Get off the land.

The land itself was, to a large extent, being put out on a contract basis. A family would contract for a certain piece of land and a portion of what they produced would go to the state. The rest they were free to sell on the market. Some of them — I have to say this — were better off than they had been before. More production, more food being produced and so on. Industry is running better. But you also have the situation that the large mass of people are still relatively poor and a relatively few people are making quite a bit of money. Some of them are becoming *millionaires*.

The argument is that everybody is supposed to get rich together, but some get rich faster than others. Anyhow, this was supposedly good for the country because it eventually, in the long run, helps everybody get well off. It sounded altogether too much like a capitalist argument with me.

The trade union movement exists now, which it hadn't during the Cultural Revolution. But it is questionable to what extent it can be effective. I had several hours of discussion with the head of the International Liaison Committee of the Federation of Trade Unions in Peking. I asked him a great many questions about the functioning of unions. Of course, the argument is the workers are the state and the state is the workers, but in practice it just doesn't work out that way. But if you accept this abstraction it is in the interests of the workers, from this point of view, that they give their all to build up industry, accumulate capital and so on. If you approach it from that point of view, it all sounds like a very good system.

Yet there is a great deal of foreign capital that is pouring into China. In some cases, a plant will be owned outright by foreign capitalists and in some places it will be a joint venture between China and some other country. I think a couple of European countries — maybe Britain and West Germany — have a lot of money invested. Switzerland had quite a bit of money in there. The United States had the potential. They had a lot of money in the Shenzhen area, the new economic zone. They were heavy into the oil industry in the South China Sea, for example.

While the Chinese were bringing in foreign capital, they were also a little bit worried about it. A little bit reluctant to go the whole way. There was a lot more

capital there for the taking. I think it was something in the neighbourhood of twenty billion dollars available and they only used something like eight or ten billion dollars of foreign money. A lot of it was US capital that was available for them to use. There was a lot of Japanese capital too, incidentally. There were plants that were owned by the Japanese. Some of them are just assembly plants.

There was a plant started in Shanghai, a textile plant. It was a joint venture of Chinese and Hong Kong capital. Chinese largely. They provided the plant and the labour, the large part of it. Hong Kong provided the capital. They started out and they were going to produce wool jackets for the American market. Six hundred thousand a year. As soon as they started producing and shipping the United States slapped a quota of thirty-five thousand jackets a year. So they got half a million jackets they can't do anything with. For three years they're losing money. They tried exporting raw wool and one thing and another. The Hong Kong capital is very unhappy because the profits are not rolling in. They tried producing rabbit-skin jackets instead of textile jackets and doing all these kinds of things. They are in a bind.

Finally they allowed what they are not supposed to do. It's a hard and fast rule that foreign capital that is invested must be invested in industry where the product can be exported. There are basic financial reasons for this. Chinese money is not convertible. The capitalist is guaranteed his profit and can take the profit out of the country. In order for that to be done, however, capital has to export in order to draw foreign currency that can then be taken out of the country. By and large the produce must be exported so that the foreign investor gets his profit out, gets a return on his capital. Of course, when they're stuck with all these jackets, they're not getting foreign capital paid off. So the Hong Kong people, like I say, are very unhappy. They decide, finally, to do what they're not supposed to do. Open up the domestic market and allow them to sell things on the domestic market and allow them to do it without paying any taxes. By doing that, they were able to pay the Chinese their share of the income, pay the wages, pay the expenses of running the plant and what foreign capital did come in — there was some, they were doing some exporting — what foreign currency did come in went to the Hong Kong capitalists to pay them their profits. The Hong Kong capitalists are very pleased and they're saying the Shanghai people are very honest and very satisfactory. Why not. They're getting their profits.

This is an area where the Chinese are babes in the woods. They don't know the operation. They're only beginning to learn the operation of the world market. They can really be caught out on a limb, but they're very dependent because they've got to get that foreign currency in order to be able to pay off the foreign investors, pay the foreign capitalists.

A number of the so-called third world countries, particularly in Africa, had American quotas for textiles, mostly textiles, and some other goods. They couldn't fill their quotas. They didn't have the capacity. So the Chinese made arrangements that they would produce the goods up to about 70 per cent and 80 per cent of completion and ship them to these third world countries for the process to be completed and then they would be shipped out as goods under their quota to the United States.

A report came out about this. There was a lot of screaming on it. After this started, the United States changed the rules. They decided that the imports would be counted against the country of origin. In other words, where it first originated. These quotas coming from the third world countries were now counted as coming from China. The Chinese were screaming their heads off about foul play, changing the rules and so on. They were going to sue the United States for losses which was sort of ridiculous. It came up in the United Nations.

