

Edward W. Laine

A Century of Strife: The Finnish Organization of Canada 1901–2001

Edited by Auvo Kostianen



Edward W. Laine / Edited by Auvo Kostiainen

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A Century of Strife: The Finnish organization of Canada was written by the Finnish Canadian archivist and historian Edward W. Laine (1940–2003). The study was almost completed by Laine, and has been accordingly edited by professor Auvo Kostiainen for publication by the Migration Institute of Finland in Turku.

Canadian Suomalainen Järjestö, the Finnish Organization of Canada, has been active from 1901. It has been one of the central organizations for Finnish immigrants in Canada with politically leftist sympathies. The volume explains the Finnish Canadian history as an integral part of Canadian statehood. Laine discusses the realities of the immigrant life concentrating especially on the turbulent periods in Canadian history of World War I and World War II, at the time when pressure was heavy towards the immigrants and their status in the country was questioned.

All these and many other transnational aspects are carefully considered by Laine, who also writes a more general analysis of the post-World War II decades, a time when the immigrant population had created new generation, and new immigrants with differing, more educated background began to pour in.



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Edward W. Laine

**A Century of Strife:
The Finnish Organization of Canada
1901–2001**

Edited by Auvo Kostainen

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Publications 2

Cover: Photo taken on stairs of Finn Hall circa 1910. Sign on balcony reads “Stay away from Porcupine Ont. ... Don’t be a Strike Breaker ... Away from Porcupine Ont. The Strike is still on.” – Lakehead University Library Archives, Thunder Bay Finnish-Canadian Historical Society Collection.

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Preface

Edward W. Laine (1940–2003) was an active researcher of overseas Finnish migration history and Finnish North American heritage. He was born in Montreal, the child of Antti Viljami Haapalainen (from Kajaani) and Anna-Liisa Mustonen (from Viipuri), who had arrived in Canada in 1930. In Montreal, Edward's father worked at the Eaton's department store and his mother as a domestic.

Ed Laine received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Sir George Williams University in Montreal in 1962, and graduated with a Master of Arts degree at McGill University in Montreal in 1967, specializing in the history of Russia and Eastern Europe. He completed studies for his Doctor of Philosophy degree at McGill University in 1974. His dissertation work discussed *Finland's Road from Autonomy to Integration in the Russian Empire, 1808–1910*. Edward W. Laine's daily work took place at the National Archives of Canada (The Library and Archives of Canada) in Ottawa and later at the Canadian Museum of Civilization (The Canadian Museum of History). At the Canadian Museum of Civilization he served as an ethno-cultural historian and curator, responsible for important exhibitions. Laine retired from Canadian public service in 1997.¹

Through his work, Laine made a significant contribution to preserving the history of Finnish immigrant lives and experiences in Canada. He collected materials on Finnish Canadian communities and compiled useful finding aid catalogues (e.g. Finnish Canadian churches, social and sports clubs, Finnish War Veterans in Canada, and most importantly, the Finnish Organization of Canada). Edward W. Laine actively participated in academic networks with an interest in ethnic history. He frequently presented at historical and archival studies conferences, and wrote many articles and reviews for academic journals with a particular emphasis on the Finnish Canadian experience. He participated in Finn Forum conferences in Toronto (1979), Turku (1984), Minneapolis (1991), and Sudbury (1996). He co-edited the proceedings of Finn Forum III, held in Turku, with Olavi Koivukangas and Michael G. Karni,² and compiled an extensive *Archival Sources for the Study of Finnish Canadians* (n.d.), including the FOC finding aid.³ Edward Laine was active with the Canadian Ethnic Studies Association and also the Association for the Advancement of Scandinavian Studies in Canada (AASSC); was the editor of the inaugural volume of the AASSC journal, *Scandinavian Canadian Studies*, in 1983.

1 This short biography is based mostly on Lennard Sillanpää's text published in FiNNALA (http://www.finnala.com/Laine_Edward_W.html), which provides additional information on Laine's career.

2 *Finns in North America: Proceedings of Finn Forum III 5–8 September 1984, Turku, Finland*, ed. by Michael G. Karni, Olavi Koivukangas and Edward W. Laine. Turku, 1988.

3 Available here: <http://my.tbaytel.net/bmartin/finnarch.htm>.

This publication is a partial product of Laine's plan to create a two-volume work, entitled *A Century of Strife: The Finnish-Canadian Working-Class Movement, 1901–2001*, which he was preparing at the time of his death in 2003. The materials were preserved by Liisa Laine, the wife of Edward W. Laine for 24 years. The manuscript of the book and additional materials were sent by another well-known Canadian Finn, Dr. Lennard Sillanpää, to the Migration Institute of Finland in Turku in 2010. It was soon realized, that the manuscript included a lot of interesting historical insights and new information, which deserved to be published. After some inquiries and contacts, the Migration Institute of Finland, decided to start preparing the publication of the Laine manuscript, the result of which process is now in hand.

Laine intended to write a large historical study, which would include Part One and Part Two. Part One is this volume, focusing on the historical study of the Finnish Organization of Canada (FOC) and the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement. As a complement, Part Two would include an archival listing of materials related to Finnish history in Canada, representing sources for various organizations and a large number of personal papers from all over Canada. Though these materials are not published as a part of this volume, Laine's record of Finnish Canadian sources are preserved and available at the Siirtolaisuusinstituutti (The Migration Institute of Finland) in Turku, and the Institute aims to publish the listing electronically for public use by researchers interested in Finnish Canadian history and culture.

This volume written by Edward W. Laine shows that his prime interest was the workers' movements and labour history. At the same time, we find out that he sought to understand the history of the Finns in Canada as a whole, and he discovered interesting facts about the Finnish ethnic community. Furthermore, he located ethnic history as a part of Canadian statehood and its political practices in domestic and international relations.

The larger picture of the Finnish history in Canada explains the main title of the book "A Century of Strife," used by Laine himself. The Finns were mostly labouring people, who built their new lives in Canada. They had to face the hard realities of an immigrant life, the problems of inter-community disputes, and consider their position in the emerging Canadian society. These circumstances motivated them to organize themselves in various groups, socialist oriented, church oriented and, for example, the more nationalist-minded loyalist group. It was also typical that specific events and problems from Finland were reflected in the immigrant lives and activities in Canada, especially problematic were the periods of World War I and World War II, during which the position of Canadian Finns was questioned due to the "enemy alien" status. All these and many other transnational aspects are carefully considered by Laine, who also writes a more general analysis of the post-World War II decades, a time when the immigrant population had created

new generation, and new immigrants with differing, more educated background began to pour in.

Since Edward W. Laine was an educated archivist and historian, it should come as no surprise that he was very careful in his research. He was also well up-to-date in his analysis of ethnic history research in North America in general. In this context, it is interesting to read his commentaries, which are published in Appendix 1 of our volume. Naturally, since the research work by Laine ended in 2003, a lot of research on Canadian ethnic groups has been published. Also, some new research has been completed on the Canadian Finns. One example is the product of the Thunder Bay FinnForum conference in 2010, the proceedings of which were published in 2011 (*Labouring Finns. Transnational Politics in Finland, Canada, and the United States*, eds. Michael S. Beaulieu, Ronald L. Harpelle, Jamie Penney. Migration Studies C 20, Institute of Migration Turku 2011. 195 pp.) and in no way annul the value of Laine's work. On the contrary, the proceedings pay attention to similar phenomena as Laine researched, including work, the labour movement, and forms of transnational contacts.

The aim of our volume is to preserve as much of its original form and contents as possible. The book was almost finished by Laine and, therefore, only a number of Finnish language expressions and printing errors were corrected during the editorial process. Structural solutions by Laine are about the same as in the manuscript. However, the first pages of the study were reorganized in order to make it more logical (pp. 9–20), although it seems that this part of the study was still under process. The original Introduction by Laine is published as Appendix 1 and it is replaced with another type of preface.

Several 'Finglish' expressions have been preserved as a token of the Finnish language used by the immigrants, as well as the Finnish language used by Laine himself. A number of explanations are included in the volume to assist with the contents of the book, and these explanations are marked in the footnotes. Also, the format and listing of references and sources are according to Laine's usage. Laine's manuscript had several detailed maps, which, unfortunately, were not possible to reproduce in our volume. He explains the idea of the maps in the original Introduction which is published in our volume as Appendix 1. The maps are available in the materials donated to the Migration Institute of Finland.

The Migration Institute of Finland in Turku has kindly included this volume in their publication series. The publication of this volume is an important contribution to scholarly historical research and a significant addition to our understanding of Finnish Canadian history.

Turku January 26, 2016
Auvo Kostiainen

1

The Arrival of the Finns in North America

THE FINNISH Organization of Canada (FOC), together with its predecessors, constitute the first and oldest active national association for people of Finnish origin in this country.¹ From the time of its initial appearance in 1911 (then as the Finnish Socialist Organization of Canada) to the present day, it has also served as the central institution of the working-class movement within the Finnish-Canadian community. In seeking to document its single-minded pursuit of working-class culture, politics and society, the FOC sought to ensure the preservation of its own dormant records together with those of its predecessors and affiliates. It also strove to acquire and preserve as much additional documentation as possible concerning other aspects of the Finnish heritage in this country. When it finally concluded that its vast store of archival material could no longer be privately maintained, the FOC chose to donate it to the National Archives of Canada (NAC) as a gift to the nation.²

1 Some of the research material used in this study was taken from one of the author's yet-to-be completed monographs tentatively entitled *A Century of Strife: The Finnish-Canadian Working-Class Movement, 1901–2001*. An extract from that manuscript "As Friend and Foe: The Finnish Community in Canada during World War II" - was presented at the conference on The Making of Finnish America: An Ethnic Culture in Transition, hosted by The Humphrey Institute, University of Minnesota (Minneapolis, November 1991). A summary of that paper was published as "Ystäviä ja vihollisia - suomalaiset Kanadassa toisen maailmansodan aikana," *New Yorkin Uutiset* (25 February 1992): 5, 13. A still unpublished article - "Never Above Suspicion: The 'Red' Finns in Canada during World War II" - languishes in the hands of the conference organizers who have not produced the promised conference proceedings.

2 William Eklund, *Canadian rakentaja: Canadian Suomalaisen Järiestön historia vv. 1911–1971* (Toronto, 1983), 614–618. Much of the correspondence concerning this donation is found in the William Eklund fonds, National Archives of Canada (hereinafter, NAC), MG 31 H 80, vol. 2, file 16.

That material, which is now preserved at the NAC as the FOC Collection, constitutes one of the principal archival sources for documenting the evolution of the working-class cultural, social and political life and traditions that have played such a significant part in the Finnish-Canadian past.¹ It also serves as an exceptionally rich, complex, and multi-faceted source for the study of many other themes respecting the Finnish-Canadian community, Canadian society at large and, indeed, other peoples far beyond Canada's borders. However, a proper appreciation of this collection and its value as an archival resource first requires some understanding of the historical development of the Finnish-Canadian community - and especially that concerning the actual creators of the FOC Collection and its contents.

The Finns were among the earliest European colonists to settle in the New World. While it has been claimed that Finns were even present amongst the Viking crews that visited North America about A.D. 1000, such assertions have yet to be substantiated by incontrovertible proof. The first clear record of the permanent settlement of Finns in the New World comes with the founding of the colony of Nova Suecia, or Nya Sverige, along the shores of the Delaware River in 1638. The arrival of Finnish and Swedish settlers there, however, was not always entirely voluntary. Finland, then being fully an integral province of Sweden, meant that Finns, no less than Swedes, were subject to the same regulations emanating from the seat of the royal government in Stockholm. Both Finnish and Swedish mal-factors alike risked the same punishment of being transported to New Sweden when convicted for contravening the king's laws.

Among the infractions for which landless Finns were most often liable to be transported abroad to New Sweden was their penchant for carving new farms out of the vast tracts of forest wilderness belonging to the Swedish Crown. In certain respects, that was rather fortuitous for the fledgling colony because such wrongdoers, given their pioneering qualities, actually made for ideal frontiersmen in the New World. Nevertheless, the populating of the tiny colony with more people from Finland did not last very long because New Sweden, including some

1 The sources of archival material concerning the Finns in Canada and the development of their archives are treated in Edward W. Laine, *Archival Sources for the Study of Finnish Canadians* (Ottawa, 1989); idem, "Archival Resources Relating to Finnish Canadians," *Archivaria*, 7 (Winter 1978): 110–116; idem, "'Kallista Perintöä - Precious Legacy!': Finnish-Canadian Archives and Their Development in Canada, 1882–1984," in *Finns in North America: Proceedings of Finn Forum III 5–8 September 1984* (Turku, Finland), ed. Michael G. Karni, Olavi Koivukangas and Edward W. Laine, 16–43; and, of course, idem, *On the Archival Heritage of the Finnish Canadian Working-Class Movement: A Researcher's Guide and Inventory to the Finnish Organization of Canada Collection at the National Archives of Canada* (Turku, 1987), an earlier version of this work. For other major sources pertinent to the study of the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement, see the section entitled Archival Sources at Other Institutions. Migration Institute of Finland, Turku, Edward W. Laine Collection, Abbreviations etc..

200 resident Finns, passed over into Dutch hands in 1655.”¹ Great Britain, in turn, forced the Netherlands to surrender its colony of New Amsterdam together with those lands along the Delaware it had recently acquired from Sweden to British rule in 1664. The Finns settled there were subsequently absorbed into the general English-speaking population of British North America, passing on their skills in the colonization of the forests of the Middle Colonies to their Scottish-Irish neighbours.² Pehr Kalm, the eminent Finnish botanist and incisive observer of the colonial societies in British and French North America on his visit there a century later, still found that “New Sweden was not only the heart of the English colonies but *also* the heart of the whole of North America.”³

The rise and fall of New Sweden in the seventeenth century constituted but the first episode in the continuing saga of the Finnish settlement of the New World. The next point of contact came in the far northern reaches of the North American continent – in Alaska – during the course of the eighteenth century. Whether or not this phase began with the presence of Karelian mariners on Danish explorer Vitus Jonasson Bering's 1741 voyage to Alaska is still unclear. The Karelians, who comprised the eastern branch of the Finnish people, had come under Russian rule when their province of Karelia was overrun by the armies of Peter the Great during the Great Northern War of 1700–1721 between Sweden and Russia. Because many Karelians were accomplished seafarers, it is thought likely that some of them sailed with Bering out of his home port of Viipuri (Sw. Viborg; Russ. Vyborg), the principal city and provincial capital of Karelia.

Be that as it may there is no doubt that Finns had participated in the construction of Novo Arkhangelsk (Sitka) in 1795. Furthermore, they comprised a significant number of the “Russians” working there. Indeed, fully one-third of the non-aboriginal population of Alaska was of Finnish origin by 1823. One measure of importance that the Russians attached to the Finnish presence in Alaska was that they allowed the Finns to maintain their own clerics and churches there. One Finn, Arvid Adolf Etholén (whose name was Russianized into Adolf Karlovich Etolin), even served as the governor of Russian America and chief manager of

1 For more, see John H. Wuorinen, *The Finns on the Delaware, 1638–1655* (New York, 1938); Olavi Koivukangas, *Delaware 350: Amerikansiirtolaisuuden alku Amerikaemigrationens början The Beginnings of Finnish Migration to the New World* (Turku, 1988); New Jersey State Museum, *The New Sweden Colony* (Trenton, N.J., 1988). (Note by the editor of this volume: More recent research points out that the population of the colony hardly exceeded 500 persons, due to the back and forth traffic between Sweden and Delaware. Ethnic Finns made majority of the colonists. See, Auvo Kostiainen, “Delaware Colonists and Their Heritage,” in *Finns in the United States: A History of Settlement, Dissent, and Integration*, ed. Auvo Kostiainen (East Lansing, MI 2014), 29–37.)

2 Terry G. Jordan and Matti Kaups, *The American Backwoods Frontier; An Ethnic and Ecological Interpretation* (Baltimore, Md., 1989), 250.

3 As cited in Martti Kerkkonen, “Finland and Colonial America,” in Vilho Niitemaa et al., eds., *Old Friends - Strong Ties* (Vaasa, 1976), 98.

the Russian-American Company from 1840 to 1845. It has also been suggested that many of the Finns then residing in Alaska moved southward into British Columbia rather than staying there or returning home to Europe after its purchase from Russia in 1867 by the United States.

That claim, no less than another sweeping assertion that an earlier contingent of Finnish immigrants had worked on the Welland Canal construction project in 1829, has yet to be authenticated and confirmed by the historical record. Nonetheless, the west coast of Canada and the United States did see a remarkably early presence of Finns. The inference is that some of those Finns may well have drifted there from Alaska as well as having been sailors who had jumped ship to join in the California Gold Rush of 1849. A number of Finns also participated in the later Klondike Gold Rush of 1896, including two brothers, Karl Fredrik Joutsen and Anton Fabian Johnsson, who made their fortune from a huge gold strike in the Yukon. Joutsen later used a generous portion of his great wealth to fund the development of the University of Turku in Finland.

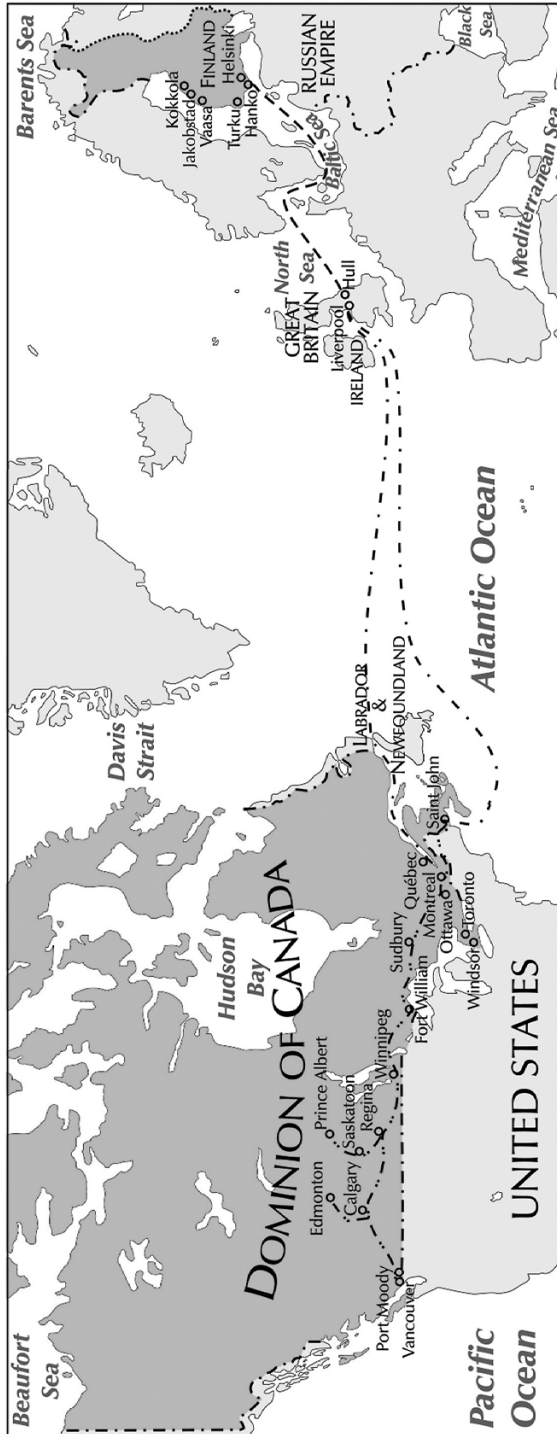
2

The Finns in the Mass Migration of Europeans to North America

The Finns were relative latecomers in the great transatlantic migration of Europeans to North America in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It was well into the 1860s before immigrants coming directly from Finland began to wash up on American shores in significant numbers. Although many of them actually landed at the Canadian ports of Quebec, Saint John and Halifax, most, if not all, of the arrivals shunted themselves off overland by railway train to various destinations in the United States. Amerikka was then deemed the most-favoured destination of working-class Finnish emigrants. They considered the United States to be their land of first choice until the American government virtually closed the country's borders to all European immigration after World War I.¹ Canada, the next most-favoured destination, received the vast majority of the new arrivals from Finland thereafter.

The earliest contingent of Finns to arrive on these shores included those who had previously emigrated to northern Norway to work the iron mines there. The later involvement of other Finns in the mining industry, first in the United States and then in Canada, may well have been influenced by the favourable initial experience the "Norwegian" Finns had encountered in that line of work here. The early Finnish arrivals included many who had originally intended to remain in America as *Gastarbeiters* (guest workers) only until such time as they had saved enough money to bankroll themselves to a better future back home in Finland. If this seem to suggest that the early arrivals from Finland consisted primarily of economic emigrants whose only interest was to secure employment and high wages, that was not entirely the case. Among the earliest immigrants were sim-

1 Reino Kero, *The Finns in North America: Destinations and Composition of Immigrant Societies in North America before World War I* (Turku, 1980), 24.



- **The Finland Steamship Company routes:** From Hanko to Hull, England, and thence by railway to Liverpool. The company also occasionally used other Finnish ports for departures, for example, Helsinki, Turku, Vaasa, Kookkola and Jakobstad.
- - - - **The Canadian Pacific Steamship Line routes:** From Liverpool to Quebec and Montreal via the Strait of Belle Isle and the St. Lawrence River during the summer sailing season, and Liverpool to Saint John, New Brunswick, in the winter months (the southern route shown on this map). Departures could also be arranged from other British ports. Third class passengers (which included most immigrants) were disembarked at Quebec and Saint John.
- . - . - . **The Canadian Pacific Railway lines:** From Quebec or Saint John to Montreal, and thence all points west to Vancouver, or south to Toronto and Windsor, on rails serviced by the CPR. Immigrants destined for other points, for example, to the United States, could transfer to other railways.
- - - - - Internal borders

Map 1. Canada and Finnish immigrant routes (Migration Institute of Finland, Edward W. Laine Collection, SerHist1, Map 1, p. 2).

ple, pious folk like the adherents of the dissenting Laestadian Lutheran sect who sought to escape out from under the thumb of the state church in their homeland, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland.

All that they wanted, was to experience the vaunted religious freedom of the United States where anyone could worship as he or she wished.

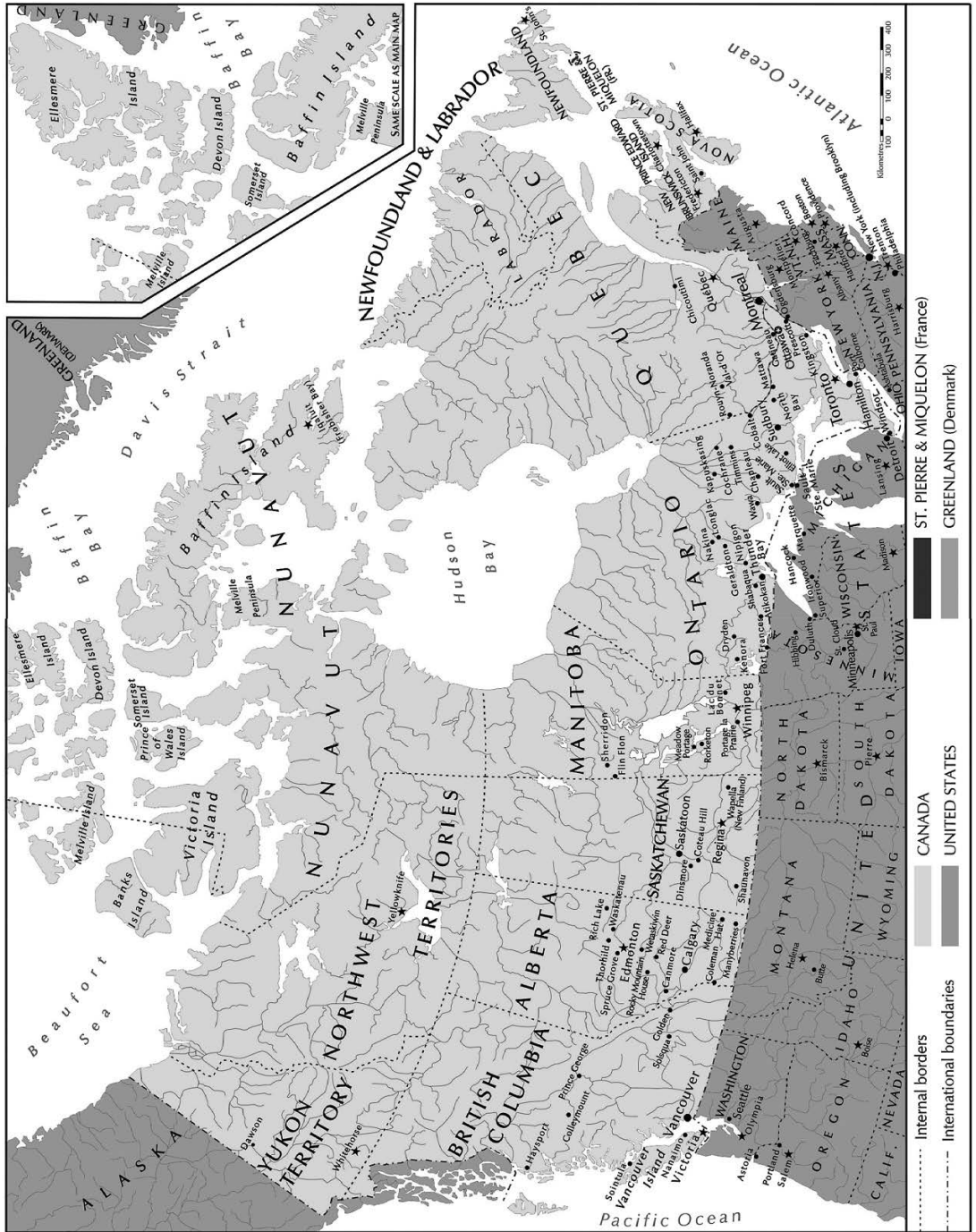
Indeed, all emigrants left their ancestral haunts for myriad personal, family, social, political and economic reasons, which included varying elements of dissatisfaction with their lot in the Old Country as well as their hopes for the future in the New Land. The particular nature of those reasons was very much rooted in and conditioned by the existing situation in the homeland prior to each emigrant's departure. Moreover, those reasons had to have been rather persuasive to have resulted in some 200,000 Finns making their permanent homes in Amerikka before the so-called Finnish diaspora abated with the outbreak of World War I.¹ While that number of Finns may not seem large when compared to the size of other ethnocultural groups landing in America during the pre-World War I mass migration of Europeans from across the Atlantic Ocean, it constituted a major drain on the population of Finland, which numbered only 2,655,900 persons at the turn of the century.²

The fact that roughly eighty per cent of those first-wave Finnish immigrants were to settle in the United States made the Finnish-American community not only older, but also much larger and better established than its Canadian counterpart. Because the United States had received so large a share of the earliest Finnish arrivals to this continent, the Finnish-American community tended to reflect the religious and conservative values of an older, pre-industrial Finland to a much greater extent than did the younger Finnish-Canadian community.³ By the time Finns began drifting into Canada in appreciable numbers, they were already more thoroughly attuned to the earthly ways and ills of an unfettered capitalist industrial economy and its secular antidote - socialism. Moreover, Canada continued to receive new immigrants from Finland long after the United States ceased admitting additional inflows of newcomers from Europe about 1923 (as reflected in Figure 1 below). Thus, if life in the urban ghettos familiar to

1 Ibid., 70, gives a grand total of 171,318 Finnish-born persons resident in North America on the basis of the respective American and Canadian censuses of 1920 and 1921. However, the reported number of immigrants to this continent was much larger, for Keijo Virtanen, "Counter-Current': Finns in the Overseas Return Migration Movement," in *Finnish Diaspora, I: Canada, South America, Africa, Australia and Sweden*, ed. Michael G. Kanri (Toronto, 1981), 188, has established that over 300,000 Finns had already emigrated to North America by 1914.

2 Finland, Central Statistical Office, *Statistical Yearbook of Finland 1979* (Helsinki, 1980), 5.

3 Edward W. Laine, "Community in Crisis: The Finnish-Canadian Quest for Cultural Identity, 1900-1979," in *Finnish Diaspora I*: 5-6; Reino Kero, "The Social Origins of the Left-Wing Radicals and 'Church Finns' among Finnish Immigrants in North America," *Publications of the Institute of General History, University of Turku*, 7, ed. Vilho Niitemaa (Vammala, 1975): 61-62.



Map 2. Canada and the United States (Migration Institute of Finland, Edward W. Laine Collection, SerHist2, Map 6, p. 36 and 37).

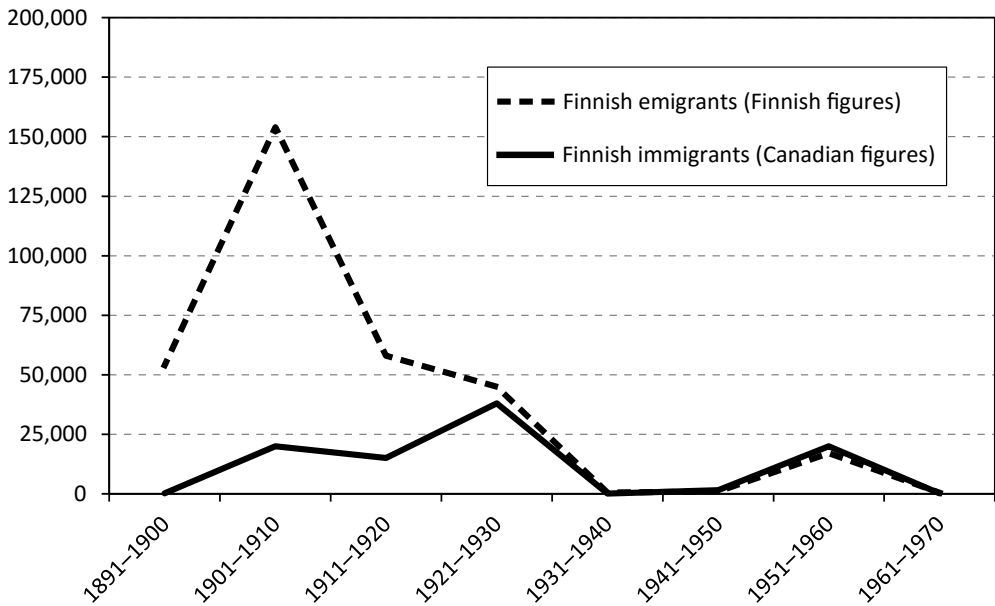


Figure 1. A Comparison of Decennial Finnish Emigration/Canadian Immigration Statistics, 1891–1970.

Notes:

The Finnish figures comprise emigrants destined for all Amerikka, including Latin America as well as Canada and the United States. The Canadian figures include only those Finnish immigrants arriving directly from overseas.

Sources:

Keijo Virtanen, *Settlement or Return: Finnish Emigrants (1860–1930) in the International Overseas Return Migration Movement*; Finland, Central Statistical Office, *Statistical Yearbook of Finland 1975*; William Darcovich and Paul Yuzyk, eds.; *A Statistical Compendium on the Ukrainians in Canada, 1891–1976*; Citizenship and Immigration Canada, *Immigration Statistics, 1964–1996*.

the Finnish-Canadian immigrants and in the Finntowns of the United States may have appeared very much alike to the uninformed outsider, they also differed in a great many ways. Those differences, which marked the separate development of the Finnish-Canadian and Finnish-American communities in the urban centres of the two countries, also extended themselves to the rural Finnish settlements on both sides of the common international border.

It was not until the mid-1870s and early 1880s that the first few handfuls of Finns began filtering into Canada in search of employment and unsettled land. Most of those early newcomers came here across the border from the United States in search of employment in railway construction and on other major work

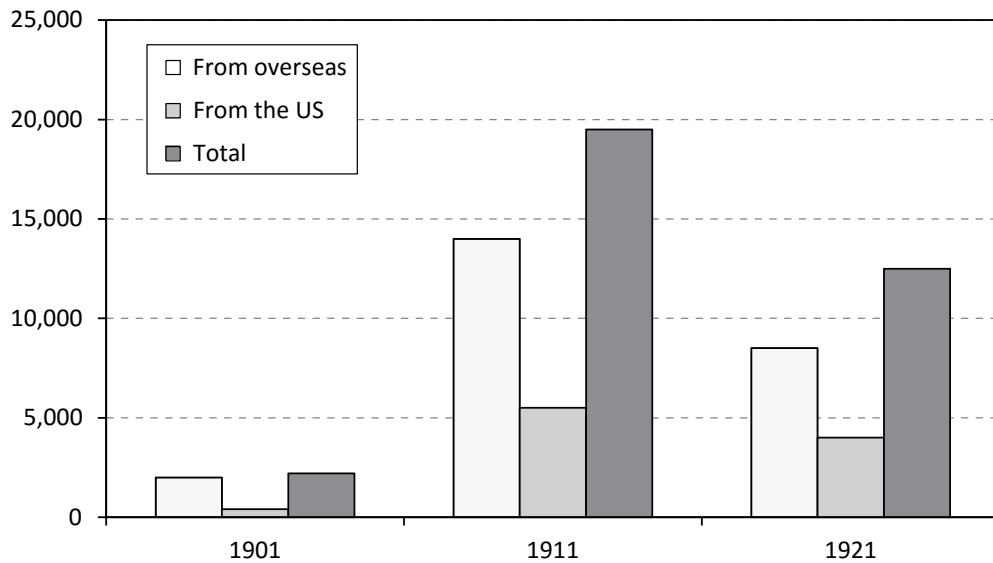


Figure 2. Finnish Immigrant Arrivals in Canada, 1901–1921.

Notes:

Most of the emigrants who entered Canada between 1912 and 1921, arrived here before the onset of World War I.

Sources:

Keijo Virtanen, *Settlement or Return: Finnish Emigrants (1860–1930) in the International Overseas Return Migration Movement*; Finland, Central Statistical Office, *Statistical Yearbook of Finland 1975*; William Darcovich and Paul Yuzyk, eds.; *A Statistical Compendium on the Ukrainians in Canada, 1891–1976*; Citizenship and Immigration Canada, *Immigration Statistics, 1964–1996*.

projects of that time.¹ Direct immigration from Finland only began about 1883, that is, after the Canadian government extended a particularly warm welcome to one pioneering group of Finnish immigrants who had ventured into this country.² Thereafter, others leaving Finland began to arrive here with greater frequency. Even so, Finnish immigration and settlement in Canada did not reach significant proportions until the turn of the twentieth century. Indeed, the Canadian census of 1901 enumerated only 2,502 persons of Finnish origin as being resident in the country, whereas the census of 1911 reported that this number had grown to

1 Christine Kouhi, "Labour and Finnish Immigration to Thunder Bay, 1876–1914," *The Lakehead University Review* 9 (Spring 1976): 17.

2 Matti Halminen, *Sointula: Kalevan Kansan ja Kanadan suomalaisten historiaa* (Helsinki, 1936), 6.

15,497.¹ The fact is that the first great wave of Finnish immigration to this country took place in the period between 1900 and mid-1914. Two more waves were still to follow: the first during the interwar period and the second shortly after the end of World War II.

The quickening flood of Finnish immigration into this country was materially aided by those earlier newcomers who had written home about the many opportunities they had found here. Their letters to relatives and friends in Finland persuaded them also to consider Canada as a potential destination for their own forays into the New World.² The phenomenon of chain migration, that is, the process whereby Finns already in Canada sent encouragement and passage money to *assist* the immigration of other family members and friends here, hastened and broadened the inflow of newcomers from Finland.³ No doubt the growing advertising and recruitment campaigns illegally undertaken in Finland by Canadian immigration officials as well as railway and steamship agents also constituted other "pulls" in establishing the eventual destination of intending emigrants.⁴ Still it should not be forgotten that those "pulls" were reinforced by equally powerful "pushes" in Finland, which predisposed so many of its citizens to venture abroad to other new lands like Canada.

Most particularly, Finnish society faced a prolonged, painful period of socio-economic destabilization and readjustment after the 1850s as its predominantly rural, agrarian-based subsistence economy slowly succumbed to new trends, which included the capitalization and consolidation of agricultural holdings with the continuing displacement and unemployment of rural leaseholders and farm

1 Canada, Census and Statistics Office, *Fifth Census of Canada*, 1911, 2: Religions, Origins, Birthplace, Citizenship, Literacy and Infirmities, by Provinces, Districts and Sub-Districts (Ottawa, 1913), Table XI (Origins in 1911 and 1901), 367.

2 For example, see Keijo Virtanen, *Letters to Finland. The Finns in the United States: The Project on Finnish Immigration of the Michigan Historical Collections* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1976); and Marsha Penti-Vidutis, "The American Letters: Immigrant Accounts of Life Overseas," *Finnish Americana* 1 (1978): 22–40.

3 For contemporary accounts of this, see W. B. Wills, "Annual Report of the Ottawa Immigration Agent," *Sessional Papers*, 1884, no. 14, Appendix 3: 21, and "Report of Professor James Mayor," *ibid.*, 1900, no. 13: 224. See also A. William Hoglund, "Finnish Immigrant Letter-Writers: Reporting from the United States to Finland, 1870s to World War I," *Finnish Diaspora 2: United States*, ed. Michael G. Karni (Toronto, 1981), 14–31. The America Letters Collection of the Institute of General History at the University of Turku is replete with examples of correspondence from Canada and the United States inviting relatives and friends to join them there.

4 Reino Kero, "Emigration from Finland to Canada before the First World War," *The Lakehead University Review* 9: 7–8; *idem*, "Migration from Finland to North America in the Years between the United States Civil War and the First World War" (Turku, 1974), 155–59 and 166–69; *idem*, *Suuren lännen suomalaiset* (Helsinki, 1976), 17–18; Maud A. Jalava, "The Scandinavians as a Source of Settlers for the Dominion of Canada: The First Generation, 1867–1897," in *Scandinavian-Canadian Studies/Études Scandinaves au Canada* 1, ed. Edward W. Laine (Ottawa, 1983), 3–14.

workers. The "pushes" driving many Finns off their ancestral holdings were assisted by complementary "pulls" to other areas within the country arising from the quickening process of industrialization and urbanization then coursing through Finland.¹ The social stability of the countryside was further eroded once the traditionally cash-poor rural workers fell under the spell of the cash economy that was associated with industrial employment, for it promised them the beguiling prospect of being able to earn a decent living wage with enough money left aside to purchase all of the consumer goods they could ever wish for.

The economic and social transformation of Finnish society was further complicated by a serious political crisis that erupted in Finland in 1899. Nicholas II, who ruled as the Tsar of Russia and Grand Duke of Finland, then undertook a wide-ranging project to russify his northwestern Grand Duchy, which included such sensitive initiatives as the conscription of Finns into the Imperial Russian Army. To achieve his ends, Nicholas authorized the abrogation of Finland's cherished constitution, laws and established conventions, which only succeeded in angering and alienating nearly all of his most loyal Finnish subjects. Their dissatisfaction led to widespread political protest throughout the Grand Duchy, and ultimately, to the political destabilization and radicalization of Finnish society from top to bottom. Not only did those developments guarantee further emigration abroad, but they also ensured that many of the departing emigrants had been thoroughly conditioned to doubt all established authority and values of the old order. That made them especially susceptible to the adoption of radically new ideas for correcting existing social, political and economic inequities wherever they went.²

1 D. O. Kirby, *Finland in the Twentieth Century* (Minneapolis, Minn., 1979), 20–21.

2 Leonard Lundin, "Finland," in *Russification in the Baltic Provinces and Finland, 1855–1914*, ed. Edward C. Thaden (Princeton, N.J., 1981), 441.

3 The Roots of Finnish-Canadian Radicalism, 1890–1910

If dissatisfaction with their lot in the Old Country and the hope of finding a better future abroad had brought the immigrants to these shores, the reality of their new life in Canada was not without its own difficulties. Because this country had been given over to laissez-faire capitalism, the actual work and working-conditions here were uniformly brutal and inhumane. Moreover, the very process itself of their uprooting and resettlement in a strange and alien land often subjected the newcomers to other forms of moral, social and spiritual distress. It also stimulated within them behaviours tied to the so-called associative spirit and call for communal action and co-operation that formed so important a part of their ancestral Finnish agrarian heritage and rural traditions. As part of their initial attempts to come to terms with the worst problems associated with their new environment, the early immigrant Finns began to establish their own temperance societies and churches. The first of these were *Lännen Rusko Raittius-Seura* (*Western Glow Temperance Society*) and North Wellingtonin Suomalainen Kirkko ja Seurakunta (The Finnish Church and Congregation of North Wellington), which were founded in 1890 and 1893 respectively by Finnish coal-miners in North Wellington, British Columbia.¹ Soon thereafter, the local temperance society and neighbourhood church congregation became a common feature in other Finnish communities across Canada.

Both the Finnish temperance society and church offered their members a measure of social, cultural and spiritual solace, but neither institution was able to address the fundamental problems of exploitation, ill use and discrimination that the Finnish immigrants experienced at the hands of many of their employ-

1 For the earliest surviving records of *Lännen Rusko Raittius-Seura* and North Wellingtonin Suomalainen Kirkko ja Seurakunta, see the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 143, files 6466 and 62 respectively.

ers and the most vocal nativist elements entrenched within the wider Canadian society. One group of Finnish coal-miners, most prominent among whom were several former residents of North Wellington, sought relief from their woes at the Dunsmuir mines by establishing the Kalevan Kansa colony in 1901 on Malcolm Island at Sointula, British Columbia, under the leadership of Matti Kurikka and A. B. Mäkelä. Their aim was to create an idealized new Finland based on such utopian socialist principles as the common ownership of property and the distribution of the colony's income according to individual need.