This was just at the time when I left China that this came up. This was one of the big problems in this way of development that you can run into. There was a Japanese plant in Shenzhen that employed somewhere around twelve hundred people and it was nothing but assembly. They were assembling tape players, those big two-speaker jobs you carry around. They were assembling them in the new economic zone and material is coming over from Japan and they had this big plant. Just an assembly line goes down and each worker does part of the work and that's all they do. Boring as hell. Complete production at that plant is for export to the United States. They are obviously at the mercy of the United States. If at some point the United States slaps on a quota or stops them from moving in, there's twelve hundred workers in that one plant that are out of work.

In other words, they're in an area where they can not determine what will happen. People outside of the country will determine what will happen. The United States, Britain, West Germany, whatever. If there's too much coming in, too much cheap goods, and they decide to make a move there's nothing the Chinese can do. They're at their mercy. This, of course, is an area that is very well known as far as Canada is concerned where your production is that dependent on export and we are dependent on the goodwill of somebody else and there isn't a goddamn thing to do once somebody else takes the stand that your goods are not coming in. You've had it. This is very widespread in China now, particularly in the area where there is a real drive for production.

There's a point where the foreign capitalists want the return on their principal, want their profit and they also want to liquidate their principal investment without ever losing. This is one of the problems of foreign investment too. They don't lose ownership. They will finally get back what it cost them to build the plant, but they'll still continue to get profit out of it. This has to come, has to keep coming. China guarantees that they are going to get satisfactory profit and a return on their investment. That's guaranteed by China and there will be no seizure of investments and so on. This presents the problem insofar as the workers are concerned.

When I was talking to the guy in the trade unions, he said, "We have to do the best we can, get the best we can for the workers, but at the same time we have to be careful not to scare off foreign investors." That puts you in kind of a tight corner. Here the trade unions don't give a shit, more or less. If they're gonna go into negotiations they are going to negotiate on the basis of what they want and what they need. If the state and the foreign investor want to be worried about it, that's their bloody worry, but it's not the trade union's concern. But it becomes part of the worry of the trade union leaders in China to concern themselves about what will be the reaction of the foreign investors. It's particularly noticeable in Shenzhen,

where there had been the development first of the special economic zone. It was very well developed at the time I went there. It was well established. When I went through Zhenshen in 1967 first, it was a peasant town, population of about thirty thousand. This time I went through they were building fifty-six-storey structures. They were aiming at some sixty, seventy storeys high. Huge city. Population of about three hundred thousand. They brought in skilled workers from all over the country, particularly construction workers. There was a deliberate effort on the part of the state. They called it their show window to the world. Right on the Hong Kong border. They brought in these people from all over the country. They instructed universities to begin training special people who would go there to work. They got all kinds of assistance, all kinds of modernization. There was a really spectacular growth.

No question about it, but only because the state was prepared to funnel all of the resources necessary for that. Of the three hundred thousand in the zone, one hundred thousand were temporary residents who were living in barracks and I do mean barracks. Very poor conditions. Because they were not going to remain as permanent residents there. When the development was completed they were going to go back home or maybe be funnelled into some other area where construction was going to take place. So you had a permanent population of two hundred thousand and one-third, the other one hundred thousand that were only there temporarily. Zhenshen is pretty well wholly foreign investment. There was a lot of Hong Kong investment there. They had country clubs, holiday hotels that are largely put up by Hong Kong capital. It's Hong Kong-Chinese and overseas Chinese that mostly are there.

Some of the peasants around have become fairly wealthy. One way they were making money was roast pigeon which we call squab and has become a great delicacy in Hong Kong. Peasants were fattening up pigeons and selling them for five Hong Kong dollars a piece on the Hong Kong market and becoming fairly wealthy. Plus selling good food on the Hong Kong market. Some of them had engaged in construction. I was told that some of them had accumulated enough capital that they'd set up construction companies and bid on contracts for construction and so on. I was going around Shenzhen one day and I was pointed out a hotel that was being built. About a ten-storey hotel. It being built by a group of former peasants who were putting their capital into building this hotel to take advantage of the tourist industry, which is booming. People are coming in for weekends and for two or three weeks, coming in from Hong Kong to spend their holidays. There are big stores in Shenzhen and all kinds of goods to be bought. Quite expensive. And they're also building a Disneyland. They have a smaller one there that has been there for several years, but they were in the process of starting to build a big one. All this is being done by foreign capital. Hong Kong capital is really big in that area and it's Hong Kong people that are coming over. Their money is worth more there than it is in Hong Kong.