Before their idealistic socialist and theosophist experiment finally collapsed in financial ruin in 1905, it had attracted a great deal of international interest and drew possibly as many as two thousand Finns to visit Sointula (Place of Harmony). With Mäkelä's assistance, Kurikka was able to establish Canada's first Finnish-language press there. It was a most ambitious and prolific - if short-lived - endeavour, publishing the newspaper *Aika* (Time), together with other periodicals, pamphlets and monographs, for distribution across Canada, Finland and the United States.¹ After 1905, some hundred settlers remained with Mäkelä at Sointula, while a smaller number followed the discredited Kurikka to found another utopian socialist community at Webster's Corners, British Columbia, known as Sammon Takojat, Ltd. (The Forgers of the Sampo [a magic mill in Finnish folklore]), this second attempt also failed.²

The largest group of Finns in Canada opted for a more realistic and, in the final analysis, the most successful solution to their organizational, social and cultural needs- the creation of local societies that were fundamentally secular and working-class in nature. These, too, were established as cultural havens and communal retreats against the harsh realities of life here, a new development which again was first seen in Canada's western-most province. At a general meeting on 11 September 1900, a group of Finnish miners established the Finnish-speaking Finnish Public Hall of Rossland, British Columbia, for "all the Finnish organizations whose aim and purpose is the elevation and education of its members."³ The founding of the Finnish Society of Toronto (Toronton Suomalainen Seura) followed in 1902.⁴ Similar associations then sprang up in Port Arthur, Copper Cliff,

1 J. Donald Wilson, "A Synoptic View of the *Aika*, Canada's First Finnish-Language Newspaper," *Amphora* 39 (March 1980): 9–14; Arja Pilli, *The Finnish-Language Press*, 42–57. For the FOC Collection's holdings of *Aika* and other Kalevan Kansan publications. See, e.g., Migration Institute of Finland, Edward W. Laine Collection, Laine_Part_2.

2 J. Donald Wilson, "Never Believe What You Have Never Doubted': Matti Kurikka's Dream for a New World Utopia," *Turun Historiallinen Arkisto* 34 (Turku, 1980): 232–233.

3 Quoted from the English-language constitution of the Finnish-speaking Finnish Public Hall of Rossland, accepted at a general meeting on 11 September 1900, in the Finnish National Hall fonds, Rossland Historical Museum, Rossland, British Columbia.

4 Minutes of the general and executive board meetings of the Finnish Society of Toronto, 1902, in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 37, file 7.

Vancouver, and wherever else in Canada that Finns had congregated in sufficient numbers to support such endeavours.¹ It is not entirely clear to what degree the phenomenon of founding such societies in Canada was locally, nationally or internationally inspired for similar types of working-men's societies were also then being set up in both the United States and Finland. For example, *Imatra* Workers' Association (Työväen Yhdistys *Imatra*) Lodges 2 and 9 respectively of Sault Ste. Marie and Port Arthur, Ontario, were patterned after and affiliated to the Työväen Yhdistys *Imatra* (later renamed the Finnish Aid Society *Imatra*) of Brooklyn, N.Y.

Regardless of their locale, those local societies shared in one constant. With each came its corporal and organizational centre - the *haali* (hall), which tended to support a much wider range of social, cultural and economic activities than was generally provided by the local temperance society or church congregation. It was the *haali* where Finnish social dances were held and theatricals were staged. It was there that Finnish bands and choirs practised and, once they were well rehearsed, entertained their compatriots with crowd-pleasing musical programmes. In the *haali*, or on its adjoining grounds, athletes and gymnasts exercised and performed. It was also in the *haali* that the society's members put aside their work clothes and cares to listen to educational lectures or to partake in spirited debates on some finer point of politics, religion or philosophy. There they took courses in the English language, or read the Finnish-language newspapers, periodicals and books subscribed to or purchased by the society's lending library. The society sometimes even offered them additional services such as modest life and health insurance policies.

The *haali* also provided individual Finns with a place where they could shine as actors on its stage and as athletes on its sports field. There they could also sing, dance or play a musical instrument as soloists or as part of a choir, dance troupe or brass band. Other creative possibilities open to them included the writing and editing of material that ranged from poetry to news items for the society's *nyrk-kilehti* ('fist-paper' or handwritten newspaper), depending upon each person's natural inclinations and interests. Those of a more practical bent could exercise their business acumen as managers of the *haali* and its facilities, perfect their organizing skills and administrative expertise on one of the society's many committees, or serve on its executive board as treasurer, secretary, or chairman (president). Nor was that all they could do, for the *haali* gave them a venue in which they could assume the role of speaker, choirmaster, orchestra leader, theatre director,

1 William Eklund, "The Formative Years of the Finnish Organization of Canada," in *Finnish Diaspora* 1: 50–51.

historian, librarian, archivist, or otherwise make use of their innate talents.¹ It provided both Finnish men and women alike with a mechanism for reaffirming their individual worth and significance to themselves and the company of their peers at a time when Canadian society generally treated them as a barely tolerated alien presence in its midst.

Under those circumstances, it was natural that the *haali* should evolve into the principal social, cultural and intellectual centre in the life of the Finnish community.² Likewise, it was also inevitable that the *haali* should have become a major centre in the development of the community's political life in this country. In that regard, it has been written that:

The *haali*, in fact, was often in itself the instrument which led to the organization and politicization of the local Finnish community. Since the majority of the immigrants were composed of people who were at most but one generation removed from their ancestral holdings in Finland, their communal instincts were again aroused by the need to build the *haali* in common. The combination of their individual sense of alienation from the rest of Canadian society and sense of community amongst themselves further reinforced the positive values of collectivism. Also, the *haali* provided a central platform from which the more committed socialists (some of whom felt themselves to have been driven out of Finland for their beliefs) could convert their fellow immigrants. In many instances, the proselytizing was expedited by the emigre's contact with the Social Democratic movement in Finland. Thus, here developed this particular amalgam of Finnish culture and socialism- the so-called "hall socialism" - that became the foundation upon which was built the national movement of the Finnish-Canadian radical Left.³

Had those Finnish socialists been content to weave their theories within the isolated confines of their halls while still remaining quiet and uncomplaining non-unionized workers on the job, their radicalism would have been of little concern to the great captains of industry and the other major beneficiaries of laissez-faire capitalism in this country. That was not to be the case. Instead, they soon came to regard themselves as constituting the spearhead in the vanguard of the worldwide

1 For example, such activities are suggested in the Archives of the Toronton Suomalainen Seura-Toronton Suomalainen Sosialisti Osasto [Finnish Society of Toronto-Toronto Finnish Socialist Local], in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 35, files 35–45, and vol. 36, files 1–34.

2 The *haali* was the central institution in Finnish immigrant life in the United States as well, according to Carl Ross, *The Finn Factor in American Labor, Culture and Society* (New York Mills, Minn., 1977), 24–26.

3 Quoted from Edward W. Laine, "Finnish Canadian Radicalism and Canadian Politics: The First Forty Years, 1900–1940," in *Ethnicity, Power and Politics in Canada*, ed. Jorgen Dahlie and Tissa Fernando (Toronto, 1981), 96–97.



Photo 1. The editorial office of *Työkansa* newspaper in Port Arthur, ONT in the 1910's. (Source: Migration Institute of Finland, Edward W. Laine Collection, FOC_FA, Images)

working-class struggle, which they believed would eventually culminate in the victory of Canada's toiling masses. Part of their optimism concerning the imminent approach of a working-class revolution stemmed from their knowledge of and, in many instances, direct experience in the tumultuous events that had recently taken place in the Old Country.

There Finnish workers had staged their Suurlakko, or General Strike, of 1905 that succeeded in completely paralysing Finland. Their strike forced Nicholas II, Tsar and Autocrat of Russia and Grand Duke of Finland, to grant them a unicameral Eduskunta (parliament) whose members were to be elected by universal suffrage. Finland thereby became the first country in Europe to extend the vote to women. The election of male and female representatives to the Eduskunta through a system of proportional representation ensured the Finnish Social Democratic Party a strong presence there and a major voice in its deliberations. With such successes in mind, reform-minded Finns here quickly subscribed to the process of making common cause with the Canadian working-class movement. Individual Finns took out personal memberships in the recently formed Socialist Party of Canada (SPC) as early as 1905. In the following year, various Finnish societies across Canada af-

filiated themselves to the SPC by organizing their own Finnish Socialist locals, the most prominent ones being located in Toronto, Port Arthur and Vancouver. Thus began what later proved to be a rather stormy relationship between the socialist Finns and their crusty English-speaking counterparts in the SPC.

In the first place, most Finnish immigrants had a poor grasp of the English language and, therefore, found it quite difficult to communicate with the *kieliset* ('tongued ones'; that is, English-speaking Canadians) in the SPC. Those initial language difficulties instinctively led the Finns to keep to themselves as much as possible. Unfortunately, such behaviour also gave them the appearance of being over-clannish, aloof and arrogant in the eyes of their English-speaking comrades in the party. There was a kernel of truth in the accusations of the *kieliset*, for the Finnish comrades themselves also believed that their attachment to the Suurlakko and the Russian Revolution of 1905 established them as the only truly experienced and successful revolutionaries of the socialist movement in Canada, and it made them somewhat contemptuous and distrustful of the armchair revolutionaries leading the SPC. Among those veteran Finnish socialists was Vilho Säilä of Toronto. Säilä, a participant in the Suurlakko, had emigrated to Canada in 1907 and then went on to become a prominent figure in the Finnish-Canadian socialist movement. Among his later accomplishments he could list his service as the secretary of the FSOC in 1912. As such, he was only the second person to fill that post.¹

The Finns also may have taken undue pride in the fact that it was they who possessed the better halls, maintained a broader constituency within their own community and had shown that they could establish their own party newspaper, *Työkansa* (The Working People), without the need for outside assistance.² Although supposedly drawing upon the resources of the much larger English-speaking community, the *kieliset* in the SPC possessed comparatively little by way of assets or popular support. Consequently, they were continually forced to beg for all sorts of monetary assistance from the Finns and other foreigners in the socialist movement.³ In short, the *kieliset* felt their own position in the party was being eroded by the growing strength of the Finnish Branch which, contrary to the SPC's constitution, spoke to general policy matters with one voice on behalf of its member locals.⁴

1 Vilho Säilä, "Muistoja elämästäni," in the Vilho Säilä fonds, NAC, MG 31 H 118, vo1.1, file 3.

2 J. W. Ahlqvist, "Järjestömme toiminta vuoteen 1920," in *Canadian Suomalainen Järjestö 25 vuotta: Kuvia ja muistelmia 25-vuotiselta toimintatapalelta 1911–1936* (Sudbury, 1936), 33–35.

3 See reports concerning the Finnish Branch in the *Western Clarion*, 21 September 1907, 29 October 1908 and 23 January 1909; Varpu Lindstrom-Best, "The Socialist Party of Canada and the Finnish Connection, 1905–1911," in *Ethnicity, Power and Politics in Canada*, 115–119.

4 Socialist Party of Canada, *Canadian Sosialistipuolueen ohjelma ja perustuslaki sekä muutamia piirteitä yhteiskuntakehityksestä* (Fitchburg, Mass., 1909), Chap. 3, art. 5.

Under those circumstances, it was quite natural that a serious rift should open up between the Finnish comrades and the SPC hierarchy. Relations grew frostier and frostier over time until the final rupture was brought to a head when the Finns dared to challenge the party leadership over its rigid adherence to Marxist doctrine in the formulation of the party platform. The Finns, who were then labelled "yellows" or "revisionists" for their heretical views, demanded that the SPC adopt certain measures that were designed to alleviate the immediate suffering of the working masses.¹ The "red" leadership dismissed the Finnish demands out of hand, arguing that such palliatives - if forced upon the capitalists - would only lessen the intensity of the class war and thereby delay the certain coming of the Revolution. In their considered view, the essential purpose of the SPC was not to reform capitalism, but to destroy it.

The Finnish comrades interpreted the intransigence of the party leaders in this matter as proof of their contempt for the *ulkolaiset* (outsiders or foreigners) and *siirtolaiset* (immigrants) as well as their showing of a complete disinterest in the working-man's most pressing everyday problems.² For its part, the "red" faction moved decisively to defend its authority, first by withdrawing its support from the Finnish newspaper *Työkansa*, and then by expelling the dissident Finns from the party in 1910. In the latter undertaking, the SPC methodically stripped its ranks clean of all but a few loyal Finnish comrades who, for the most part, were situated in western Canada. The only Finnish local to remain under the aegis of the SPC was Vancouverin Suomalainen Sosialisti Osasto N° 45 (Vancouver Finnish Socialist Local N° 45). Even so, a dissident faction consisting of roughly half of that local's membership broke away to form the rival Vancouverin Suomalainen Työväen Yhdistys *Raivaaja* (*Raivaaja* Finnish Workers' Association of Vancouver).³ Despite their expulsion by the SPC, none of the Finnish "yellows" were prepared to let such a setback dictate their withdrawal from the working-class movement or the broader political arena in this country.

1 For example, see the reformist platform which the publishers of *Työkansa* issued under the title of *Canadian Sosialistipuolue ja sosialidemokratia* (Port Arthur, 1909).

2 Ahlqvist, "Järjestömmä," 34–35; Finnish Socialist Organization of Canada, *Canadian Suomalaisen Sosialistijärjestön ensimmäisen edustajakokouksen pöytäkirja, 19–23 p:nä maaliskuuta 1914*, ed. Aku Päiviö (Port Arthur, 1914), 10; Counterproposals of E. O. Tigert and J. W. Ahlqvist, n.d., and letters [concerning the socialist movement], 1910, in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 24, file 24; minutes of the general meetings of Toronto Suomalainen Sosialisti Osasto [Toronto Finnish Socialist Local], 1908–1910, *ibid.*, vol. 37, file 10.

3 See the minutes of the founding convention of Vancouverin Suomalainen Työväen Yhdistys *Raivaaja* on 12 November 1910, in the Vancouver Finnish Organization of Canada Local N° 55 fonds, NAC, MG 28 V 113, vol.1, file 1, and V. Mutta, "C.S.J. Vancouverin os. n:o 55 historiaa," in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 13, file 11, submission no. 41.

4

The Finnish Socialist Organization of Canada et al., 1911–1925

The expulsions from the SPC included not only the Finns, but also other "yellows" who had shared in the same dissatisfaction with the party's leadership and its policies. In April 1911, all of those ex-SPC members joined together to found the Canadian Socialist Federation (CSF). Meanwhile, the Finnish Socialist Associations of the new federation also decided to form their own Finnish Socialist Organization of Canada (FSOC) - in Finnish, Canadian Suomalainen Sosialistijärjestö (CSSJ) - which they wished to federate with the CSF as its national Finnish-language section. On 25 October 1911, the FSOC obtained its charter from the CSF and formally began operations as its affiliate. In December of the same year, the CSF was modified, enlarged and renamed the Social-Democratic Party of Canada (SDPC). The FSOC then formally transferred its allegiance to the SDPC.¹ By year's end, the FSOC numbered nineteen locals with a total membership of 1,205 persons. By the end of the following year, those figures had increased to forty locals and 2,218 members.²

In the beginning, the FSOC functioned as a loose federation of the Finnish Socialist locals of the SDPC. Its administrative and coordinating centre was initially located in Toronto for the sake of convenience. The welding of the FSOC into an effective, centralized organization did not take place until its first national convention in 1914. There it was decided to establish the FSOC's National Office permanently in Toronto, a situation that prevailed with the FSOC and its successors to this very day. It was also agreed that the National Office should be placed under the direction of J. W. Ahlqvist who, in 1913, had been elected secretary to the National Executive Committee (NEC; in Finnish, Toimeenpaneva komitea or Tpk).

1 Ahlqvist, "Järjestöme," 36–37.

2 *CSSJ:n ensimmäisen edustajakokouksen pöytäkirja*, 11–12.



Photo 2. The Haapalainen immigrant family photograph, or Edward W. Laine (left) with his parents Antti Haapalainen and Anna-Liisa Mustonen, and sister. Photo taken in the mid-1940's. (Source: Migration Institute of Finland, Edward W. Laine Collection, FOC_FA, Images.)

The NEC's mandate was to interpret and implement those policies approved by the last national convention and otherwise direct the organization's affairs in the interim until the convocation of the next national convention.¹ Convenience again dictated that the positions of national secretary - the full-time, salaried executive director who was charged with the routine administration of the National Office - and secretary of the NEC- the principal officer responsible for scheduling the NEC's meetings, setting its agenda, partaking in its deliberations and carrying out its resolutions - were to be combined in the one person.² It effectively made the secretary the single most powerful official in the FSOC (and its successors). Given Ahlqvist's great administrative and political abilities as well as his exceptional fluency in the English language, the FSOC had assured itself that it would enjoy capable, strong and undivided leadership during the difficult years that lay ahead.

Indeed, the first serious crisis was not long in coming, for the outbreak of World War I brought with it several major problems for the FSOC. First, as an immigrant organization, it became suspect for its potentially dangerous alien character. Nor were its socialistic, anti-war and pacifist sentiments very popular with a nascent nation girding itself for battle on behalf of the beleaguered Mother Country - Great Britain. Even so, the FSOC managed to steer a fairly safe course throughout most of the war years without compromising its cherished principles or unduly antagonizing the government authorities. Indeed, it was only in the autumn of 1918 that the Canadian government really began to pay attention to the radical Finns. Although Ottawa's new-found interest in such matters may have arisen from its prescience with respect to the unfolding events in Russia that culminated in the Bolshevik Revolution and Lenin's withdrawal from the war together with the accommodation he made with Germany at Brest-Litvosk, it most probably occurred at the behest of the British and American intelligence services acting through C. H. Cahan, a Montreal lawyer who was then serving as director of public safety. In fact, Cahan's reliance on the two foreign intelligence services naturally stemmed out of the deference that the Canadian government traditionally accorded the British, as well as from the specific orders that Cahan had received from Prime Minister Sir Robert Laird Borden to avail himself of American intelligence in determining Canada's needs for internal security.³

1 Social-Democratic Party of Canada, *Canadian Sosialidemokraattisen Puolueen perustuslaki ja Canadian Suomalaisen Sosialistijärjestön säännöt* (Berlin, Ont., [1912]), 178.

2 *Ibid.*, 178–181, that is, CHAPS. 2 and 3 of the FSOC's constitution.

3 R. B. Borden to C. H. Cahan, 19 May 1918, in the Sir Robert Laird Borden fonds, NAC, MG 26 H, vol. 103, part 2-vol. 104, part 1, file OC 519, p. 56642. Cf. William Rodney, *Soldiers of the International: A History of the Communist Party of Canada, 1919–1929* (Toronto, 1968), 17–18; Gregory S. Kealey, "State Repression of Labour and the Left in Canada, 1914–20: The Impact of the First World War," *Canadian Historical Review* 73 (1992): 303–304; Jeff Keshen, "Ail the News That Was Fit to Print: Ernest J. Chambers and Information Control in Canada, 1914–19," *ibid.*, 327.

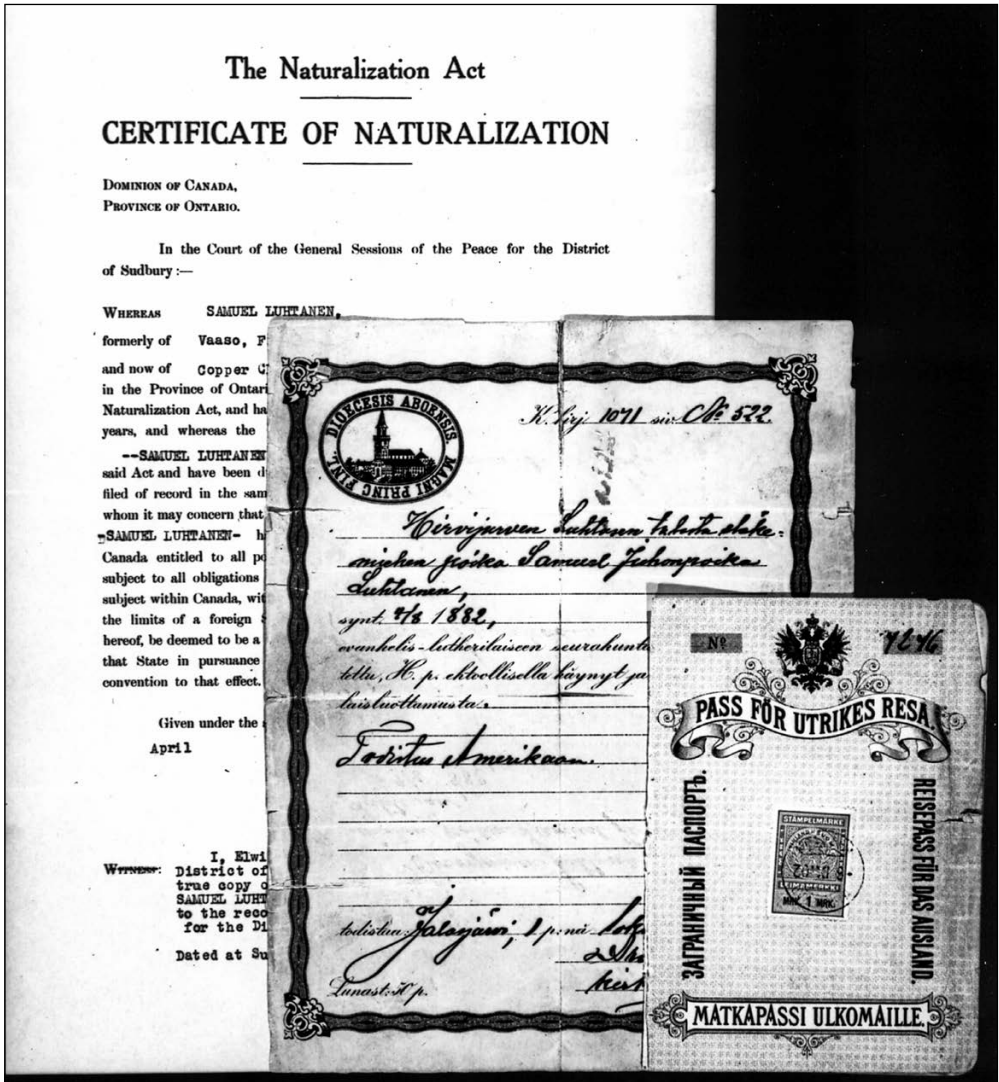


Photo 3. The Passport and naturalization certificate of an immigrant named Samuel Luhtanen. (Source: Migration Institute of Finland, Edward W. Laine Collection, FOC_FA, Images.)