What happens to labour? Where is the trade union movement? There is a labour contract commission, an official state commission that operates in Zhenshen and the employer gets his employees through this labour contract commission. They

tell them how many workers they need, what category and so on. The commission ships that number of workers. The employer can pick and choose, decide who he wants to employ. If there are some there he doesn't want, he sends them back and they will send more. Wages and conditions are not negotiated by the union. They are set by the labour contract commission. When I was there the system of wages was that they would get more than would be paid in other parts of China — living standards there are better than they are in other parts of China — but their wages would be one half of comparable industries on the other side. A textile factory in Hong Kong had a certain rate of wages and in the new economic zone workers would get half that rate. Workers in an engineering plant in Shenzhen would get half. Since I came back, I read in a copy of *China Pictorial* that the rate is now one-third. I don't think that necessarily means there has been a reduction of wages. It may mean that there has been an increase in Hong Kong but there has been no increase in Shenzhen so that the difference is greater.

I remember going up in the hill at Sheko, which is a part of the Shenzhen area. It's the base that supplies the oil drilling rigs in the South China Sea and is an area where there is electronic production. The director of the area was with me and he pointed across to a part of Hong Kong — you could see the buildings and so on — and he said, "We are in direct competition with that area over there." This, of course, is a situation where there is competition between workers, obviously. If you're gonna set the standard of wages in which one group gets paid half or paid one-third of what's paid another sector, then you're bringing worker into competition with worker. The foreign capitalist comes to the market where there's the lowest wages and establishes himself there. There's also the problem there, of course, that living standards being higher in the zone than they are in other parts of China, there's an attraction there.

You end up having a big influx. There is a border established between Shenzhen and the main part of China and you can only get into the new economic zone if you have authority to come in. It's far easier to go from Hong Kong to Shenzhen than it is to go from China proper to the zone. They have an electrified fence and they have border stations that you have to report to. They were in the process of constructing it when I was there and it has since been finished. Going in from Hong Kong was much easier. There's a freeway now built from the Hong Kong border. You can go all the way, drive your own car across the border, and all the way into Canton. About a hundred and fifteen to twenty miles from the border.

Businessmen are driving back and forth. Driving around Shenzhen. Some of them, particularly the Hong Kong capitalists, are building homes on the Shenzhen side of the border. Really comparable to the best you could find anywhere in the western world. Mostly two-storey homes. Swimming pools, gardens and, of course, they have servants, very cheap. Domestic service has become a big thing in China. Even some of the better off Chinese are employing servants. For a long time it wasn't allowed. It was ruled out, but it's come back in because they're making enough money to afford it. I even saw a gas station. Johnson told me there are three or four. I saw a gas station in the new economic zone, a Mohawk gas station. You could drive up and get a fill.

There are, other than Hong Kong capitalists, quite a few Americans, western Europeans, and Japanese that are buying apartments in Shenzhen. The companies are buying apartments for their personnel. When they come there, they spend a few months, maybe just a few weeks. But these apartments are there for them to live in. There are some semi-permanent managers come in to live.

Shanghai just recently started pushing to make itself a free port and they've been in the process of building apartments there which will be available for foreign corporations and their representatives to use and live in. These are all up to western standards and when you compare them to Chinese living conditions, there is a fantastic gap between the two. I argue, of course, that, at some point, the Chinese are bound to become very dissatisfied when they see a bunch of foreigners living among them and even some of their own people living in the best in the world and they can't. There's gonna be discontent rise at some point.

In Shenzhen the trade union movement was quite innocuous, it seemed. It doesn't mean anything. Had little effect on wages. The director at Sheko was the most open person, I think, that I ran into in China. We were discussing about all of this and he's telling me a number of things. I had been prodding a lot of other people about hiring procedures and wages and couldn't get any response. He didn't need any prodding from me at all. He comes out and he says, "Now this is capitalism. Since this is capitalism, there are contradictions. We're able to handle them. We're able to keep them in line without breaking out." He says, "We're having a problem right now."

They're working a six-day week in China and working an eight-hour day, but this could become quite lengthy because they have one hour for lunch and they have a twenty minute break in the morning and a twenty minute break in the afternoon, but that's not like a coffee break here where it's part of your work day. It isn't there. Your eight hours are still to be made. So it means nine hours and forty minutes if you count your lunch period and the two breaks that you're putting in daily. They are working a six-day week and all these hours. The director told me that even with this number of hours the foreign companies had been pushing for overtime. He said, "The workers are resisting." He didn't go into details about the resistance. Quite frankly, I didn't ask him because I knew what he would answer. No point to it. To me, there's only one way to resist and that's to bloody well refuse to do it. He claimed they were handling this, that they were dealing with it and they would settle it without any difficulty. I don't know whose favour he was going to settle it in, but supposing it was a compromise, I don't know how much overtime the capitalists were asking for, but I would assume it would not be less than a couple of hours a day. It wouldn't amount to anything otherwise. If they settled it on the basis of a compromise, giving them half, with the length of the working day already long, maybe wanting to work a seventh day, I don't know, the workers are still paying an awful price. I talked to some there about the five-day week being universal in North America and most western countries, eight-hour day and very often down to the seven-hour day. One guy, who was a Party cadre, chimed up and said, "That's what we need here. People need time off. They need time to study and

need time for recreation. We've got to get to that." I would say that even with all the vast mass of labour they've got available, there's still quite a weight on them.