Even before that time, the FSOC and its sympathizers had not been altogether spared from the war's effects. Wartime censors, for example, had barred Finnish-American socialist publications from entering Canada in 1915.¹ It was also alleged that, as well as financial mismanagement, various wartime restrictions contributed to the failure of the Finnish Publishing Company, Limited, of Port Arthur, Ontario

1 J. W. Ahlqvist, "Muistelmia sosialistilehtien julkaisemisesta," in *Vapaus 1917–1934* (Sudbury, 1934), 9.

and its newspaper *Työkansa*, which served as the official organ of the FSOC.¹ The FSOC tried its best to save the company and the newspaper both by pouring its own funds into the company to stave off its creditors and by persuading its locals and their members to do the same. All was for naught, for the company folded in 1915. Thousands of dollars of Finnish-Canadian savings disappeared with the bankruptcy of *Työkansa*. The FSOC then sought to moderate the severe losses sustained by its membership by repaying them a portion of the loans they had made to the now-defunct company.²

With the loss of *Työkansa*, the FSOC was left without a satisfactory means for reaching out to its scattered membership. So, it chose to publish its own Finnish-language newspaper. On 6 November 1917, it commenced the publication in Sudbury, Ontario, of *Vapaus* (Liberty) on a regular twice-weekly basis.³ The newspaper appeared for less than a year when it was suspended by an order-in-council on 25 September 1918 as an enemy-language publication. P.C. 2381, in declaring Finnish to be an enemy language, had decreed that "any person who, unless duly licensed by the Secretary of State, imports or brings into Canada, or after October 1st, 1918, prints, publishes, posts, delivers, receives or has in his possession ..., any publication in an enemy language [excepting that not deemed to be 'objectionable matter'], shall be guilty of an offence and liable to fines and imprisonment."⁴ The *Vapaus* offices were subsequently raided, its records and publications were seized, and its business manager was arrested.

Other Finns associated with various FSOC locals in Ontario were also arrested for the possession of prohibited printed materials. One of the arrested Sudbury Finns, John Ajola, described the chaotic mess that ensued following their arrest in his letter to Frans Mäkelä, another Finnish comrade in the FSOC. If Ajola's account accurately reflects what had actually transpired in Sudbury, the Finnish radicals were quite meowed and believed themselves to be uncommonly well in control of the situation there:

In reply to your letter of the 27h, I can tell you that the plague [the 1918 influenza epidemic] has not greatly bothered us Finns here.... In its place, we have another problem here. We Finns have been jailed by reason of possessing political literature. Searches of homes have been undertaken in almost every place wherever our leading men are known to be. Arrests were made at 2 o'clock on the 20th day of this month [October] and thereafter of the following well-known persons: Dr. H. Koljonen, Jacob Jarvis, Emil Johnson, P. Katainen, H. Juntunen, Knut Harju, John Wirta, H. Toivonen, S. Luhtanen and

1 For a discussion of this, see Pilli, *The Finnish-Language Press*, 78–81.

2 FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 2, files 1–3, and vol. 3, files 38–39.

3 *Vapaus*, 6 November 1917.

4 Quoted from P.C. 2381, in the Privy Council fonds, NAC, RG 2 1, vol. 984, 25 September 1918.

John Ajola. And altogether we were 18 Finns, all of whom are now freed on bail totalling \$59,000.00. Isn't that a pretty sum? But we got it together in a day, because even socialists have money - and a lot of it. If they had raised it by another \$20,000.00, and that, too, we could have gotten together in an hour and the boys out of jail. Even I have a bond of \$4,000.00. They still do not know what to accuse us of in court, and so the case has been postponed until the government can ascertain what is in our writings. They did not really get anything from me except for a chemistry book and my correspondence, and I imagine that it is very vague with what they can charge me from those, except for their being in Finnish. To say the least, they jailed me as quick as the devil! Our case was heard last Monday and was postponed indefinitely into the future without any accusation being laid against anyone. The Liberal newspapers raised a helluva big stink concerning our case and condemned the government's course of action as did the unionists. For our case, we have begun to collect a fund although all official activities in the locals have ceased to exist. We hear that Finns have been detained in Toronto and the Soo. Ahlqvist was also here when we were arrested and he was locked up along with the rest of the gang. Yes, that kind of scourge is here in addition to the Spanish cough.

Well, there is nothing else here of importance to be reported because the locals and all party activity are shut down for the time being. The one fact that I can mention is that, when the unionists demanded the lifting of the ban against strikes and the withdrawal of the ban against Finnish associations by the government, such was the reply that the Finns can hold union meetings in their own language. And these we will begin to establish as soon as possible.¹

The above clearly suggests that the first concerted drive by the authorities to suppress the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement proved to be rather clumsy and inept. The fact was that, given Canada's earlier indifference to the revolutionary activities supported by some of its ethnic minorities, none of the country's law enforcement agencies possessed an adequate fund of useful intelligence concerning the enemy-alien communities to be able to serve effectively as an internal security force in monitoring them. Nor had they proven to be par-

1 My translation of John Ajola to F. Mäkelä, 31 October 1918, in the FOC Collection, MG 28 V 46, vol. 91, file 6. See also the information of and complaint of John Brown, Sudbury chief of police, 24 December 1918, *ibid.*, vol. 3, file 5; inventory of enemy-language publications seized from the *Vapaus* premises by Sudbury's Chief of Police, 1918, *ibid.*, vol. 4, file 5; minutes of the Trustees of the *disbanded* FSOC, 22 October and 12 November 1918, *ibid.*, vol. 1, file 13; Ahlqvist, "Muistelmia," 16; "Kun *Vapaus* lakkautettiin ja miehet vangittiin," in *Suomalaiset nikkelialueella: C.S.J:n Sudburyn osaston 25-vuotisjuhlan johdosta*, ed. H. Sula, K. Salo and A. Kannisto [Sudbury, 1937], 39–42. Rev. Heinonen (see pp. 59–61 below) had probably instigated the raid.

ticularly adept in making use of the broad discretionary powers to which they had fallen heir under the War Measures Act.

The ham-handedness of the various police forces was particularly noticeable in the case of the Finns, with whom they tended to be too zealous and indiscriminate in rooting out what they perceived to be subversion. Consequently, many of the most innocuous records and publications of *Vapaus* and the FSOC were seized by the government and never returned. Other such material was hastily hidden and lost or destroyed by its owners in their attempt to rid themselves of everything written in the Finnish language for fear that it might be used as incriminating evidence against them. This, of course, accounts for many of the gaps that exist in the records of the affected organizations for that period in the FOC Collection.

The Canadian government's actions against the Finnish-Canadian radicals were ostensibly taken on the basis of the changed situation in Central and Eastern Europe. There the turmoil of the Bolshevik Revolution enabled Finland to declare its independence from Russia in December 1917 and to effect a rapprochement with Germany. Unfortunately, Finland could not achieve its independence without first experiencing a most fearsome intensification of internal political divisions that threatened to tear the country apart. It subsequently suffered a short, savage civil war in 1918 between its White and Red Guards, which the former won with military aid and political support from Germany.¹

The newly installed White government even floated a scheme to crown a German princeling as the King of Finland before the Allied victory put an end to that project. Finland's pro-German policies put it firmly in the enemy camp, giving the Canadian government the flimsiest of pretexts for suppressing the Finnish radicals here. The ultimate irony was that neither *Vapaus* nor the FSOC were at all sympathetic to the bourgeois White government in Finland or its right-wing allies in the Finnish-Canadian community, the enemy aliens against whom this application of the War Measures Act should really have been directed. In contrast, the rabidly "White" *Canadian Utiset* - a conservative newspaper in Port Arthur, Ontario, which had also been initially suppressed - was allowed to recommence publication in a Finnish-English bilingual format as early as December 1918, an option that was denied to *Vapaus*.²

The hatred that J. A. Mustonen, the editor of *Canadian Utiset*, bore the Finnish-Canadian leftists was underscored in the English-language editorial he penned shortly before his newspaper's suspension. It was a scurrilous piece that twisted the facts concerning the German intervention in the Finnish Civil War and its support of the Finnish White Guard. In that editorial, Mustonen linked the FSOC not only with Russian Bolshevism, but with German militarism as well:

1 Eino Jutikkala and Kauko Pirinen, *A History of Finland* (Rev. ed.; New York, 1974), 257–258.

2 Pilli, *The Finnish-Language Press*, 108 and 127–128.

Left Finland to Germans. Russian bolshevikism, with the help of mislead [misled] Finnish Red Guards, in time succeeded in starting a civil war in Finland, and then - not one attempt was made for the protection of Finland against Germany. The Russian war ships that were in the Finnish harbor made no attempt against the landing of the Germans, and the Russian bolshevik soldiers that were in Finland, as soon as they heard the Germans were coming, left the Finnish Red Guards to their responsibility and ran away with their plunder to Russia....

Hereby, Santeri Nuorteva [the director of the Finnish Information Bureau in New York City, the official, if unrecognized, mission in the United States of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the People's Republic of Finland] and his helpers, supporters, and those who give money, the whole Finnish Socialist party in the United States and Canada support bolshevikism and German militarism, and are pro-German, that is, they are against the allied countries, United States, Canada, England, France, Italy and other allied countries, and it is treasonable politics.¹

Even before the cessation of hostilities in Europe, the Canadian government seemed much more animated by the growing Red Scare rather than by any fear at that late date of an uprising in this country by ethnic sympathizers of the near-defeated Central Powers. That was suggested in the speedy enactment of subsequent orders-in-council expressly intended for suppressing those organizations associated with the radical Left - P.C. 2384, for example, was directed against the SDPC, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) and various other socialist organizations harbouring ethnic minorities² Although the FSOC was not specifically mentioned therein, it nonetheless deemed itself to be one of the proscribed organizations and dutifully complied with the order-in-council by dissolving itself.³ In any event, the government soon corrected that minor oversight with its issuance of P.C. 2786, which officially suppressed the FSOC at the war's end.⁴

The ex-National Executive Committee and Trustees of the FSOC decided to apply to the federal government for permission to establish a suitable replacement for the FSOC as soon as possible.⁵ In his response to their decision, J. W.

1 Quoted from "Bolshevik Propaganda Spells Treason," *Canadian Uutiset*, 25 July 1918 [emphasis, spelling, grammar and errors as in the original text].

2 P.C. 2384, in the Privy Council fonds, NAC, RG 2 1, vol. 984, 25 September 1918.

3 Minutes of the Trustees of the *disbanded* FSOC, 13 October 1918, in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG28 V 46, vol.], file 13.

4 P.C. 2786, in the Privy Council fonds, NAC, RG 2 1, vol. 959, 13 November 1918. In that document, the FSOC was referred to as "The Finnish Social Democratic Party."

5 Minutes of the Trustees of the *disbanded* FSOC, 29 November 1918, in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 1, file 13.

Ahlqvist drafted a letter dated 12 December 1918, together with an enclosure entitled "A proposed constitution of the Finnish Organization of Canada," both of which were sent to the deputy minister of justice. Additional copies were then forwarded to the Secretary of State and Director of Public Safety C. A. Cahan.¹ In J. Donald Wilson's analysis of the text, Santeri Nuorteva, who had accompanied Ahlqvist in several of his meetings with Cahan, probably had a hand in the writing of the letter due to his fine grasp of the English language.² Certainly, the internal evidence in the letter bears out Wilson's supposition insofar as the text is noticeably inconsistent in its use of both Canadian and American spellings for words possessing 'our' and 'or' endings. Even more telling in that regard is the letter's preferred use of the American-style 'Finnish Socialist Federation' rather than the actual name 'Finnish Socialist Organization of Canada'.

Be that as it may, the substance of those documents, especially Ahlqvist's epic letter, included many remarkable insights into the Finnish-Canadian community as well as an uncannily accurate organizational outline of the past and future development of the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement. The letter's contents far transcended the occasional exaggeration and outright fudging of a few facts here and there that he had made for the sake of wresting approval from the Department of Justice and the hard-nosed Cahan. Here is the text of what Ahlqvist called his *poissa 'sarvet'* (dehomed, that is, sanitized) letters.³

His Excellency,
The Honourable,
The Deputy Minister of Justice,
Ottawa, Ont.

Sir,

On behalf of five thousand Finnish speaking residents and citizens of Canada, who formerly comprised the Finnish Socialist Federation of the Social Democratic Party of Canada, we most respectfully beg you favourably to consider the enclosed draft of a constitution of a proposed new organization of Finnish speaking people of Canada, and to enable us to conduct activities in our native language along the lines presented in that constitution.

1 J. W. Ahlqvist to the deputy minister of justice, 12 December 1918, together with its enclosure, "A proposed constitution of the Finnish Organization of Canada," in the Department of Justice fonds, NAC, RG 13 A-2, vol. 229, file 2636.

2 J. Donald Wilson, "The Finnish Organization of Canada, the 'Language Barrier,' and the Assimilation Process," *Canadian Ethnic Studies/Etudes ethniques au Canada*, 1977, no. 2: 113.

3 Ahlqvist, "Järjestömmä," 47.

The Orders in Council declaring certain foreign language organizations unlawful and prohibiting practically all collective activities in the Finnish language, have caused the most grave economic and spiritual damage to thousands of industrious and, from the point of view of Canadian civic interest, desirable Finnish speaking citizens. It has caused such a hindrance to their natural aspirations, that thousands of Finnish speaking workers consider it impossible to remain in the country under such conditions.

Knowing that it has not been the desire of the Government of the Dominion to bring about such results, and believing that now that the war emergency which caused the issuance of the mentioned orders is passed, the time has come when the other aspects of the problem of the foreign speaking population may receive proper attention, we beg to present to you the following arguments in favour of our request. From the point of view of narrow nationalism it is of course unfortunate that any part of the population in any country is using a language other than the historic and official language of the country. The Dominion of Canada, however, being a country deriving much benefit from immigration, and one which liberally invites immigration, must make the best of the natural impediment which the presence of a foreign speaking population represents.

Such elimination of these impediments as is under the circumstances possible obviously does not lie in preventing the foreign speaking people from employing their native language in such civic activities as are vitally necessary for a proper development of their material and intellectual interests. An opportunity to develop such interests, within the bonds of the opportunities granted to the native population of the country, is the greatest incentive to the immigrant not only in bringing him to the country, but, what is most important, in making him stay in the country, partake in the development of the national resources and as far as possible, assimilate himself with the native population, leaving all thoughts of a return to the land from which he came.

A prohibition to use their native tongue in collective enterprises of an economic or intellectual character is, at least to the Finns, analogous with taking away from them the most essential means of enjoying those advantages of civic life, which have brought them to the country, and which make them stay here, gradually making them full fledged Canadians, not only in respect to their interests and activities but in their language as well. The logical result of a prohibition will be not only a cessation of further immigration, but, as indications already show, a movement to leave the country in great numbers, - and, as we will endeavour to show in another paragraph, the interests of the

Dominion would require a retention of the industrious, clean mannered and efficient Finnish immigrant.

The Finnish people speak a language which is radically different from those of the Indo-European races and it is most difficult for an adult Finn to learn the English language. While experience shows that children of Finnish parents in the schools very rapidly learn the language of this country, and adapt themselves to the manners and usages of Canada, perhaps more readily than children of many other nationalities, it is a fact that adult Finns very seldom acquire such knowledge of the English language as would make it possible for them by the employment of that language only to get the benefit of those economic and spiritual opportunities which caused their coming to the country.

Narrow nationalism regards as a calamity the fact that foreign speaking people in Canada segregate in colonies and in these colonies develop activities in their own language. Such segregation and such activities are regarded as an obstacle to assimilation and Canadization. In view of the aforesaid we, however, beg to make the rejoinder that foreign segregation and activities in a foreign tongue are *not a cause* but *a result* of the inability to use the official language of the country. The alternative is not *an elimination of foreign segregation* nor activities in the English language among the native population, but *a continuation of segregation, without any constructive material or intellectual activities, which in practice results in a lowering of civic morale, in loafing, drunkenness and addiction to vice* as a substitute for the educational interests.

We do not say this as theoretic presumption only. There is ample experience along these lines in the history of the Finnish immigrants to Canada. As long as there were no economic and intellectual organizations among the Finns in Canada, the name of a Finn was a hiss and a byword among their neighbors. They were, and not without cause, regarded as semi-savages, led by uncontrollable passions, and absolutely unwilling and unable to assimilate with the native population. They were employed in unskilled trades mostly, they were lacking in self respect, their standard of life was low. Any Canadian who has been in contact with Finns 15 to 20 years ago, i.e. before the development in Canada and in the United States among the Finns of co-operative activities along economic and educational lines in their native language, most certainly will testify to the truth of the above assertion.

In the past two decades a wonderful change has been brought about in this respect. The Canadian Finns today represent perhaps a higher standard of life than any other foreign speaking people in Canada. Their many co-operative business enterprises, are conducted in a progressive and efficient manner, their

labor temples, with extensive activities along purely educational lines, their civic alertness, reliability and resourcefulness, especially among the Finns allied with the labor movement of Canada, have attracted the favourable attention of every one, who has been able to see clearly through the clouds of prejudice which have been created by those who have not been willing to see anything else but the fact that many Finns are interested in the Socialist movement.

Forty per cent of the Finns are today industrious farmers in the provinces of Ontario, Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia. They have broken ground for the civilization in backward districts. They have come to stay, and to develop, if they are permitted to do so with a liberal understanding of their needs. The rest of the Finns are all skilled workers, miners, carpenters, shipbuilders, etc.

It can not be disputed that the great majority of these Finns are indebted for their progress to the co-operative and educational activities of those organizations the necessary continuation of which is here being pleaded.

It should also be noted, that while it may seem to many persons objectionable, that some of these activities are socialistic in their tendency, this very tendency has represented a deterrent factor against such foreign nationalism, as can be noticed among foreign organizations organized on the basis of conservative ideals, which among foreign language associations usually develop not a Canadian nationalism, but a foreign one. It is well known among the Finns that while Finnish organizations along conservative lines have been countenanced by a part of the public opinion here because of their social conservatism their activities consciously tend to perpetuate old country customs and usages. That very internationalism, which by some people is being held against the Finnish Socialists in Canada, on the other hand is an incitement to them as rapidly as possible to assimilate themselves with the rest of the population, leaving aside all traditions binding them to the old country. It is a fact which can be easily ascertained, that the amount of "Canadization" work done by our former organizations, such as teaching the English language, distributing English literature, co-operating with English speaking people, making citizens out of the immigrants, and teaching them the laws, customs and history of this country, may be roughly estimated as ten to one compared with that done by any other foreign language agency in Canada.

The Finnish Socialists of Canada have been accused of alliance with the I.W.W., "bolshevism" etc. While not denying our interest in the socialist movement as represented by parliamentary activities of legal socialist parties, and admitting that as workingmen we have a great interest in bona fide unionism, we

want to state as a fact that from the very outset of its existence the former Finnish Socialist Federation has been radically and actively opposed to the I. W. W. A great part of the history of that Federation is the history of a consistent struggle against syndicalistic and anarcho-syndicalistic tendencies.

As adherents to the international labor movement we are of course interested in the progress of the workers everywhere in the world, yet we always emphatically have maintained that the labor movement in each and every country must be conducted within the bounds of the conditions, laws and environments of each particular country. We do not believe that methods and tactics employed by the labor movement in another country can be transplanted to another country with different conditions. We do not advocate "bolshevism" in Canada, and never have done so, if thereby is meant, as usually is being meant, the use of violence and "proletarian dictatorship" as opposed to constructive parliamentary methods.

We do not, Sir, appeal to your mercy. We appeal to your reason and your sense of fairness. While grateful for the many opportunities Canada is giving us, the immigrants from a country with less liberal opportunities, we maintain that in order to enjoy the opportunities of Canada and to put them to a use which will bring returns of an economic and spiritual contribution to the general development of this country, we must be put in a position to work in a way which will not fetter a great part of our material and spiritual capacity. We speak to you in the name of our mutual interests in this respect. We sincerely hope that now that the emergencies of war no more present problems which man [may] have excused the course pursued recently against foreign language associations, you will liberally consider the positive aspects of our aspirations, and place us in a position where we will be able to conduct the work outlined in the constitution of our proposed new organization.

We shall be happy to submit such further and detailed information as may be required in order to bring out all the aspects of the problem, and remain, Sir,

Most respectfully yours,

J. W. Ahlqvist

on behalf of the late Finnish Socialist Federation Ottawa, Ont.

December 12th, 1918¹

1 Quoted from J. W. Ahlqvist to the deputy minister of justice, 12 December 1918, op. cit. [emphasis, spelling, grammar and errors as in the original text]. For the Finnish version of this letter, see Ahlqvist, "Järjestömmе," 44–47.

The attachment to Ahlqvist's letter, "A Proposed Constitution of the Finnish Organization of Canada," was also drafted in a manner intended to provide further ammunition for obtaining the federal government's approval for the establishment of the new organization. The objects of the new organization (especially CHAPTER 1, SECTION 1) outlined a benevolent kind of cultural and philanthropic immigrant institution against which the government could really find no objection, viz:

To assimilate the Finnish speaking people of Canada with the native population by the instilling in their minds the benefits of Canadian citizenship, by the teaching of the English language and by disseminating true information about the laws, customs, traditions, history, and current events in Canada; thus to facilitate a lawful and intelligent use of the rights of and adherence to the duties of Canadian citizenship in the interests of the people of Canada.

1. To advance the standard of life of the Finnish speaking people of Canada by encouraging and developing co-operative enterprises tending to secure their material interests.

2. To develop the mental faculties of the Finnish speaking people of Canada by the holding of educational lectures, by furthering artistic endeavors, such as singing, music, theatricals, gymnastics, etc. and by maintaining libraries and reading rooms.¹

Despite any ulterior motives that may have lain behind the drafting of the new constitution, its objects remained fully consistent with the historic principles and interests of the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement.

The establishment of the new FOC, of course, could only be contemplated after the restrictive provisions of P.C. 2384 had been amended by P.C. 2733, an order-in-council permitting the use of an enemy language at meetings other than those of the outlawed associations and as was necessary to inform such persons in attendance who understood neither English nor French of the business at hand.² It also required the approval of the Director Of Public Safety who, in a letter to J. W. Ahlqvist, offered no objection to the establishment of a new Finnish Organization of Canada provided that it remained separate from the SDPC.³ Once those

1 Quoted from "A proposed constitution of the Finnish Organization of Canada, in Canada," op. cit.

2 P.C. 2733, in the Privy Council fonds, NAC, RG 2 I, vol. 958, 7 November 1918.

3 C. H. Cahan to J. W. Ahlqvist, 18 December 1918, in the Department of Justice fonds, NAC, RG 13 A-2, vol. 229, file 2636.

conditions were met, the founding meeting of the Finnish Organization of Canada took place on 18 December 1918.¹

What the meeting really established was a *provisional* Finnish Organization of Canada (FOC), for it continued to operate under that name for only about a year. Mimeographed petitions were quickly prepared and sent to the former executives of the banned FSOC locals for their signature and that of their members.² The complete text of those blank petitions was as follows:

WHEREAS the Orders-in-Council of the 13⁶ day of November, 1918, have declared among others the Finnish Organization of the Social Democratic Party of Canada an unlawful association for the duration of the state of war;

WHEREAS the *said* Organization in compliance with the Orders-in-Council, has disbanded, and thereby the branch of the said Organization has ceased to exist as a branch of the said Organization and of the Social Democratic party of Canada.

WHEREAS the material and intellectual interests of the Finnish Speaking people of Canada necessitates a continuous co-operation along educational lines;

WHEREAS there has been formed in Toronto, Ont., a Finnish Organization, with headquarters at 27 Alcorn Ave., which, while not affiliated with the Social Democratic Party of Canada, seeks to advance united educational efforts among Finnish-speaking people of Canada;

BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT we, undersigned, former members of branch of the Finnish Organization of the Social Democratic party of Canada, constitute ourselves a Finnish Association of and apply for affiliation with the above said Finnish Organization of Canada, in accordance with its Constitution.³

By that means, the various locals of the new *provisional* FOC were quickly established and put into operation.

The radical Finns regained their freedom of association once the government lifted its ban on socialist organizations.⁴ They were quick to take advantage of the new situation. On 2 December 1919, a *reconstituted* FSOC emerged once more

1 Minutes of the founding meeting of the FOC, 18 December 1918, in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol.1, file 13; *ibid.*, vol. 89, file 72: Concerning P.C. 2733 and the establishment of the *provisional* FOC.

2 See the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 2, file 16-vol. 3, file 22 *passim*.

3 Copied from *ibid.*, vol. 2, file 16.

4 P.C. 702, in the Privy Council fonds, NAC, RG 2, 2, vol. 969, 2 April 1919.

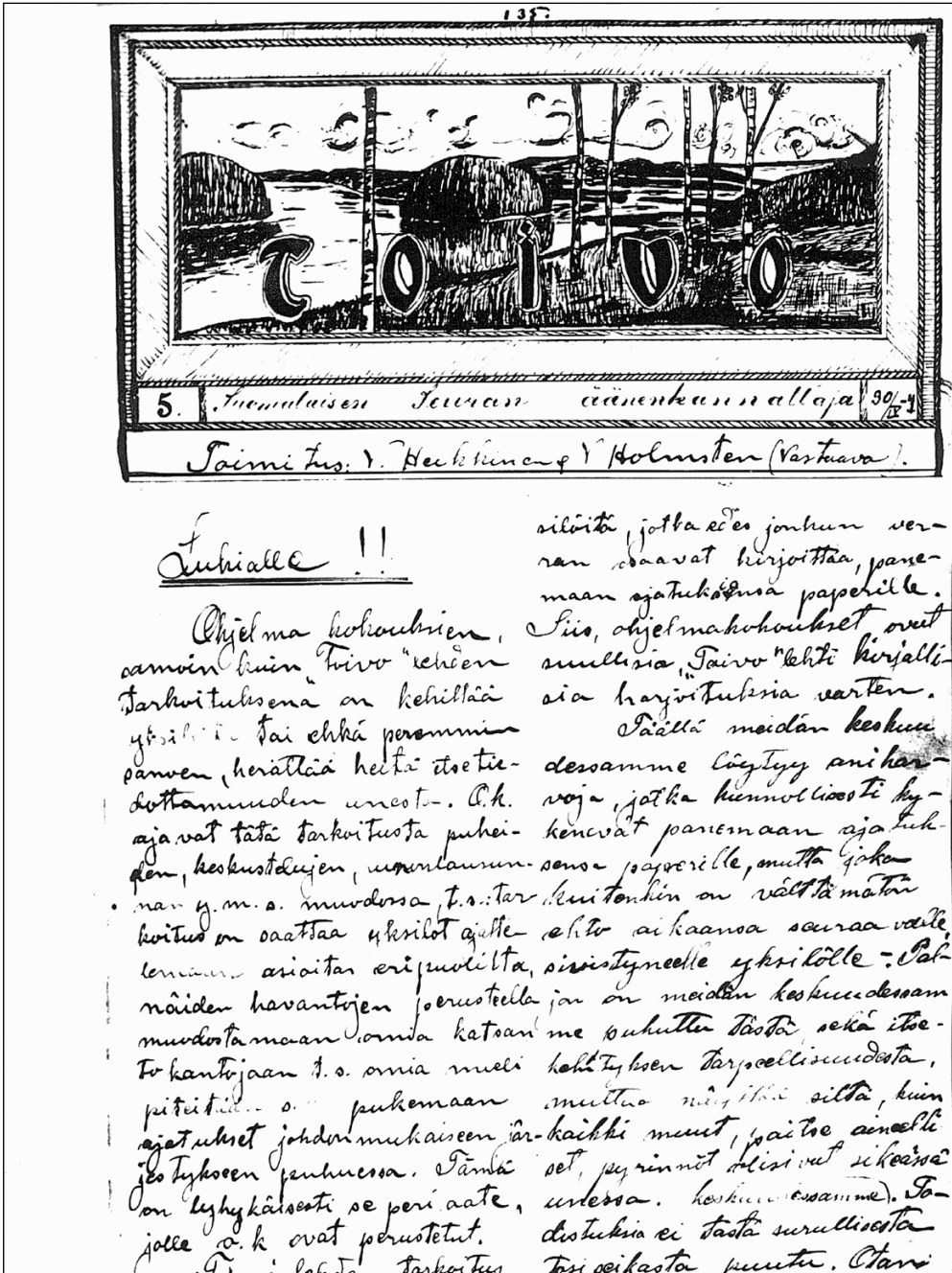


Photo 4. The Cover of the issue of Toivo (Hope), hand written journal, aiming at practicing Finnish Migrant people to express themselves in written text form. (Source: Migration Institute of Finland, Edward W. Laine Collection, FOC_FA, Images.)

with the intention of affiliating itself with one of the Canadian socialist parties.¹ Nevertheless, that did not mean the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement had fully recovered from the effects of the recent ban, as noted by the fact that the total of 3,036 members reported by the FSOC at its national convention in 1918 had been reduced to 1,990 members in the *provisional* FOC in mid-1919.² Thus, the *reconstituted* FSOC still faced the formidable task of rebuilding the decimated ranks of its membership.

In the meantime, many of the FSOC's former members had become increasingly reluctant to renew their past ties with the recently revived organization for fear of provoking future persecution by the government. The heavy hand of the authorities during the war and in its aftermath had frightened the more timid among them to withdraw from the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement. The availability of work had also grown considerably scarcer as the Canadian Expeditionary Force demobilized and the war veterans competed for the available jobs across the country. For many Finns, it was quite enough to be labelled a 'foreigner' without also having to endure the epithet of 'socialist' added to their public persona. With the end of the wartime labour shortages, many employers were now more than ready to blacklist socialist agitators, union organizers and their supporters.

The conservative or "White" element in the Finnish-Canadian community - at whose core were the pious "Church" Finns who had long opposed the heretical legions of Godless socialism - added to the *reconstituted* FSOC's recruitment problems by using the postwar Red Scare in this country to their advantage in marshalling public opinion against their "Red" rivals. The tragic events of the 1918 civil war in Finland further hardened the internal political divisions within the community as news filtered into Canada of the numerous atrocities suffered by friends and relatives in the Old Country at the hands of one or the other of the contending sides there. In one of the typical stories of the times, one brother living in Finland wrote to his sister who was then resident in Copper Cliff, Ontario, of the execution of a second brother by the White Guard as well as of his own and a third brother's imprisonment by the Whites under such conditions of want and extreme deprivation that the latter died of pleurisy shortly after his release.³

Moreover, the second great wave of immigration from Finland to Canada, which swelled the number of persons of Finnish origin resident here from 21,494 per-

1 Correspondence concerning the Socialist Party of Canada's proposal for FSOC affiliation, 1919, *ibid.*, vol. 5, file 5.

2 Canadian Työläispuolueen Suom. Sos. Järjestö, *Suomalaisen Sosialistijärjestön Kolmannen Edustajakokouksen pöytäkirja* ([Toronto], 1922), 13.

3 Martti Eskola to Hilda Eskola, 1919–1920, in the Eskola Family fonds, NAC, MG 30 C 213, files 16–58.

sons in 1921 to 43,885 in 1931,¹ included many veteran Red and White Guards from the Finnish Civil War who continued fighting that conflict here. Apart from its effect in deepening the existing ideological rifts within the Finnish-Canadian community, this latest influx of newcomers tended to work to the particular disadvantage of the radical faction insofar as the regulatory devices controlling the emigration of individual Finns from Finland and their immigration into Canada actually favoured the exit and *entry* of those who belonged to the White faction.² The response of the radicals was to establish *tutkijakomiteat* (investigation committees) for identifying and ostracizing the flood of *valkoiset lahtarit* (white butchers) from the ranks of the newcomers.³ Thus, if the *reconstituted* FSOC and its successors wished to regain the state of pre-eminence in the Finnish-Canadian community that their predecessor had enjoyed before the war, they needed to obtain a much higher level of membership than any of them had ever acquired or could hope to acquire under the then-prevailing conditions.

Despite those unsettling developments, committed Finnish-Canadian radicals still remained optimistic about their future prospects, for they deemed the Bolshevik Revolution to be the first success in the imminent triumph of the working class in its worldwide struggle. Spurred on by that belief, many of the radical Finns veered further to the left. The force of that leftward movement grew with each new addition of reinforcements into their ranks of war-hardened immigrant "Reds" fresh from Finland. The first indications of that new trend already surfaced during the period of the FSOC's suppression, when some of its former members became increasingly enamoured with the ideas of radical syndicalism as first expressed by the One Big Union (OBU) and then by the IWW. Initially, the *reconstituted* FSOC also supported the OBU, but it chose not to affiliate itself to any other radical organization until after the election of A. T. (Tom) Hill as secretary in 1921.

As one of the eight founding members of the original "secret" or "underground" Communist Party in Canada and as an avowed opponent of anarcho-syndicalism, Hill sought to affiliate the *reconstituted* FSOC with the Party's "above ground" subsidiary - the Workers' Party of Canada (WPC).⁴ That was accomplished in 1922 when, at the third national convention of the *reconstituted* FSOC, the delegates voted to make their organization an integral part of the WPC. Thereafter, it became known as the Finnish Socialist Section of the Workers' Party of Canada (FSS/

1 M. C. Urquhart and K. A. Buckley, eds., *Historical Statistics of Canada* (Toronto, 1965), 18.

2 Akseli Rauanheimo [Finnish consul general in Montreal], to Oskar Siren, 26 February 1929, Suomi-Seuran Kokoelma 31, Turun yliopiston yleisen historian laitoksen arkistot (hereinafter, TYYH).

3 For this, see inquiries about various individuals for the FOC's *tutkijakomiteat*, 1925–1930, in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 16, file 13.

4 A. T. Hill, "Canadian Suomalaisen Järjestön toimintaan vaikuttaneet tilannemuutokset vuoden 1917 jälkeen," in *Canadian Suomalainen Järjestö 25 vuotta*, 52.

WPC)¹ In the following year, the word 'Socialist' was dropped from its name (FS/WPC).² In 1924, the WPC was openly renamed the Communist Party of Canada (CPC) and the FS/WPC became its Finnish Section (FS/CPC).³ Then, in 1925, the CPC received instructions from the Comintern to bolshevize, that is, to dissolve all of its separate language sections and incorporate them into the regular party structure. Consequently, the FS/CPC disappeared as a national organization although many of its locals unofficially persisted in maintaining their identity as distinct Finnish-language units of the CPC for several years longer.⁴

In retrospect, the move of the *reconstituted* FSOC into the camp of the CPC had several important consequences. The first was that it led to another rupture in the solidarity of the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement. The rump of Finnish comrades who preferred to remain loyal to the OBU and IWW now marched to the beat of a different drummer. Secondly, the wholesale recruitment of the *reconstituted* FSOC into the WPC ensured that the Finnish component would comprise more than fifty per cent of the total membership of the Communist movement until 1925.⁵ This was not entirely without its own dangers, for the considerable assets belonging to the *reconstituted* FSOC had been put into jeopardy. They were now liable to seizure either by the always resource-hungry CPC or by the government should it ever decide to clamp down on the Party and its properties. Out of those concerns began a new chapter in the organizational history of the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement.

1 Canadian Työläispuolueen Suom. Sos. Järjestö, *Suomalaisen Sosialistijärjestön Kolmannen Edustajakokouksen pöytäkirja*, 42; Workers' Party of Canada, Finnish Socialist Section, *Canadian Työläispuolueen ohjelma ja säännöt* (Toronto, 1922).

2 Workers' Party of Canada, Finnish Section, "Canadian Työläispuolueen Suom. Järjestön [Neljännen] Edustajakokouksen pöytäkirja laadittu Torontossa, Ont., 26, 27 ja 28 helmik. 1923 pidetyssä C.T.S. Järj. edustajakokouksessa," in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 1, file 13.

3 Communist Party of Canada, Finnish Section, "Pöytäkirja laadittu Torontossa, Ont., 23, 24, 25 ja 26 p. huhtik. 1924 pidettyssä Can. Työläispuolueen Suom. Jarj. edustajakokouksessa," *ibid.*; Communist Party of Canada, *Kommunistipuolueen ja Canadian Kommunistipuolueen Suomalaisen Järjestön säännöt* (Sudbury, 1924).

4 For example, the Port Moody FS/CPC local continued to operate as a Finnish-language unit until 1928, as noted in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 57, file 13.

5 Ivan Avakumovic, *The Communist Party of Canada: A History* (Toronto, 1975), 35; cf. Laine, "Finnish Canadian Radicalism and Canadian Politics," 109, n. 48.

5

The Finnish Organization of Canada, Inc., 1923–1930

Once having allied themselves with the extreme Left in Canadian politics, the Finnish-Canadian radicals now wished to protect the considerable assets of the FSOC and its *Vapaus* publishing operations from any threat of confiscation by the government.¹ Moreover, with the absorption of the *reconstituted* FSOC by the WPC, the actual owner of record of that accumulated wealth had ceased to exist as an independent entity. It, therefore, became absolutely necessary for the Finnish comrades to find another means for maintaining the undisputed title to their moveable and immoveable properties independent of the FS/WPC.² An even more immediate concern was the need to prevent potential dissenters in the ranks from wresting control of the individual locals and their properties as the OBU's Finnish supporters had so recently done in their takeover of the Työn Temppele (Labour Temple) in Port Arthur, Ontario.³ To forestall any further repetition of such an eventuality, the radical Finns devised the simple strategem of incorporating their own independent cultural organization to which all of the *reconstituted* FSOC's assets could be transferred in safety.

Early in 1923, the organizers of the newly proposed cultural institution first called together a founding convention of the FOC. The participants at the convention then elected a provisional executive committee, giving it the mandate to seek the incorporation of their organization under federal statute.⁴ In their attempt to ensure the success of that undertaking, the organizers cannily used the case of

1 G. Sundqvist, "Vuosien varrelta," in *Canadan Suomalainen Järjestö 25 vuotta*, 107–108.

2 *Canadan Työläispuolueen Suom. Sos. Järjestö, Suomalaisen Sosialistijärjestön Kolmannen Edustajakokouksen pöytäkirja*, 15.

3 See minute book of the Finnish Association [Suomalainen Osasto] of Port Arthur, Ontario, NAC, MG 28 V 137, microfilm reel M-1960.

4 FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 5, file 22.

the *provisional* FOC as their precedent for overcoming the federal government's objections to their project. They worked under the logical assumption that the government could not now deny them in peacetime their request for the establishment of a Finnish cultural organization very similar to one that it had previously allowed during a period of extreme emergency. For that reason, the purposes and objects cited below from the original letters patent of the Finnish Organization of Canada, Inc., were little more than a word-for-word transcription of those found in the *provisional* FOC's constitution:

- a) To assimilate the Finnish-speaking people of Canada with the native population by instilling in their minds the benefits of Canadian citizenship, by the teaching of the English language, by disseminating true information about the laws, customs, traditions, history and current events in Canada, and by a Lawful and intelligent use of the rights and duties of Canadian citizenship;
- b) To advance the standard of *life* of the Finnish-speaking people of Canada by encouraging and developing co-operative enterprises tending to secure their material interests;
- c) To develop the mental faculties of the Finnish-speaking people of Canada by the holding of educational lectures, by furthering artistic endeavours such as singing, music, theatricals, gymnastics, and by maintaining libraries and reading rooms;
- d) To own such buildings and other properties and to carry on such business as are necessary for the efficient execution of these activities, and in particular, (1) To publish a newspaper and other publications; (2) To maintain book stores, ticket offices and other agencies for the convenience of the members;
- e) To organize and issue charters to local bodies throughout Canada for the same purpose.¹

Nevertheless, the application for the incorporation of a cultural organization associated with the radical Finns - even if that organization intended to operate outside the pale of the FS/WPC - received scant sympathy from the federal authorities. As one government official put it to the law firm handling the negotiations for the Finns, four of the seven members of the FOC's provisional executive committee belonged to the "Executive of the Finnish Section of the Workers' Party of Canada,

1 Quoted from a certified copy (1937) of the letters patent granted by the federal government to the FOC in 1923, *ibid.*, file 33. For other texts of the FOC's constitution in use between 1923 and 1940, see *ibid.*, files 26–33. Cf. the aims and objects in the *provisional* FOC's "A proposed constitution of the Finnish Organization of Canada," in the Department of Justice fonds, NAC, E.G 13 A–2, vol. 229, file 2636 (as quoted above, p. 41).