In raising questions and criticisms with a whole series of people it pretty soon became apparent to me that they were getting word that I was a potential thorn in their side and they had to begin to deal with me. They were phoning ahead and warning people about the questions that I would raise. That was quite obvious because I'd come into a place and they were calling me Mr. Scott. It had been Comrade Scott before, now I was Mr. Scott. Mr. Scott, "We understand you want to know about such and such." The only way they would know was by being warned ahead of time that I was going to raise these questions. They were ready for me, but it didn't make any difference. Mind you, I was doing it, as far as I could, on a friendly basis. The only place where anybody got a little bit out of sorts with me was in Shanghai when I was really pushing quite hard at some points. They got a little bit huffy for a few minutes. We parted friends.

I do not argue, never have argued, about the necessity for some economic development in China. There were people, in the States in particular, who argued that China should forget all about industry and stick to agriculture. It's like telling — these were people, middleclass people who were living very well — the Chinese that you should be satisfied with scraping among the rocks for a few grains of rice sort of business. "We're living OK in North America. We taught you a lesson. There's all kinds of problems in industry. Don't go for it sort of business." I don't go for that. I recognize the need for development. I would certainly argue for a limit. I argued against, for example, the introduction of automobiles, which would be ridiculous in China. Imagine if you could get two automobiles for every family in China. Good Christ Almighty. You know what's going to happen to the resources of the world if that spreads around. We need to cut back here rather than encouraging them to catch up to us. But by and large I recognize the need for economic development in China. So that's not an argument that I got into.

The argument that I got into is how you achieve that, how much and how do you go about achieving it. The point is, of course, is this method or that tactic harmful to socialism. I argued this straight out with the Chinese. They call what they are doing socialism. But it isn't socialism. What you're presented with is you're at a crossroads. In the process of economic development, how you achieve that economic development will determine if you go in the direction of socialism or if you will postpone that for a long period of time, go in the direction of capitalism. The problem that exists today, as far as I can see, is they're taking a turn toward a capitalist style of development. They argue against this view, claiming that the state still owns the majority of the means of production and therefore that guarantees that it is socialism. They call it socialism now; they've got socialism. Socialism will remain and foreign capitalists are simply helping to build socialism. It sounds rather ridiculous to me. I don't think that's what foreign capital is in there for at all.

It is argued it is a workers' state. Therefore the land being owned by the workers' state, it is basically socialism, part of the means of production. That's all very well to argue that way, but the problem is not who has formal ownership, but who has the use of it. This is a big question. If they turned in the direction of contract use

of the land, who gets the product of the land? There is big development in agriculture in Chungking. They had been going ahead by leaps and bounds. New ways of development. They had started out that the contract for the land would be one year. They ran into problems because the peasant doesn't know if he's gonna have the use of that land for a second, third or fourth year or whatever. In that year that they have contracted for the land, they're concerned with getting everything they can out of it. Putting nothing in. So they run into a problem. While I was there, they had gone, in most cases, to a three-year contract. They claimed that they had problems about taking everything out and putting nothing in which can be disastrous for the land. They had gone to the three-year contract and they said that they were still going to have problems. There would be a little bit go back into the land maybe the first year, but the second and the third year nothing would go in. They said they realized this and the problems were there and they were talking then — and I think they've already instituted it in a great many areas — of going to a fifteen-year period of contract, even longer.

In other words, it's reaching the point that at least the peasant will have the use of the land for a generation, if not longer. That's being made necessary in order to encourage the peasant to put a part of his return back into the land in the forms of fertilizer and so on, to maintain the land at a high rate of production. You actually reach a stage where it's not that different than individual ownership.

They were even going from a tax in kind to a tax in cash, to income tax on the return of the land. They're moving toward that quite rapidly, so they're adopting more and more a system quite comparable to what we have in the western world.

You notice this shift politically as well, towards much more cautious, revisionist kinds of perspectives. This is the dominant force now in China because it dominates the Party. It was obvious to me — of course, with my long experience in the movement, I could read between the lines — that there were quite serious divisions at the top in the Party. Unfortunately, you can only get one side of it as is usual in the Party. You could understand it because people like Deng Xiao-ping and so on were coming out and making certain statements about people. For example, there was a statement came out that some people were arguing that there were good things about the Cultural Revolution as well as bad things. They said these were only the people who were benefiting by the Cultural Revolution that were arguing this point of view. There were replies being made to people who were arguing that there was too much capitalism and that there had to be certain restrictions and so on.