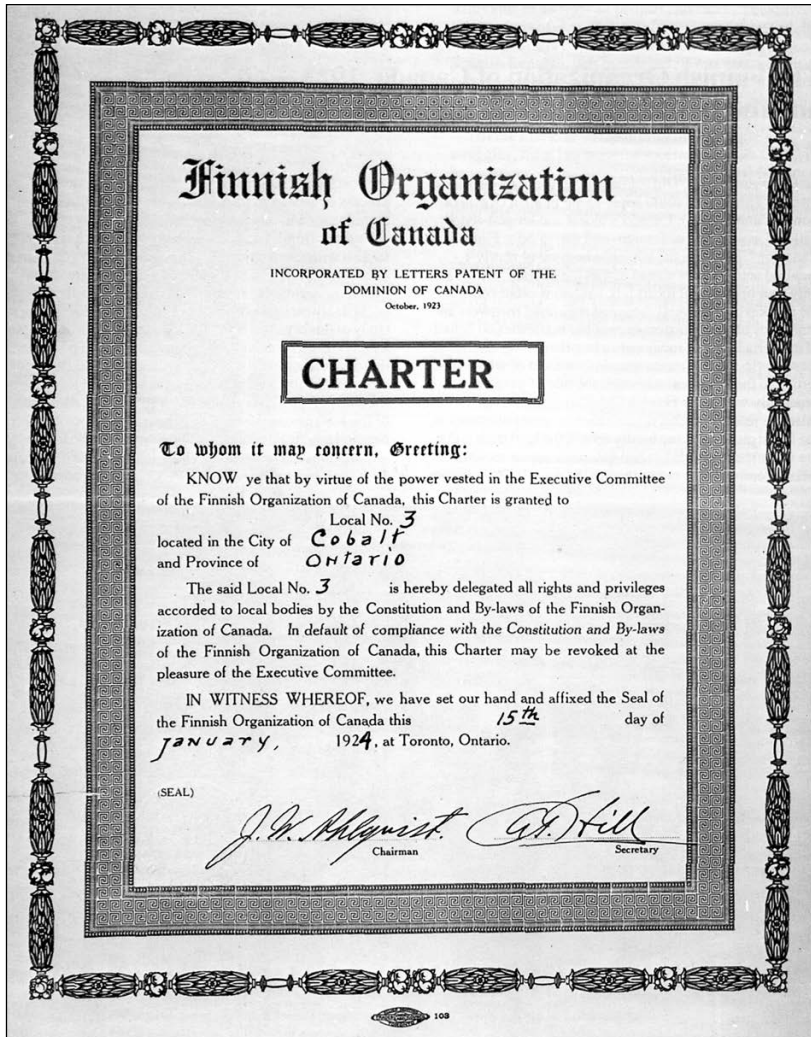


Photo 5. The Charter of Cobalt, ONT FOC Local. (Source: Migration Institute of Finland, Edward W. Laine Collection, FOC_FA, Images.)

that is, [each was found] to be an avowed and active communist, definitely disloyal to the institutions of this country." He then added that: "The opinion had also been advanced [presumably by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) or the Department of Justice] that the purpose of the application for incorporation is to forward the conspiracy against Constitutional Government and the present system of society in Canada."¹

¹ Quoted from a transcript of a letter dated 8 September 1923, from W. P. J. O'Meara for the under secretary of state to Lee, O'Donoghue and Harkins, in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 5, file 23.

Despite its deep-seated reservations, the federal government relented and finally gave its approval to the letters patent of the Finnish Organization of Canada, Inc. The new cultural organization of working-class Finnish Canadians came into being on 24 October 1923.¹ Thereafter, the title of ownership to the assets of the *reconstituted* FSO, together with those of many of its locals, were legally vested in or transferred to the ownership of the FOC.² Indeed, during the first two years of its existence, the FOC acted as little more than as a kind of holding company or convenient owner of record for the *reconstituted* FSO's extensive properties. Meanwhile, the FS/WPC and its successor, the FS/CPC, continued to serve as the principal focal point in the sponsorship of cultural and social programmes as well as of political activity for the radical element in the Finnish-Canadian community.

That situation came to a sudden end once the Comintern in Moscow decreed that it wanted the bolshevization of the Communist movement in North America despite the discord it caused.³ In seeking to comply with those directives to transform itself into a non-ethnic, predominantly English-Canadian party, the CPC dissolved all of its ethnic language sections in 1925, including the FS/CPC. Consequently, the members of the FS/CPC were now forced to make the FOC their principal organizational centre.⁴ In the words of A. T. Hill, "the FOC hereby was transformed into a broad educational and cultural organization which gave support and toiled usefully in building the central organization of the working-class struggle and assisting in the operations of that struggle."⁵ Of course, the CPC's relegation of the FOC to the role of an auxiliary rankled in the minds of many of its members, for that meant they had lost their cherished tradition of serving as a distinctly Finnish unit in the forefront of the working-class struggle. The end result was that the seeds of further discord had been sown in the relations governing the CPC and the FOC.

By forcing the FS/CPC to sink into oblivion at the behest of the Comintern, the CPC had actually severed the formal institutional ties that had previously bound the central organization of the radical Finns tightly to the Party.⁶ The effect of the CPC's breaking of those links was not immediately felt, for the majority of the NEC and membership of the FOC still belonged to the CPC. As loyal party members,

1 Ibid., files 22–23; Sundqvist, "Vuosien varrelta," 108.

2 For the transfer of assets to the FOC by its locals, see the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 5, files 24 and 25.

3 For the Finnish-American experience, see Auvo Kostiainen, "The Finns and the Crisis over 'Bolshevization' in the Workers' Party 1924–1925," in *The Finnish Experience in the Great Lakes Region*, ed. Michael G. Kami, Matti E. Kaups and Douglas J. Ollila, Jr. (Turku, 1975), 171–185.

4 Sundqvist, "Vuosien varrelta," 108–109. Cf. Kostiainen, "The Finns and the Crisis over 'Bolshevization' in the Workers' Party 1924–1925," 184–185.

5 My translation of Hill, "Canadian Suomalaisen Järjestön toimintaan vaikuttaneet tilanne-muutokset vuoden 1917 jälkeen," 54.

6 Rodney, *Soldiers of the International*, 84.

they submitted themselves completely to its authority and discipline. The cross-membership and personal ties linking the two organizations initially hid the fact that the fundamental relationship governing the FOC and CPC had changed. This situation was further complicated by the internal dissension that existed within both the Comintern and the CPC before Joseph Stalin and Tim Buck had consolidated their full power and authority over the respective organizations they headed.

The extent of the CPC's weakening grip on the FOC only became clear in the festering crisis that developed between the two organizations in 1929. As part of a personal campaign to consolidate his somewhat tenuous hold on the leadership and direction of the CPC, Buck sought to reimpose the Party's full authority over the FOC and its internal affairs. The NEC responded by removing from office its incumbent secretary, A. T. Hill, who was one of Buck's staunchest supporters. It followed up that action by firing several pro-CPC editors from *Vapaus* as well. The CPC responded by trying to cow the FOC into submission through the retaliatory expulsions from its ranks of several prominent FOC officials and *Vapaus* staff members, including the dean of the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement - J. W. Ahlqvist.¹ Before this crisis was finally resolved towards the end of 1930, the feuding organizations required the direct intervention of the Comintern which, for all intents and purposes, ruled in favour of the FOC and against the CPC. Thereafter, the FOC began to operate as an independent force in the radical Left.²

Nonetheless, this victory over the CPC proved extremely costly to the FOC, for it led to another splintering of the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement in the early 1930s. Once having become disillusioned and dissatisfied with the FOC's apparent over-willingness to accommodate itself to the CPC in the course of that dispute and with its positive response to the Party's new demands for sharing the control, resources and revenues of the co-operative movement, a group of so-called social-democratic opportunists bolted from both the Party and the FOC in 1930. Among the most prominent dissidents were Reynold Pehkonen and Bruno Tenhunen, both of whom had previously served as trusted members of the *Vapaus*

1 Ibid., 157; Ian Angus, *Canadian Bolsheviks: The Early Years of the Communist Party of Canada* (Montreal, 1981), 295–301; *Punainen Työläinen*, 1 December 1929.

2 "Canadian Kp:n ja Suom. Järj. välisen selkkauksen selvittely - Kominternin poliittisen komissionin päätöslauselma Canadian kysymyksessä," *Vapaus*, 5 and 7 April 1930; cf. Gerry van Houten et al., eds., *Canada's Pony of Socialism: History of the Communist Party of Canada, 1921–1976* (Toronto, 1982), 59. For a succinct account of this period, see Mauri A. Jalava, "Radicalism or a 'New Deal'?: The Unfolding World View of the Finnish Immigrants in Sudbury, 1883-1932" (Master's thesis, Laurentian University, 1983), 194–214 passim.

editorial staff.¹ The dissenters were labelled *Haloslaiset*, or followers of Halonen, that is, George Halonen, a Finnish-American activist who had spearheaded the drive in the United States to deny the Communists the control of the Finnish co-operatives there.² One of the first acts of the *Haloslaiset* in Canada was to wrest control of the Co-operative Trading Association of Sudbury Limited (CO-OPTAS).

In October 1931, the *Haloslaiset* formed their own political party here with the name of Canadian Suomalaisten Työläisten ja Farmarien Liitto (CSTFL), or Finnish Canadian Workers' and Farmers' Federation (FCWFF), which they allied to the Commonwealth Co-operative Federation (CCF) that had been formed by the Social Reconstructionists and others associated with the moderate Left in Canada.³ Pehkonen and Tenhunen put their previous editorial experience with *Vapaus* to good use through their active participation in the founding and publication of a rival newspaper, *Vapaa Sana* (Free Press), which served as the official organ of the new political party. The *Haloslaiset* and their sympathizers continued in their struggle to secure the control of other co-operatives patronized by the FOC and its membership, who were now being called the *linjalaiset* or followers of the Communist Party line. The ultimate effect of the split between the two was to fragment and weaken the Finnish-Canadian co-operative movement further because the losers in the bitter takeover battles of established co-operatives usually chose to form their own rival co-operatives in the same neighbourhoods.⁴ Inasmuch as those competing co-operatives then drew upon the same limited client base, one or the other would inevitably fail.

1 "Tenhusen hyökkäys Vapauden ja Suomalaisen Järjestön valtaamiseksi," in *Vapaus 1917–1934*, 85–89; G. Sundqvist, "Taistelu oikeistovaaraa vastaan Canadian Suomalaisessa Järjestössä ja Canadian suomalaisen siirtolaisväestön yhtenäisyys," in *Canadian Suomalainen Järjestö 25 vuotta*, 77–82; S.J. Kommunistinen Keskusfraktia, *Taistelu oikeistovaaraa vastaan Canadian Suomalaisessa Järjestössä* (broadside; n.p., n.d.), in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 13, file 30.

2 For the Finnish-American experience, see Michael G. Karri, "Struggle on the Cooperative Front: The Separation of Central Cooperative Wholesale from Communism, 1929–30," in *The Finnish Experience in the Great Lakes Region*, ed. Michael G. Kami, Matti E. Kaups and Douglas J. Ollila, Jr., (Turku, 1975), 186–201, and Arnold Alanen, "The Development and Distribution of Finnish Consumers' Cooperatives in Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin, 1903–1973," *ibid.*, 103–130.

3 Kiviperän Pekka [pseud. of Reynold Pehkonen], "Kiviperän Pekka kertoo muistelmiaan," *Vapaa Sana*, 19 December 1936. See also the file of general correspondence dating to the early 1930s in the *Vapaa Sana Press Limited* fonds, NAC, MG 28 V 42.

4 Mauri A. Jalava, "The Finnish-Canadian Cooperative Movement in Ontario," in *Finnish Diaspora* 1, 98; Peter Vasiliadis, "A Purpose Served: The Workers' Co-operative of New Ontario Limited, 1926–1980," *Canadian Ethnic Studies/Etudes ethniques au Canada* 1985, no.3: 47.

6 Attacks Made Upon the Finnish-Canadian Working-Class Movement

The late 1920s and early 1930s were characterized by several significant events which the FOC and its adherents interpreted as evidence of the hardening attitude of the authorities. The first of these involved the 1929 conviction of *Vapaus*' editor, Arvo Vaara, for seditious libel. Vaara was found guilty for having published an article that declared the health of King George V to be of lesser concern than the suffering of Canada's masses, a crime for which he was fined and imprisoned.¹ Juxtaposed against this was the case of the deaths under suspicious circumstances of two Finnish union organizers, Viljo Rosvall and John Voutilainen, at Onion Lake (some twenty miles east of Port Arthur, Ontario) later during the same year. This time the local authorities appeared to be most unwilling to uncover the true facts, although the FOC's membership adamantly insisted that two of its members had been murdered.² The Communist Trials of 1931 in Ontario - particularly through the imprisonment of A. T. Hill under SECTION 98 of the Criminal Code as a member of the illegal CPC - did much to create the impression that the FOC itself was also illegal and violent.³ The 1932 RCMP raid on the *Vapaus* offices, coupled with the arrest and subsequent deportation of its business manager, John Stahlberg, and two of its editorial staff - Arvo Vaara and Martin Parker - as Communists and undesirables under SECTIONS 41 and 42 of the Immigration Act, was a stark reminder

1 *Sudbury Star*, 20 February 1929. For the libellous article itself and a discussion of who had actually written it, see Leppovaaran Isko [pseud. of Reynold Pehkonen}, "Iskon näkökulmasta," *Vapaus*, 4 December 1928, and Jalava, "Radicalism or a "New Deal"?", 192, n. 5.

2 "Viljo Rosvall - John Woutilainen: Ketä he olivat ja miksi heidät salamurhattiin," *Metsätyöläinen* 7 (November 1932): 3-5; Satu Repo, "Rosvall and Voutilainen: Two Union Men Who Never Died," *Labour/Le Travail* (Fall-Spring 1981/82): 97-98; Laurel Sefton MacDowell, "Mysterious Deaths at Onion Lake," *The Beaver* 75 (April/May 1995): 32-34.

3 Pilli, *The Finnish-Language Press*, 182.

to other Finns that they, too, were subject to similar penalties if they persisted in their support of the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement.¹

Barbara Roberts, a historian who has specialized in the subject of deportations of immigrants from Canada, had this to say on that matter as it concerned the Finnish-Canadian community:

By the early 1930s, many Finns still did not have citizenship, and others were refused when they applied, so any contact with the authorities could prove dangerous. Political persecution could take place even if no laws were broken; translators for companies hiring Finns were often anti-radical informers. Protesting poor working conditions or the lack of work could have grave consequences. The political climate in Finland was not friendly to radicals; there might be a danger to liberty or perhaps to life for those deported.²

What made the situation even worse for the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement was a 1932 appeals court decision upholding a lower court ruling that found proof of an immigrant's membership in a Communist organization was sufficient in itself to enable his or her deportation from this country.³

Tom McEwen, a left-wing political and labour activist, described in his memoirs the kind of harassment that Finns and other suspected ethnic radicals might expect at the hands of the Red Squad that had been cobbled together by Brigadier General Dennis C. Draper, CMG, DSO with Bar, Croix de Guerre, an uncompromising, harshly anti-communist World War I veteran who served as Toronto's police chief from 1928 and until his retirement in 1946:

Another favorite pastime of the Red Squad was to forcibly enter homes at midnight or after, terrorize the inhabitants and their children, and should the resident be an immigrant worker whose English pronunciation was faulty, threaten deportation unless he (or she) ceased supporting and reading all newspapers, books or other literature the Red Squad declared to be "Communistic." And all this without warrant or other legal authorization.

It was enough that the victims of such police-terror were "suspect" to merit such treatment, which in many cases included Red Squad violence upon the victims of their nightly orgies in search of "Communism." ... Any Toronto citi-

1 "R.C.M.P. Crash Vapaus Office; Seize Records," *Sudbury Star*, 4 May 1932. For the FOC's slant on this, see Sundqvist, "Vuosien varrelta," 116. The deportation proceedings against Arvo Vaara are in the Board of Inquiry, in Immigration Branch series, NAC, RG 76, vol. 376, file 513116.

2 Quoted from Barbara Roberts, *Whence They Came: Deportation from Canada 1900–1935* (Ottawa, 1988), 134. See also Henry F. Drysek, "The Simplest and Cheapest Mode of Dealing with Them': Deportation from Canada before World War II," *Histoire sociale* 15 (Nov. 1982): 407–441.

3 Roberts, *Whence They Came*, 140.

zen with the slightest hint of a foreign "accent" was considered fair game for a "roughing up" by Toronto's "finest."¹

In addition to the difficulties already mentioned, the FOC also faced increasing opposition from the anti-communist elements within the Finnish-Canadian community. Montreal, as the principal port of entry and stopover for the second great wave of Finnish immigration into Canada during the 1920s, naturally became the initial staging area for organizing the growing tide of incoming "White" nationalists as a formidable counterforce to the FOC. Moreover, it was there that Akseli Rauanheimo, the resident Consul General of Finland, could lend an immediate and effective hand in encouraging the development of an interlocking network of Finnish nationalist institutions across the country to combat the internationalism of the "Red" menace in the Finnish-Canadian community. Thus, Montrealign Suomalainen Pyhän Mikaelin Luterilainen Seurakunta (St. Michael's Finnish Lutheran Congregation of Montreal), Montrealign Suomalainen Seura (Finnish Society of Montreal; later, renamed Montreal Suomi Society - that is, Montrealign Suomi-Seura) and the Finnish Immigrant Home (Suomalainen Siirtolaiskoti) were all established in the course of 1927 to ensure in common the preservation and propagation of the religious, ideological and moral orthodoxy of White Finland amongst the immigrant Finns of Montreal.²

One other "White" society also made a brief appearance in Montreal at the turn of the decade. It was the Montreal Finnish National Society (Montrealign Suomalainen Kansallis Seura), which was founded in 1930 by a group of dissident Finnish nationalists who had broken away from the Montreal Suomi Society. The Montreal Finnish National Society only operated for a short time because it was never able to draw a large enough following from the relatively small pool of right-wing Finns living in Montreal to take root. Nor were matters helped by the fact that, Lauri Salmio, the first chairman of the Central Organization of the Loyal Finns in Canada (COLFC) to which the Montreal Finnish National Society was affiliated, had embezzled for his own use some \$300.00 from a Olympics fund intended for transmittal to the Montreal society. Salmio eventually received a six-month sentence of imprisonment for the error of his ways, while leaving the COLFC and its affiliates to clear the debts incurred by his wrongdoing.³ Once its executive board and membership realized that the prognosis for the future success of their society was non-existent,

1 Quoted from Tom McEwen, *The Forge Glows Red From Blacksmith to Revolutionary* (Toronto, 1974), 174–175; miscellaneous biographies of Police Chief Dennis C. Draper from the archives of the City of Toronto Police Museum.

2 For the records of those organizations, see the St. Michael's Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church of Montreal fonds, NAC, MG 8 G 62; Montreal Suomi Society fonds, NAC, MG 28 V 68; Finnish Immigrant Home fonds, NAC, MG 28 V 128.

3 Yrjö Raivio, *Kanadan Suomalaisten historia*, 2 (Sudbury, 1979), 53–54. See the Montreal Finnish National Society fonds, NAC, MG 28 V 102, for more on its reaction to this scandal.

they quickly dissolved the Montreal Finnish National Society in 1931. Most of its members then chose to rejoin the Montreal Suomi Society, thus bringing to an end an embarrassing split that had troubled the "White" forces in that city.

As the "White" newcomers fanned out from Montreal to other parts of the country, they supported existing parallel institutions or established new ones in the areas in which they settled that corresponded to the ones they had founded, promoted, and participated in during their stopover in that city. The most favoured of those institutions to be rejoined or founded was a congregation of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church, that is, the denomination adhering to the doctrines of the state church in Finland and to which 96.3% of the population belonged according to the 1930 Finnish census.¹ Offhand, it would only seem natural that the majority of the Finnish-Canadian community should have supported the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church. Nevertheless, as the 1931 Canadian census shows (see Table 1 below), the number of Finns reporting themselves as being nominally Lutheran (including Laestadians) in their religious affiliation here was considerably lower (by 8.6%) than was the case in Finland. Clearly there were other factors involved in the determination of a Finn's confession of faith and church affiliations (or lack thereof).

Table 1. Religious Affiliation of Finnish Canadians, 1931–1981 (expressed in percentages)

Affiliation	Year of Census					
	1931	1941	1951	1961	1971	1981
Lutheran	87.7	85.5	75.8	70.2	60.3	59.4
United	3.9	5.6	10.3	12.8	12.6	10.9
Roman Catholic	1.3	2.3	7.4	9	5.9	4.8
Pentecostal	0	0.4	0	1.3	2.2	4.2
Anglican	1.5	2.2	3.8	4.4	4.3	3.3
Presbyterian	2.1	2.2	5.1	8.2	1	1.6
Other/None stated	3.4	2.1	3.9	4.5	12.4	15.7
CENSUS TOTALS (Finns enumerated)	43,885	41,683	43,745	59,436	59,215	52,315

Source: *Statistics Canada, Censuses of Canada (1931–1981)*.

There were several reasons for such behaviour in the Finnish-Canadian community, one of the most important being the desire of so many pre-World War I Finnish immigrants to get out from under the thumb of the Finnish state church

1 Finland, Central Statistical Office, *Statistical Yearbook of Finland 1980* (Helsinki, 1980), 44.

which condemned them as being wickedly selfish *isänmaanpettureita* (traitors of the fatherland) for having emigrated abroad and opened themselves to the evil ways there.¹ Most Finns simply "forgot" to transfer their Old Country religious memberships to local Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church congregations here. Only the Laestadians held fast to the traditional faith of their Lutheran sect, while other dissenting Finns took more active steps by joining local congregations of other religious denominations - which usually meant those belonging to the Presbyterian and United Churches. Still others converted to new faiths as the consequence of intermarrying with members of other ethnic groups or decided to join mainstream religious institutions as a means of easing their integration into Canadian society. Buoyed by their nationalist aspirations, the "Whites" strove to reverse those tendencies and to bolster the waning influence of the Finnish state church in Canada.

Certainly the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church then needed all the help it could get to make itself a major bulwark of conservative values and thought in the Finnish-Canadian community even though the overwhelming majority of Finns still nominally identified themselves as being Lutheran. In its report for the year 1921, the Suomi Synod - the conference of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States and Canada - listed only 772 members (or 3.6%) as actually belonging to its Canadian congregations out of the 21,494 Finns reported in the same year's Canadian census as being resident here.² However, with the aid of the new reinforcements from Finland, the church was able to found several new congregations across the country and establish itself as the pre-eminent religious denomination in the Finnish-Canadian community. By 1932, the effect of the church's rising fortunes encouraged its congregations to unite into one body as the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Conference in Canada.³ As of 1933, the church boasted an increase in its baptised membership to the total of 1,259 souls, which still compared rather unfavourably with the FOC's tally of 4,070 card-carrying members.⁴

The influx of staunch "Whites" into its ranks effectively transformed the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran church into a "fighting church." Its pastors sought to preach the gospels of Finnish nationalism and conservatism as their antidote to the Communist tidings of international solidarity and the coming revolution of the masses that emanated from their "Red" counterparts in the FOC.⁵ At the fore-

1 Yrjö Raivio, *Kanadan Suomalaisten Historia 1* (Copper Cliff, Ontario, 1975), 232.

2 *Ibid.*, 231.

3 Lauri T. Pikkusaari, *Copper Cliffin Suomalaiset ja Copper Cliffin Suomalainen Evankelis-Luterilainen Wuoristo-Seurakunta* (Hancock, Mich., 1947), 142.

4 Markku Suokonautio, "Reorganization of the Finnish Lutherans in Canada," *Polyphony* 3 (Fall 1981): 93; Pilli, *The Finnish-Language Press*, 142.

5 Jalava, "Radicalism or a "New Deal"?", 168-169.

front of the Lutheran clergy in the crusade against Communism was the Reverend Edwin A. Kyllönen. Kyllönen's contemporaries were generally agreed that he was singularly uncompromising and fearless in the discharge of his churchly duties, although one of his clerical superiors allowed that he was less than enamoured with Kyllönen due to his apparent shortcomings in theological training and general education.¹ While ministering to the Finnish congregation in Kirkland Lake, Ontario, Kyllönen actively sought to harass and harm the FOC local there by such means as egging on the provincial authorities to prosecute it under the Lord's Day Act for having staged plays on the Sabbath.² This stubbornly anti-communist cleric believed it to be immaterial that Sunday was the only day when the hard-working common folk could have participated in or attended Finnish theatrical performances. Nor did he seem to care that his actions might result in dire consequences for a large part of the local Finnish community.

Kyllönen's mischief against the "Red" Finns did not end there. He prepared extensive reports on their activities for the RCMP and the American consulate in North Bay, Ontario. In commenting on the usefulness of his new informer, the American consul reported the following in November 1931 to his superiors in Washington, D.C.:

I ... found that information of some value could be obtained from Reverend Edwin A. Kyllonen [*sic*], a so-called White Finn who is Pastor of the Finnish United Church at Kirkland Lake, Ontario, and had asked him through a mutual friend to obtain all the information he could concerning the organization, purposes *and* activities of the Communist Party in Canada.³

Nor was the consul exaggerating, for Kyllönen conveyed a great deal of personal and organizational information to the American government concerning the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement. For example, this 1932 report submitted by Kyllönen was chockablock with valuable intelligence on the left-wing Finns in Sudbury, Ontario:

I am enclosing some names ... which you may run across sometime or other in your capacity as U.S. consul: Matti Tenhunen. Formerly on the staff of *Vapaus*, Sudbury, Ont.; Arvo Vaara. Former Editor of *Vapaus*, who was convicted for

1 Raivio, *Kanadan Suomalaisten Historia 1*, 256, 275.

2 For this, see Rev. E. A. Kyllönen, Kirkland Lake, Ont.: Re breach of The Lord's Day Act by the Communists by holding plays on Sunday. 1929, in the Central registry of the Department of the Attorney General, Archives of Ontario (hereinafter AO), RG 4-32, 3242.

3 Quoted from Chapman to the Secretary of State, Voluntary Report of 14 November 1931, in United States, National Archives and Records Administration (hereinafter, NARA), Records of the Department of State Relating to Internal Affairs of Canada, RG 59, Box 6167, Decimal File 1930-39, 842.00B/61, as cited in Oiva W. Saarinen, *Between a Rock and a Hard Place* (Waterloo, Ontario, 1999), 132.

slander on King George V; Dr. H. Koljonen. Claimed by some to have been, in years past now, the "brains" behind the Finnish Organization of Canada, and its Communist activity; J. W. Ahlquist. Manager of *Vapaus*, Sudbury; J. Jarvis. More secretly active Communist. Has a general agency in that city; U. Ronni, Secretary of the Finnish Organization of Canada Athletic Association [Finnish Section of the Workers' Sports Association of Canada]; J. Wirta. Communist Agitator. Made a trip to Soviet Russia, summer 1931, in official capacity; H. Ellmen [*sic*], Sudbury, Ont.¹

Kyllönen's influence within his God-fearing flock was not inconsiderable. While serving in Kirkland Lake, he was credited with the founding in 1930 of *Canadian Viesti* (The Canadian Messenger), the United Church of Canada's long-running Finnish-language monthly.² During his tenure as editor of *Canadian Viesti*, he endorsed the Social Gospel of the United Church through his advocacy of the moderate leftist political programme and social policies of the CCF.³ He thereby mirrored the position taken by the *Haloslaiset* and others who were attached to the social democratic tradition. In 1936, Kyllönen served as the founding editor of *Isien Usko* (Faith of Our Fathers), the publication of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.⁴ In the final analysis, the apparent distrust and distaste accorded Kyllönen by his more politically and religious conservative brethren in the Suomi Synod were most probably rooted in their innate disapproval of his progressive social philosophy and his eagerness to make common cause with the rival United Church in the religious crusade against the FOC and its Communist cohorts.

There were also other pastors in the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church who, like Kyllönen, demonstrated an equal readiness to preach from United Church pulpits so that they might rain down fire and brimstone upon the FOC and its allies. However, the most notorious anti-communist Finnish clergyman of them all - the Reverend Arvi Iisakki Heinonen - never compromised his deep prejudice against the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church for the sake of assuaging his hatred of the radical Left in the Finnish-Canadian community. Born in Helsinki, Heinonen first immigrated to the United States where he received his theological training and was ordained by the Congregational Church in 1913. Soon thereafter, he was called to Northern Ontario as a missionary to the Finns by the Presbyterian Church in

1 Quoted from *ibid.*, as cited in Saarinen, *Between a Rock and a Hard Place*, 150. The same type of intelligence material (although not necessarily of the same grade) for that period is found in Gregory S. Kealey and Reginald Whitaker, eds., *The Depression Years, Parts 1-V: 1933-1939. R.C.MR Security Bulletins* (St. John's, Nfld., 1993-1997). The real problem with the RCMP's intelligence reports as a source is the absolute unreliability of the raw data they contain.

2 Raivio, *Kanadan Suomalaisten Historia* 1, 313.

3 Edwin A. Kyllönen, "Onko yhteiskunta-järjestelmä muuttuva?" *Canadian Viesti* 3 (January 1933): 7-8.

4 Pilli, *The Finnish-Language Press*, 261.

Canada. When part of the Presbyterian Church was folded into the United Church of Canada, he continued his service in Northern Ontario as a United Church minister, and later on, in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. In 1914, he founded the Finnish Peoples' Institute in Copper Cliff, Ontario, an outreach project sponsored by the Presbyterian Church with the aim of gaining new converts from among the Finns in 'New Ontario' while chipping away at the strength of the FOC there.¹ Heinonen wrote two books, *Finns in Europe and in Canada* ([Toronto], [1915]) for the Presbyterian Church and *Finnish Friends in Canada* (Toronto, 1930) for the United Church, both of which were primarily addressed to English Canadians. As such, his publications emphasized the virtues of the immigrant Finns and downplayed the influence of the left-wing radicals in their midst.

Heinonen wrote this summary in his own hand outlining his wartime activities concerning the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement:

Leadership in National Unity campaign among Finns & Scandinavians when World War [I] broke out.

"Informant-in-Chief" to the Finns in New Ontario (appointed by Dominion Govt) during National Registration;

Had charge of the Registrars to the Finnish Townships, and supplied necessary interpretations & translations; National services in connection with Chief Press Censors Dept. re. nondesirable literature & other printed matter in Finnish.

Produced to the Dominion Government evidence of "Bolsheviki" literature and propaganda.

Produced [to the Dominion Government] names etc. of leaders Dominion-wide organizations promoting Bolshevism.

Read two tons of literature and some 50,000 letters seized by Police in raids on same Dominion leaders.

Produced evidence from this material to convict everyone arrested.

Gave confidential help to the "*authorities prosecuting*" throughout trials.

Leadership in Dominion-wide loyalty campaign among Finnish Canadians.²

1 Biographical questionnaire submitted by Rev. Arvi Iisakki Heinonen to the Historical Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, [April?] 1918, from the United Church of Canada/Victoria University Archives, Biographical Files Collection.

2 Quoted from *ibid.* [emphasis, spelling, grammar and errors as in the original text].

Oiva W. Saarinen, a noted scholar of the Finnish-Canadian past, has been able to add the following details respecting Heinonen's list of services to King, Country and Capitalism:

He [Heinonen] also acted as an informant for Canadian companies regarding the political leanings of prospective Finnish employees. These activities were taken as proof by socialists that organized religion served the big companies rather than the workers.¹

Indeed, most radical, non-religious and dissenting Finns already arrived here with an intimate understanding of just how closely tied were the interests of the state church, the State and big business in Finland. They saw nothing in this country to dissuade them from concluding that the situation was any different here.

Another manifestation of the spreading "White" movement was the appearance of new ultraconservative, locally based Finnish National Societies (*Suomalaiset Kansallisseurat*) in various centres across the country. Those societies appear to have been initially formed for the purpose of certifying the political reliability of their members to prospective employers during the Hungry Thirties. Certainly, that was the impression given by the Montreal Finnish National Society's constitution, which claimed that the society was law-abiding (ARTICLE 1); that it would refuse membership to all Communists (ARTICLE 2); and that it would strive to obtain employment for all of its members (ARTICLE 8).² The Toronto Finnish National Society (*Toronton Suomalainen Kansallisseurat*), as part of its proposal to create an over-arching Finnish National Society of Canada, even went so far as to print a circular letter for distribution to potential employers suggesting that they should only hire Finns who were certified as belonging to the Finnish National Society of Canada because "no person corrupted by communism will bear the membership card of this society."³ One need not dwell too long on the effect that such propaganda could have had on jobless Finnish radicals during the Great Depression.

In February 1931, the various Finnish National Societies joined together to found the *Kanadan Kansallismielisten Suomalaisen Keskusjärjestö* (Central Organization of the Loyal Finns in Canada). Shortly thereafter, the new organization changed its name to *Kanadan Kansallismielisten Suomalaisen Keskusliitto*. The reason for substituting the word *liitto* for *järjestö* was that so many of its members found the latter term objectionable because it was also used in Canadian

1 Quoted from Saarinen, *Between a Rock and a Hard Place*, 83.

2 See the Finnish and English-language versions of this constitution, dated 1930, Montreal Finnish National Society fonds, NAC, MG 28 V 102.

3 Quoted from a printed copy, in general correspondence, 1930–1931, Suomi-Seuran Kokoomus 31, TYYH.

Suomalainen Järjestö - that is, the Finnish name of the FOC.¹ The Keskusliitto was subsequently incorporated in 1938 as the Central Organization of the Loyal Finns in Canada, Inc. Although the Loyal Finns never had more than eighteen locals and some five hundred members, they enjoyed the unqualified support of both the Finnish and Canadian governments. The Finnish government became the official patron of the Loyal Finns and its consular officials actively participated in their affairs, while the Canadian authorities chiefly used them as a source of intelligence and infiltrators for monitoring the activities of the radical Finns.² Consequently, the Loyal Finns were well situated to cause a great deal of mischief to the FOC and its members.

If that was not enough, each FOC local had to contend with its own combination of sworn enemies which, depending on the area in which it was located, might include other hostile organizations, too. For example, in Sudbury, FOC Local N° 16's opposition ranged from the various local affiliates and associates of the rival "White" nationalist, church, anarcho-syndical, socialist and social democratic organizations in the Finnish community to such purely non-Finnish establishments as the *Sudbury Star*, the International Nickel Company of Canada Limited (INCO) and the All People's United Church.³ Because Sudbury was mainly a one-industry town, the Finnish radicals were particularly susceptible to identification and punishment for their ideological beliefs by INCO, the town's major employer. Although INCO's layoff practices for that period have yet to be fully studied, it is quite possible that the company's selective release of known and suspected FOC supporters from its workforce in the mines contributed to the heavy Finnish involvement in the leftist street demonstrations that shook Sudbury between 1929 and 1932.⁴ Certainly, if INCO and the other Northern Ontario mining companies tended to be discriminatory in their hiring and firing of militant troublemakers - that is, labour organizers and the like - at other times,⁵ there is no particular reason to believe that they should have acted any differently during the Great Depression.

1 Minutes of the 1933 annual meeting of the Central Organization of the Loyal Finns in Canada, in the Montreal Suomi Society fonds, NAC, MG 28 V 68, vol. 8, file 5.

2 Varpu Lindstrom-Best, "Central Organization of the Loyal Finns in Canada," *Polyphony* 3 (Fall 1981): 101-102. The name was later shortened to Loyal Finns of Canada, Inc.

3 For archival material concerning the Finnish anarcho-syndicalists (that is, the Canadian Teollisuusunionistinen Kannatusliitto, or CTKL; in English, Support-League of Canadian Industrial Unionists) and social democrats (FCWFF) in Sudbury, see the Einar Michael Jouppi fonds, NAC, MG 31 H 105, and the Vapaa Sana Press Limited fonds, NAC, MG 28 V 42, respectively. A discussion of the local situation there is treated extensively in Jalava, "Radicalism or a "New Deal"?" especially chapters 10 and 11.

4 "Luokkataistelun kärjistyessä Sudburyssa," in *Suomalaiset nikkelialueella*, 97-116; Jalava, "Radicalism or a "New Deal"?", 179-193.

5 Jim Tester, *The Shaping of Sudbury - A Labour Kew* (Sudbury, 1980), 24.

The experience of the FOC's adherents and sympathizers from elsewhere across the country was very much like that of their comrades in Sudbury. Indeed, the pressure exerted by the authorities and potential or actual employers on all left-wing Finns was so great that the FOC's socialist rivals opted to rename and transform their 'Finnish Socialist Clubs' into the more innocuous and politically neutral 'Finnish Social Clubs'. Likewise, certain members of the FOC had become equally intimidated by the fear of physical violence, blacklisting and official persecution that they also chose to cover up or renounce their allegiance to the organization and cancel their subscriptions to *Vapaus*.¹ A few gave up all hope of ever seeing better days in this country and reluctantly returned to their ancestral haunts in Finland despite fears of triggering further government prosecution there, choosing a course of action that was more normally followed by discontented "Whites." Among the "Red" Finns prepared to ride the storm here in the hope of better days were those who continued to look for more promising fields where they might better invest their energies and better put their working-class ideals into practice.

When Soviet Karelia issued an invitation in the early 1930s to the Finns in North America to assist it in the building of socialism there, at least 5,000 answered the call. Among them were the 2,095 Finnish Canadians - men, women and children - who emigrated to the Soviet Union under the auspices of Soviet-Karelian Technical Aid (Neuvosto-Karjalan Teknillinen Apu).² They joined another two hundred Finnish Canadians who had been separately recruited in 1930 by the Karjalan Työkunta (Karelian Work Unit), an agency established under the leadership of Alf. Hautamäki with the aid of Kalle Salo. Although both the FOC and CPC tried to make a public show of their support for the Soviet Karelia project, that support was lukewarm at best. The two organizations were, in fact, fundamentally opposed to the emigration of their most vigorous members to Soviet Karelia because it was extremely detrimental to their own organizational well-being and interests.³ Nevertheless, the FOC's and *Vapaus*' enemies in the Finnish-Canadian community continued to propagate the myth that they had duped many of their followers into emigrating to Soviet Karelia, especially after news of the disastrous experience suffered by the newcomers there began to surface with increasing regularity.⁴

1 Pilli, *The Finnish-Language Press*, 197.

2 John Latva, "Selostus Suomalaisen muutosta Neuvosto-Karjalaan vuodesta 1931-1935 loppuun," in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 95, file 27. Cf. Reino Kero, *Neuvosto-Karjalaa rakentamassa: Pohjois-Amerikan suomalaiset tekniikan luojina 1930-luvun Neuvosto-Karjalassa* (Helsinki, 1983), 58-60,

3 Eklund, *Canadian Rakentajia*, 562-63; Jalava, "Radicalism or a "New Deal"?", 233-238.

4 For example, see V. Suomela, *Kuusi kuukautta Karjalassa; mitä siirtolainen näki ja koki Neuvosto-Karjalassa* (Sudbury, n.d.), a booklet issued by *Vapaa Sana*.

Once in Soviet Karelia, the Finnish-Canadian and Finnish-American immigrants quickly discovered that the resident Finnish émigrés and native Karelians were a most unwelcoming and unfriendly lot. Both the expatriate Finns and Karelians alike thoroughly detested the presence of their wealthier North American cousins. The newcomers were also utterly shocked to find the depth of poverty and harshness of the living and working conditions there. As many as half of the new arrivals (but more likely between four and twenty per cent) managed to return to Canada and the United States because they were fortunate enough to be still in possession of their passports. Others were forced to remain in Soviet Karelia and face even greater horrors there. When Joseph Stalin drifted further into his state of paranoia that led to the Soviet purges in 1935, he began to view the project for strengthening the Finnish presence in Soviet Karelia as a Trojan horse ultimately designed for the creation of a Greater Finland. In his endeavour to root out the source of that treason, he first targeted the local leadership of Soviet Karelia for elimination and, before the executions, imprisonments and banishments to the forced-labour camps of the Gulag ended, many of the ordinary Finnish-Canadian and Finnish-American menfolk were also executed or taken away never to be seen again.

The Spanish Civil War of 1936–1939 occasioned a further loss of members and activists from the ranks of the FOC and the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement, although the number involved was relatively small. According to one contemporary source, as many 300–350 Finns from Canada, Finland and the United States enlisted in the International Brigades, volunteering their services for the fight against General Franco and his Fascist Italian and Nazi German allies.¹ The precise number of Finnish Canadians is impossible to ascertain because so many of the volunteers used aliases to foil the authorities. At least one hundred and twenty Finnish names were inscribed in the rolls of the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion alone. Along with the Finnish-Canadians were also a few Finnish Americans, for example, Major Frank Rogers, who had been sent from the Abraham Lincoln Brigade to serve as the battalion's political commissar, and a scattering of Finns from Finland as well, one of them being Kauko Nihtilä, a member of the Mac-Pap's machine gun company who fell during the retreat from Aragon. The Finnish war dead included thirty-five men - not the least of whom was the redoubtable Captain Niilo Mäkelä - who were listed as killed in action plus two others who were reported as missing in action (and presumed dead).² The battalion's Finnish-manned machine gun company suffered the worst casualties in

1 Frank Rogers, "Suomalaiset vapaaehtoiset Espanjassa," in K. E. Heikkinen, ed., *Meidän poikamme Espanjassa* (n.p., 1939), 8.

2 Extracted from lists of Mackenzie-Papineau volunteers compiled by Myron Momryk, a private scholar, and Heikkinen, *Meidän poikamme Espanjassa*, 188–89.

the war, losing all but four men from its complement of twenty-two.¹ There were, of course, many more who had been wounded - some more than once.

The effect of the emigration of Finnish radicals abroad during the Great Depression accounts, in part, for the noticeable drop in the number of persons of Finnish origin reported in the 1941 Canadian census to 41,683 (a decrease of 2,202 from the 1931 total).² Despite the loss of many of its most energetic and committed members during the course of that troubled decade, the FOC surrendered not an inch to its opponents, choosing to hold fast to its political ideals. It continued to provide unstintingly of its limited resources in money, manpower and moral support to the labour movement in Canada. Among the many recipients of that aid were the Lumber [and Agricultural] Workers' Industrial Union of Canada, the Canadian Labor Defense League, the Workers' Unity League of Canada, the Canadian Federation of Women's Labor Leagues, the Farmers' Unity League of Canada, *The New Advance*, the National Committee for Unemployed Councils and the National Children's Council.³ The FOC also actively supported various causes abroad as noted in its sponsorship of a write-in campaign to free Toivo Antikainen, a former Red Guard being held as a political prisoner on trumped-up charges in Finland, and in its contributions to the work of the Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy during the Spanish Civil War.⁴ In doing so, the FOC had clearly demonstrated to its friends and enemies alike that it was not about to abandon its working-class ideals.

1 Rogers, "Suomalaiset vapaaehtoiset Espanjassa," 21.

2 Canada, Department of Trade and Commerce, *Population by Racial Origin* (reprint, 272517 of vol. 2, *Eighth Census of Canada, 1941* [Ottawa, 1944]).

3 For example, see the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 16, files 26-27,29,33-35, 37 and 38; and vol. 17, file 1.

4 *Ibid.*, file 24, and vol. 17, file 3.