I don't know whether I support those people who are making those arguments or not because I don't know what kind of programme is being put forward. You don't get that. All you get is the opposition to whatever it is they're pushing. So, I'm not, at this point, going to say that I'm in support of the people who are opposed to present policies because I simply don't know what their programme is. I do know I have criticisms of what is happening. I'm inclined to be curious about what the option is. It is obvious that there are differences at the top. I think that might be getting changed somewhat. Some people who are opposed may be getting pushed into the background.

Together with the change in economic policy, then, there's a whole change

taking place in the personnel of the Party. Several million have been expelled or dropped out. Their membership hasn't been renewed or what have you. They have check ups of membership. One, two, or three years or whatever and there is a renewal of Party cards. They don't go through the formality of expelling you. They just simply don't allow you to renew your Party card. This was a great thing in the Soviet Union under Stalin for many years. This has been happening. Several million people who were brought into the Party during the Cultural Revolution are now out. Others are being brought in to take their place. The big emphasis on recruiting is among academic and managerial personnel, the very people who are pushing the new economic policies taking place. This is no theory because they have been boasting about it. There was a photograph awhile back in *Peking Review* of a whole number of people who were being sworn into Party membership. They were all described as academic personnel, skilled personnel, or managers and it was said that these are the kind of people that are now coming into the Party and the Party wants them.

I was talking to a young student here who was working on a master's thesis in Canada. She's working on the subject of socialism and democracy. I told her that I thought that she was treading on pretty serious ground. She said she was going to deal with East Europe and Yugoslavia and it doesn't matter. I said, it does matter. They see through you. I was talking to her about this and the development of democracy and I was pointing out this before I had read about this big influx of academics and managers into the Party, but I knew it was taking place. I pointed out to her that you've got to look, in a one party system, at the make-up of the Party. What are the interests of the various cliques that are in there. Who is dominant. I pointed out to her that, in my view, the new people that are coming into the Party, will become dominant sometime. They are the ones who will determine what the policy of the state will be. The whole history of the past has shown that once you start bringing into the Party people who are primarily interested in advancing their own careers and making a profit for themselves, they will begin to band together and form a faction which will develop interests. When they become dominant in the Party then those are the interests that will be reflected in the Party. In the one party state this is quite important. I told her she should try to look at the make-up of the Party. They are not releasing any figures of what proportion of the Party membership is working class, peasant or made up of managers and so on. I suspect that it is becoming top heavy with academics and managers and that is going to be reflected in the policies that the Party will promote. That means particular state policies with the Party and the state obviously synonymous in China as they are in the Soviet Union.

Things obviously have changed a great deal in China in the 1980s. My view of China in 1984 did not give me cause for a lot of optimism. I'm not pessimistic about the ability to develop the economy, although there are certain dangers there what with dependence on the world market, especially when, like the Chinese, you are not very experienced in its operation. There are clearly dangers there. But the greatest dangers are still political. I am quite pessimistic about them going in a direction that will lead to any kind of socialist development.

25. A COMMUNIST LIFE

After some fifty years in the workers movement I've seen a few ups and a lot of downs. I don't allow it to get me down that much, but I'm inclined to be a bit pessimistic about the immediate future. My day of activism has passed.

I do go out to demonstrations occasionally. The time that they had the anti-racist demonstration when Yuri Oja had his skull fractured by the Bainsites. I didn't go out to the first one. I thought they could get along without me. I'm just not going to bother. Enough people without me, so I stayed at home. But they had a battle with the CPCML that first Saturday that they were out when Yuri was hurt. Then they scheduled one — I think it was for two weeks later — in defiance of the CPCML. At that point, I decided to go. Not because I particularly wanted to, because I thought I was really needed. I didn't want to stay home and think, let the CPCML think they were scaring me out. So, I went and made myself deliberately conspicuous to them. They weren't going to scare me away. There wasn't quite as much of a battle that day. The cops moved in and kept the groups a bit separated. The CPCML was there with their two-by-fours ready to do business.

So I do occasionally go out to demonstrations, particularly ones where I might be very interested in the issue. I was, of course, at all of the Solidarity demonstrations that took place. I turned out to them. Usually May Day. I turn out to some things on May Day.

I think it's downer than it's ever been down before right now, particularly in British Columbia. It's an extremely reactionary period. But what disturbs me more than anything else is the fact that there is very little attempt, no real movement of opposition at street level, no real fight back. There's really no evidence of serious resistance. There have been periods of reaction before. R.B. Bennett was as reactionary as anybody could find during the period he was in power federally and the time they rounded up the Party leaders and threw them into the Kingston Pen. But there were battles in the streets. There weren't as many unemployed, but the population wasn't that great. The proportion of unemployed was greater then than it is now. There was no welfare, no unemployment insurance, these kind of things. There was a complacency within the AFL unions, for example, and they said, "Well, hard times, you can't organize workers and you can't strike." But workers could be organized and you could fight back. About 90 per cent of the strikes that were called were called by the Workers Unity League. We lost strikes, but we won some strikes.

Now we are back in the situation where all kinds of concessions are being made. The attitude seems to be it's not a good time to fight. Haven't got the strength and so on. Well, I expect that. What bothers me is that there is no really good opposition to that kind of policy. Nobody really fighting back. The groups that did exist in the 1950s and 1960s and into the 1970s don't exist anymore. Certainly the Communist Party is one of the most conservative outfits in the goddamn country and they're not gonna challenge anybody. We did in the 1930s. We at least made a chal-

lenge to some of the issues of living and so on, but they're not going to make any challenge. And nobody else is either.

The CP will lead a couple of militant actions as they did in Solidarity and then they will just turn it over lock, stock, and barrel because they've got this position that the only real fight is gonna be waged by the mainstream trade union elements, so they immediately liquidate any position or any membership or any radical action they've taken.

The membership is different, to start with, than the membership in the 1930s. And I'm not arguing that the membership in the 1930s were more revolutionary than people are today because they weren't but they were militant. There is a difference between militancy and revolution which a lot of people don't understand. I used to argue this out with the Trotskyists who kept maintaining that there was a revolutionary situation in the 1930s and the Party betrayed the revolution because they didn't lead the revolution. I argued differently. In my view there was no revolutionary situation. There was plenty of militancy and where the Party fell down in the 1930s was not in failure to lead a revolution. Their failure was not building a revolutionary party which would have been a minority party, a small party. They built a party of militants, sympathizers with Communists. They were never able to really present the politics of socialism. When Stalin finally woke up to the fact that Hitler was a threat in the world and he started the business of the big popular front the word was out, "Don't talk about socialism." This was the order in the Party. Don't talk about socialism.

But socialism was talked about by middle cadres like myself and by rank and filers who got up and spoke at meetings and they'd keep bringing in socialism. But they kept getting criticism: "Don't drive the people away. Bring them in. Don't raise the socialist question to drive people away." At the same time, while the leadership was doing that they also had to confront the situation that existed, so there was plenty of militant activity and it was activity that was necessary. You know, the fight for unemployment insurance, the fight for industrial unionism and so on. These were necessary battles. You felt that you were doing something that was necessary.

What happens today? Everything is manipulation and scheming behind the scenes and so on. And, you see this within the trade union movement which is supposed to be the mainstream of labour. Regardless of whether one agrees or disagrees about the need for a Canadian trade union movement, the fact is that out here in BC the group that represented the move toward an independent Canadian trade union movement was the most militant. They were precisely the ones that the Party was fighting because they're opposed to an independent Canadian trade union movement that is outside of the mainstream. You've got to work for autonomy within the American Federation of Labor. There's simply not any group that is taking up that kind of a fight, raising the banner.

They've all gone. Even the Trotskyists in this area don't exist anymore. They've packed their bags and taken flight to central Canada. Nobody is doing anything and this is what disturbs me. Not so much that they're swinging to the right — although that's bad now — but the fact that there's no real challenge to it.

You take the response of the NDP. In order to win elections they've got to move more to the right. Deliberately. They are planning policies that are more to the right. Good Christ, you've got to go almost to the right of Genghis Khan to get to the right of what the NDP has been in the last number of years. This is what disturbs me. No real fight back. It's really necessary because if there isn't the working class is in trouble.

Of course things are difficult today. In the 1930s you'd go to the relief office any day of the week and there'd be hundreds of people there and you had a ready made audience that you could agitate amongst. Now you mail in your statement for unemployment insurance and they mail you out your cheque. They mail you out your welfare. This is deliberate policy to keep from getting people gathered together in one area, you see.

The state learns from its mistakes. Take the relief camp strike here. They ran single men into camps. The government organized it. They had nothing to do in these camps. Didn't have that much work to do and they're in the camps all night. They could beat their gums all night. Complain and grieve and generally raise hell. The government isn't doing that kind of thing anymore. They're not gonna organize us if they can help it. They're gonna do everything possible to keep the unemployed away from getting in crowds. These are difficulties that need to be overcome and there's really no campaign to overcome them.

The official unemployed movement that exists here — and the CP is very much involved in it — is run in conjunction with the trade union movement. There are a hell of a lot of people that are unemployed that never belonged to trade unions. They've had no experience in them. You've got to mobilize them. You've got to mobilize everybody. Those kind of people can also be very undisciplined. If you get them together, they might decide to take off on their own. They're not so easy to control.

All in all, while I agree that the right-wing policies that are in effect in the governments at the moment are disturbing, the more disturbing feature to me is the lack of a left-wing movement to take to the streets and consistently raise hell about conditions and mobilize people. And I don't see that beginning to exist. At the very time when it's needed, all of the groups that had risen up — Christ there were a thousand different organizations and tendencies that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s — have disappeared. They're all gone. In their absence you get the trade union bureaucracy.

Take Jack Munro. I knew Jack's wife, of course, before I knew Jack and I have been quite friendly with her. I'm sort of ambivalent on Jack Munro because I recognize him as a guy who is a solid militant trade unionist who rose up from the ranks. He wasn't one of the bureaucrats that was recruited from academic circles to front the trade union movement. He rose up from the Nelson area. He was a machinist in the industry. The problem there is, you see, that once he got in with the bureaucrats over a period of time, obviously, Jack began to look upon himself as a labour statesman and likes to fill the role. It's quite unfortunate. He's confronting problems that are extremely difficult, that can only be tackled by militant policies that Jack has now left behind because he now views things bureaucratically and

because the IWA is reduced to less than half of its former size. They're in the process of being totally wiped out because the forest industry in British Columbia is going down the tube. It's even been almost entirely written off by the Macdonald Commission. There's no place for it anymore. You've got to look elsewhere to develop industry and this, of course, is the area in which Jack is operating. It's the area he depends on for a living. I'm ambivalent because on the one hand I like Jack personally. I'm friendly with him, but I'm not at all in favour of the policies he pursues. I'm hoping that the situation will push him back to the days of his militancy and give him some leadership. I'm not too optimistic about that.

I've been around a long time. Sometimes I ask, "Is there any low too low?" I look at it. There is. We're not there yet. But we're still a long way from getting that kind of a movement where the working class will bring up a leadership that can tackle the problems. Even a leadership that would get the most *within* capitalism is lacking. I'm not talking here about doing away with the capitalist system as such, though I'd like to see it. But I'm not going to talk about it, talking won't do it. Getting what you can get within the system is extremely important today, because the capitalist system can no longer operate in the old way.

We have a crisis of the system that we have never seen before. People are redundant in our system. Machines are doing all the work, and will continue to. Never mind some guy's bullshit about the new society, the new computer society that will create new jobs. Bullshit. It won't. We're at a time of crisis, when the system itself and the people who are being exploited and want to resist have to chart new paths. And the trade union leadership is just as bad as the capitalist from this point of view. They're still tackling it from the point of view of another ten cents an hour on wages. Talk about the four-day week. This is basic stuff. You've got to get down to how the system is operating, and it can't operate in the old way. There have got to be fundamental changes in it even short of talking about a socialist society, even short of that. The first people who should be doing that are the people in the trade union bureaucracy and in the places like the NDP and so on. They do not tackle the fundamental problems of the system today.

The anarchists make things interesting out here by going around sticking slogans up on the walls. But one of their big weaknesses is, of course, they don't want anything to do with politics, mixing in politics at all. They stick to the anarcho-syndicalist idea. So they just organize in the workshop and not on the political front. I say the two have got to go together. As a matter of fact — oh, it's a couple of years ago now — the anarchist group out at UBC, where there's a fairly solid group, organized a noon-hour meeting for the purpose of discussing setting up a permanent organization. They had gone on for about half an hour discussing what to do and how to proceed with an organization and finally one of the young ones got up and said, "What are we sitting around here discussing? Organization!" He says, "Anarchists don't believe in organization." The whole thing went to pieces right there. They don't do things consistently. They do things haphazardly. In any event, at the moment, lacking anything else, they are sometimes a humourous spot on the horizon.

The women's movement, too, is a breakthrough. But there are things about the

women's movement that I see as disturbing. That part of it which introduces the struggle as between male and female rather than between classes and that they are a part of the class. Women, of course, are especially oppressed and there are plenty of reasons for them to organize. Plenty of reasons to fight. Partly what helps to sort of move the women out of the general struggle is the attitude of male trade unionists, their approach. There's only been one good struggle out here and that was by CAIMAW when they were on strike out in Burnaby. They raised the issue in the strike and there were a number of women there. There weren't that many, but there were some women and one of the things they raised was equal pay for equal work. They hung tough to get it and got it. While they were doing that, of course, being a Canadian union movement, they're being attacked by the international unions. Instead of supporting them, they're being attacked.

As a matter of fact, there had been a meeting of women in the NDP. One of the NDP leaders was there. I forget which one. Hilda Thomas brought this up. She'd been to the meeting. There was a conference being held and there were some things being said. I got up and I spoke and I mentioned about what CAIMAW was doing and this was an example that others should take up and should follow. I remember Hilda Thomas rising and telling about this meeting of women in the NDP and the NDP leader there telling them to have nothing to do with CAIMAW. Ridiculous. She said that there was a tremendous storm amongst the women about this because they appreciated the fact that this issue was being raised. What do you expect? If the unions are not going to raise issues that are of interest to women, of course they're gonna go and raise it themselves.

Mind you, there's one thing I'm critical of the women about. They often raise things from the point of view that the men are not doing things for them. They've got to do things for themselves. They're over half the bloody population of the country. Why do we not have more women elected, even in the bourgeois parties? They're over half the people. They should be able to do more. A lot rests within their own hands. Therefore, I'm very much in favour of them having their own organizations. I'd like to see less of the emphasis on the point that women are women and it doesn't matter what class they belong to, they're all together. They're not all together with the same interests. High-class women, the wives and daughters of millionaires and multi-millionaires, do not have the same problems as working women. I cannot see the point in saying, "We're all just women, therefore, all being women, we've all got the same problems."

As far as development on the left is concerned, of course, I've changed my ideas quite a bit over the years. I don't think anybody should get so hard and fast on their own ideas that they never change. I read a paper not too long ago to a group that I had been invited to. There was a little political discussion circle and I went there. Being invited to speak, I had written this paper out to point out some of my views as of the time. I went there fully expecting to get a real blasting. I remember after I read the paper Joyce Cameron got up and said, "Well, Jack Scott is saying things that are a lot different than he used to say some years ago." It was true. What surprised me — quite agreeably, as a matter of fact — was that I didn't get the blasting I expected. I got a very serious discussion of the paper. A few years before that

I'd have been shouted out as some kind of revisionist or something else because I was introducing ideas that were somewhat different than I had espoused sometime before.

I think that in all of my experience looking back on it, that we've been far too much influenced by outside forces. And I don't mean that if the left in Canada ever gets its act together it should isolate itself from the world, but they should start with what Canada is. You know, if we're gonna have a change in society we've got to base ourselves in the struggle within Canada. We've got to understand our own country. For years it was the Soviet Union. This is the path we're going to go down. Lenin has shown us the way. As a matter of fact, the Young Communist League used to sing a song that was precisely that. "Lenin has pointed out the way." It's fine to learn lessons from every other country. But there was too much simply taking and plastering on the Canadian situation the programme and policies of someplace else. When it wasn't the Soviet Union it was China. This was the answer. The Cultural Revolution, the Chinese Revolution and so on. True, we've got lessons to learn from that. But to think that this is our policy is wrong. Imagine arguing that Albania with a population the size of British Columbia — about two and a half million — is going to make the revolution in the entire world. According to Bains and his gang in the CPCML, this is the case, which is utterly ridiculous. Nobody's ever taken Korea up, but now we've got a dynasty in Korea. Kim Il Sung has named his son as his successor in a socialist country, if you like. A monarchy established. You've got to look and examine these things. You've got to know your own country, where you came from, and where it's possible to go. There's got to be a whole review of our past experience, the things we did, looking at the things that we did wrong, and appreciating what was done right.

Looking back on my whole life is difficult, hard to judge. Sometimes it seems like a series of accidents. There's nothing that I can say that I regret. I would say, of course, if I had it to do over again knowing what I know now, there are a lot of things that would be different. But, you don't have that gift of foresight when you're starting out. You have to learn. I think I've learned enough to realize I've been through a hell of a lot of mistakes. I don't regret it because the things I did I did honestly and I did because I believed in them. I think I did some things that were worthwhile and I did a hell of a lot of things that were not worthwhile, but I'm not going to sit around stewing about it and think that I should go out and commit harakiri because I made a few blunders on my way through life. I have tried — particularly in the last twenty odd years — to convey to young people some of my experiences hoping that they would not make the same mistakes I did. Unfortunately, some of them do make the same mistakes over again. They should look at history and they should learn from the experience of the past.

I would do things differently, but at the same time, I don't regret what I have done. I'd go a different way about doing a number of things that I did do. I don't know if I was starting out over again — knowing what I know — if I'd join the Communist Party. I'd probably look for something else to join.

A COMMUNIST LIFE:
JACK SCOTT AND THE CANADIAN LABOUR MOVEMENT,
1927-1985

Edited and Introduced by Bryan D. Palmer

For the better part of fifty years Jack Scott has been involved in many of the major developments associated with the labour movement and the left in Canada. He joined the Communist Party of Canada in the 1930s and quickly found himself a part of the struggles of the unemployed and of industrial unionists in Ontario. After World War II Scott moved west, where he worked in Vancouver, Trail, and, as a business agent for the Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers Union, in Yellowknife. As a dissident communist, he often found himself at odds with the Party leadership, and eventually he was expelled in the early 1960s. A founding member of the Canada-China Friendship Association, he made four trips to China between 1968-1984, witnessing the Cultural Revolution firsthand and observing the many changes in the course of Chinese economic and political life over the last two decades. In this unusually frank oral biography, Scott recounts his experiences, providing a unique account of a twentieth-century Canadian communist life. Edited by labour historian Bryan D. Palmer, who also provides an introduction situating Scott's reminiscences within the politics of Communist Party historiography, *A Communist Life* reaches across chronological time and the diversity of the country's regions to challenge many received wisdoms about communism in Canada.

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