7 The Finnish Organization of Canada and Working-Class Culture

The FOC responded vigorously to the challenge of its foes by dedicating itself wholly to the task of serving as the *seura-, valistus- ja kulttuurielämän ahjo* or "forge in the development of the social, educational and cultural life" of the Finnish-Canadian community.¹ It could not have found a more propitious time to do so. By broadening its activities in the cultural sphere at a time when many thousands of Finns had been idled by the severity of the economic depression in Canada, the FOC was able to staunch the flow of defections from its ranks - and it even managed to attract new members.² Yet the FOC had not focused so heavily upon a wide variety of cultural endeavours solely for the reason that they served as a useful expedient for preventing the further erosion of its membership. Rather, it did so as part of a continuing evolutionary process that saw the completion of its transformation into a thoroughly working-class cultural institution. In other words, once it wholeheartedly embraced its role as the *seura-, valistus- ja kulttuurielämän ahjo*, the FOC had finally come to realize the full extent of the promise in its 1923 constitution, which stated that its purpose was to serve as the central cultural institution for the Finns in Canada. This also signalled the FOC's complete acceptance of its new role and status as had been decreed by the Comintern. It would henceforth operate as a cultural auxiliary in the working-class movement rather than as a major political force in the frontlines of the working-class struggle.

Indeed, the origins of the Finnish-Canadian radicals' linking of their cultural activities with the development of the working-class movement can be traced

1 A. T. Hill, "Canadan Suomalainen Järjestö 25 vuotias - 1911–1936" [a draft manuscript, 1936], *ibid.*, vol. 13, file 14.

2 For the discussions and resolutions of its 1931 and 1933 national conventions concerning this, see FOC, *Vallankumouksellista joukkotyötä kohti!* (Sudbury, 1931), 44, and *idem*, *Nälkää, Sotaa, Fascismia ja Sosialifascismia vastaan* (Sudbury, 1933), 40–41.

at least as far back as the *reconstituted* FSOC's national convention of 1922. One resolution at that convention requested that all locals found athletic clubs and, if at all possible, have those clubs sponsor such popular sports activities as would induce the enthusiastic participation of Finns and non-Finns alike from outside the working-class movement.¹ That resolution sparked the establishment of the Keski-Ontarion Voimistelu- ja Urheiluseurojen Yhteistyöjärjestö (The United Task Force of the Central Ontario Gymnastic and Athletic Clubs) in 1924. In the following year, that regional association of local Finnish sports clubs was then reconstituted as a national umbrella organization for all local Finnish athletic clubs across the country under the name of the Canadian Suomalaisten Työläisten Urheiluliitto (CSTUL; Finnish-Canadian Workers' Sports Association).²

By 1927, the CSTUL consisted of fifteen affiliated sport clubs with a membership of 500 persons. In 1929, it became the Finnish Section of the Workers' Sports Association of Canada (FS/WSAC; Canadian Työväen Urheiluliiton Suomalainen Jaosto). By 1933, the Finnish Section included thirty-one clubs with a combined membership of about 1,500.³ Thereafter, interest in the Finnish Section waned until 1936, when the decision was made to rename it the Canadian Amateur Sports Federation (CASF; Canadalainen Amatööri-Urheiluliitto), an important change of name that finally enabled its members to participate in the bourgeois sports activities carried out under auspices of the Amateur Athletic Union of Canada.⁴ Consequently, athletes belonging to sports clubs associated with the working-class movement were no longer precluded from being able to represent Canada in the Olympic Games.

Theatre and music were also made an integral part of the FOC's programme to entertain, to educate and to raise the moral worth and dignity of the Finnish-Canadian worker.⁵ The centrepiece of that endeavour was the FOC Play Inventory (CSJ:n Näytelmävarasto), an agency of the National Office that functioned as a rental library for dramatic scripts and musical scores to be used by the locals when presenting public performances of plays and musical works.

Although some thought had been given to the establishment of such an agency as early as 1924, it only came into being in 1927.⁶ Thereafter, it quickly began to

1 Finnish Canadian Amateur Sports Federation, *Canadian suomalaisten urheilukirja: Suomalais-Canadalaisen Amatööri-Urheiluliiton 25-v toiminnan johdosta*, ed. H. Sula (Sudbury, 1950), 13.

2 Ibid., 14–15.

3 Finnish Canadian Amateur Sports Federation, *Canadian suomalaisten urheilukirja: Suomalais-Canadalaisen Amatööri-Urheiluliiton 40-v toiminnan johdosta* (Sudbury, 1950), 6–7.

4 FCASF, *Canadian suomalaisten urheilukirja... 25-v. toiminnan johdosta*, 22.

5 FOC, *Nälkää*, 40–41; Jussi Latva, "Järjestömme näyttämö- ja kuliuriryö 25vuotistaipaleella," in *Canadian Suomalainen Järjestö 25 vuotta*, 71–22; Lennart Hjorth, "Työväen näyttämötyö," *Vapauden Viiri*, 3 (1939); 13–14.

6 Eklund, *Canadian rakentajia*, 254.

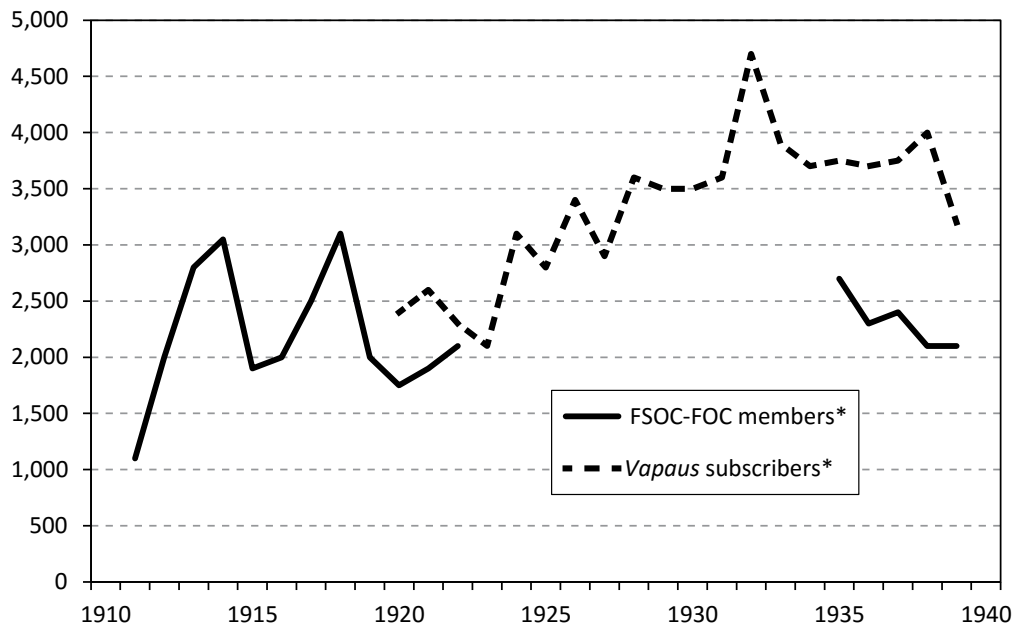


Figure 3. Adherents of the Finnish-Canadian Left, 1911–1939.

Notes:

1) No data on the FOC membership for 1922–1934.

2) *Vapaus* was founded in 1917. Banned in 1918, it resumed publication in 1919.

Sources:

Annuals Reports of the FSOC–FOC, and Arja Pilli, *The Finnish Canadian Press*.

draw together a collection of Finnish-language plays from various sources in the United States, Finland and the Soviet Union.

Finnish-Canadian playwrights were also encouraged to write some fifty plays in response to the various incentives offered by the FOC, not the least of which included payments for performance rights and the sponsoring of a play-writing contest.¹ As a result of its efforts, the FOC had materially helped in drawing together and developing a solid core of Finnish-Canadian writers and composers, including such well-known names as Aku Päiviö, A. B. Mäkelä, Magnus Raeus, Jack Koski, Paul Laakso, Alfred Hautamäki, Tyko Virtanen and Toivo Karvinen.² The FOC's support of its locals in their production of plays ensured the development of a wide array of actors, directors, singers, musicians, artists and other talents associated with the performing arts and theatrical productions across the country.

1 FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 19, files 8–9.

2 For a brief introduction to the work of some of the major Finnish-Canadian playwrights, see Taru Sundsten, "The Theatre of the Finnish-Canadian Labour Movement and its Dramatic Literature," in *Finnish Diaspora 1*, 84–88.

The extent to which working-class Finnish-Canadian theatre flourished is indicated by the fact that, in 1939 alone, the FOC managed to present 116 three-act plays, six one-act plays, twenty-one concerts and twenty-nine other miscellaneous cultural events.¹ Indeed, one study has ascertained that the locals belonging to the FOC had staged 3,919 plays in the years between 1921 and 1970.²

While the FOC's primary role was that of a facilitator respecting the theatrical and musical life of its locals, it played an even more direct part in their educational development. Like its predecessors, the FOC sent out a stream of speakers and organizers on extensive speaking tours across the country. Those speakers were charged with the task of addressing, entertaining, provoking discussion and educating the membership of the FOC locals and the Finnish-Canadian community at large on a variety of issues.³ As well, the FOC sponsored a host of adult education courses in the locals to raise the working-class consciousness of their members. Because the FOC's National Office possessed limited resources for the presentation and management of those programmes, it had to rely heavily upon the aid of the various District Committees in the task of coordinating and implementing them at the local level in their respective districts.⁴

On 7 April 1928, the FOC undertook to increase the amount of *Vapaus'* informational content and to improve upon the timeliness in its delivery of that content by changing the newspaper from a thrice-weekly into a daily.⁵ From the early 1920s to the mid-1930s, *Vapaus* served as the FOC's internal publishing house. In that capacity, it also published the occasional book and a slew of serial publications with varying frequencies as well as the newspaper. Some of the serial publications were monthlies, while others were quarterlies or annuals. Among the titles appearing under the *Vapaus* imprint were *Työn Vappu*, *Taistelun Viiri* and *Vapauden Soihtu*. *Vapaus* also printed a variety of serial, annual and anniversary publications under the imprimatur of the FOC and its locals. As well, its editorial office and press produced a string of publications for other organizations allied to the FOC. Titles in that category included *Maa- ja Metsätyöläinen*, *Metsätyöläinen*, *Työläisurheilijain Joulu*, *Spartak* and *The Sudbury Worker*, which served as the organs of such associations as the Lumber and Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union of Canada, the Lumber Workers' Industrial Union of Canada, the Workers' Sports Association of Canada and the Finnish Agitation and Propaganda Com-

1 Eklund, *Canadian rakentajia*, 258.

2 Eklund, "The Formative Years," 59.

3 For this, see the FOC's National Office files, 1927-1939: Correspondence concerning speakers and organizers, in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 96, vol. 13, files 23-27.

4 For example, see minutes of the Central Ontario District Committee, 1932-1940, *ibid.*, vol. 34, file 12.

5 Sundqvist, "Vuosien varrelta," 115.

mittee of the CPC.¹ In all of this, *Vapaus* played a crucial role in the FOC's bid to serve as the central agency in the political, social and cultural enlightenment of the Finnish-Canadian community.

As the result of a rash of nuisance libel suits that were then being successively laid against *Vapaus*, the FOC was prompted to find a means of freeing itself from the potential threat of having to pay damages in some future case before the courts. The FOC had also decided that, if it wished to better its own standing as the *seura-*, *valistus- ja kulttuurielämän ahjo*, the *Vapaus* publishing operation would have to expand upon the services it already offered to the Finnish-Canadian community. Thus, Vapaus Publishing Company, Limited, was incorporated in the Province of Ontario on 23 July 1935. On the first of November of that year, the assets of *Vapaus* were transferred to Vapaus Publishing Company, Limited. In return, the FOC received controlling interest in the company with the receipt of 39,500 shares of the latter's authorized issue of 40,000 common shares. As owner of the Vapaus Building in Sudbury, the FOC's Sudbury local now became the new company's landlord.² Once all of the arrangements had been completed, Vapaus Publishing Company undertook such daring new ventures as the publication of the literary weekly *Liekki* (The Flame), the *näyttenumero* (prospectus issue) of which appeared on 7 December 1935.³

At first, Vapaus Publishing Company carried on with the publication of *Vapaus'* older periodicals, but, in time, it began to replace them with new ones (for example, *Canadian Suomalaisen Taskukalenteri* and *Vapauden Viiri*).⁴ It accepted commercial printing jobs as well to ensure the steady employment of the typesetters and printers on its staff. In addition, it maintained a store in Sudbury which sold Finnish-language newspapers, books, stationery supplies, gramophone records and sundries. The store also operated as a travel agency and money-changer for the conversion of funds between the Finnish *markka* and the Canadian dollar. *Vapaus* branches offering similar services were also established and maintained in Toronto, Port Arthur, Timmins, Kirkland Lake and Montreal to look after the needs of the local Finnish communities there.⁵ Through such means, the Vapaus

1 National Library of Canada, *Checklist of Canadian Ethnic Serials*, comp. Ruth Bogusis (Ottawa, 1981), 95–104; Pilli, *The Finnish-Language Press*, 207–210, 212–215. To compare the Finnish-Canadian and Finnish-American publishing industries, see A. William Hoglund, comp., *Union List of Finnish Newspapers Published by Finns in the United States and Canada 1876–1985* (St. Paul, Minn., 1986).

2 Annual report of Vapaus Publishing Company, Limited, 1938 [*Vapaus Publishing Company Limitedin ja Canadian Suomalaisen Järjestön Sudburyssa sijaitsevan talon tilikertomus ja tilintarkastajain lausunnot tammikuun 1 p:stä 1938 joulukuun 31 p:ään 1938* (Sudbury, 1939)], 1, in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 64, file 21.

3 FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 94, file 7.

4 Pilli, *The Finnish-Language Press*, 207–215.

5 Annual report of Vapaus Publishing Company, Limited, 1938, 2.

Publishing Company played an important role as a cohesive force in keeping the FOC's membership together through difficult times.

Although hardly a large business enterprise by Canadian standards, *Vapaus* Publishing Company and its related operations had accumulated assets with a net worth approaching a hundred thousand dollars by the mid-1930s. More importantly, *Vapaus* used those assets to generate respectable revenues from its business activities and operations. In fiscal year 1938, for example, it posted revenues of \$50,671.67. Because its pricing practices emphasized cost recovery rather than outright profit, the company still managed to incur a small net deficit of \$314.37 in expenses over income for that year. Another factor contributing to *Vapaus'* perennial deficits was that, in addition to paying its unionized printing staff at the union scale, it frequently undertook marginally profitable print jobs just to keep them working. More than half of *Vapaus'* gross revenue was used to meet the payroll of \$25,607.05 for its staff and agents in 1938.¹ By comparison, the NEC of the FOC then had to manage the affairs of the organization on an annual budget of about \$5,000.² For some indication of the real value of the dollar about that time, the respective average annual earnings for unskilled and skilled labour in 1941 were \$566.00 and \$1,052.00.³ In other words, even as *Vapaus* Publishing Company served the FOC as its communications and service auxiliary, the company's revenue-generating capacity effectively multiplied the value of the assets it had at its disposal for furthering the work of the working-class movement in the Finnish-Canadian community.

Although it was primarily involved with serving the needs of the immigrant generation in the Finnish community, the FOC also concerned itself with the welfare and interests of second-generation Finnish Canadians - the Canadian-born children of its membership. The FOC actively encouraged its locals to establish secular, working-class Sunday schools and youth clubs for assisting with the educational development and other needs of the younger folk. In addition, it oversaw the establishment of a coordinating centre for the youth clubs that had been founded under its auspices. Thus came into being a Provisional Committee of the Youth Clubs of the Finnish Organization (YCFO; SJ Nuorisoklupit) in 1934. In the following year, the YCFO held its first national convention to formalize its existence as an independent organization in its own right. Even so, it still remained very much an extension of the FOC, as indicated by the fact that the YCFO's Na-

1 Ibid., 6–7.

2 See the financial statements presented to the thirteenth national convention of the FOC, in CSI, XIII Edustajakokous, "TPK:n toimintakertomus, pöytäkirja ja päätökset" [mimeographed proceedings, 1939, in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 6, file 10.

3 Urquhart and Buckley, *Historical Statistics of Canada*, 96.

tional Office operated out of the same Don Hall premises in Toronto that housed the headquarters of the FOC.¹

In sum, the second and first half of the third decades of the twentieth century had wrought major changes to the central institutions of the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement. As a consequence of that process, the FOC had become increasingly preoccupied with its role as the chief cultural institution of the Finnish-Canadian community. The FOC's success in that regard was described in the following fashion by Hannes Sula, an FOC member and *Vapaus* editor, on the occasion of its twenty-fifth anniversary in 1936 (which the FOC traditionally dated from the founding of the FSOC in 1911 rather than from its own incorporation in 1923):

It (the FOC) demonstrates that the revolutionary working people's movement is not the enemy of national culture and enlightenment, but rather their friend.

Its present situation shows that the Finnish Organization of Canada is the leading and overwhelmingly the largest educational and cultural organization of the Finnish-language working people in Canada.

We can proudly point to the following results of our work:

About 75 locals of our organization are active now, more than ever before.

All of them have their own operational centres - forming together a common forge of enlightenment and cradle of social life for the Finnish-language working people. About 50 of these locals retain full control of their own quarters. Hundreds of plays are presented by us every year. Thousands of speeches are sponsored by us every year.

In our libraries are thousands of works and more are being continually added. *Vapaus* - the only Finnish-language daily in Canada - brings knowledge and light into thousands of homes in the cities and forest fringes, leading the struggle and operations on behalf of those oppressed and exploited in defence of their rights - against capitalism and in defence of socialism.²

Notwithstanding its transformation into a predominantly cultural institution, the FOC chose not to evade what it considered to be its broader political and social responsibilities. It was determined not to show any moral cowardice or distaste for dirtying its hands in the implementation of its ideals - the kinds of

1 For the records of the YCFO, see the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vols. 57–59.

2 My translation of H. Sula, "Canadian Suomalainen Järjestä johtaa," in *Canadian Suomalainen Järjestö 25 vuotta*, 162–163 (from Edward W. Laine, "The Finnish Organization of Canada, 1923–40, and the Development of a Finnish Canadian Culture," *Polyphony* 3 (Fall 1981): 86–88).

weaknesses that it laid at the doorstep of its petty bourgeois rivals. Nor would it - like they - hide behind such rarefied concepts as promoting art for art's sake or by retreating into the safety of academic ivory towers in search of ethereal universal truths that soared far above the more mundane concerns of everyday life as expressed by the common folk. It would always remain steadfastly dedicated to the common pursuit of working-class politics and society while encouraging the development of working-class culture both within the Finnish-Canadian community and in the country at large. That, too, was proudly noted in Hannes Sula's twenty-fifth anniversary tribute to the FOC:

We could point to a number of other important achievements, but we shall limit ourselves to ascertaining that our organization, in having observed the principles of the proletarian movement of revolutionary conflict, has participated in the struggles of the Canadian proletariat and has supported them in every possible way.¹

In other words, the FOC still maintained the same sense of ideological purpose during and after its rise to pre-eminence as a cultural institution in the Finnish-Canadian community. Just as importantly, it remained firmly convinced that the solidarity of the working-class movement as defined by the CPC should not be breached despite the fact that its formal structural ties with the Party had been severed. The voting delegates to the first three national conventions held by the FOC as an organization independent of the CPC never even considered the possibility of doing otherwise, for most of their constituents would have interpreted any talk of deviation from the Party's policies as a betrayal of the basic tenets of the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement. The FOC continued to cleave to the Communist line throughout the rest of the 1930s in all political matters even through the actual formulation and approval of the organization's policy was now the sole responsibility of its own governing body - the biennial national convention. It did so despite the fact that the constitution then in force clearly established that "*Canadan Suomalaisen Järjestön ylin elin on konventionsi ja sen kutsuu koolle toimeenpaneva komitea vähintään kerran kahdessa vuodessa* (The supreme body of the FOC is the convention and it shall be called together by the executive committee at least once every two years.)"²

As admirable as their unshakeable loyalty and commitment to the CPC, the Comintern and their causes were in the eyes of the other comrades in the radical Left, the FOC and its membership were more often than not the ones who had to pay the price in providing that level of support to the Party. Just as had happened

1 My translation of Sula, "Canadan Suomalainen Järjestö johtaa," 88.

2 My translation of the FOC, *Canadan Suomalaisen Järjestön perustuslaki* (Sudbury, 1931), CHAP. 4, ART. I.

in the past whenever it cast aside its own interests for the sake of the Party, the FOC was left with the responsibility of paying the costs out of its own financial, material and human reserves. Nor did its sacrifices always end there, for its readiness to support the sometimes unpopular directives and changes of policy passed down from party headquarters could lead to further confusion and dissension within the ranks of its membership. Just as importantly, the FOC's close ties to the Party often adversely affected its credibility and standing with the rest of the Finnish-Canadian community, too.

Joseph Stalin's consolidation of power in the Soviet Union about the end of the 1920s had finally allowed him to impart to the Comintern the unity of vision, authority and force to impose its will on the working-class movements of Canada, the United States and Europe. Stalin's rigid enforcement of party discipline ensured that all of his directives were obeyed even though they may have sometimes been contrary to the best interests of those who were forced to follow them. However, to be fair, a few of the policy directives emanating from Moscow about the mid-1930s did resonate well among the masses abroad, even in Canada where the CPC found itself in the unusual circumstance of cresting on the cusp of popular and electoral success.¹

1 The recent opening of the Communist International (Comintern) fonds held by the Russian Centre for the Preservation and Study of Records of Contemporary History [formerly the Central Party Archives, CPSUJ in Moscow should be a boon to researchers working in this field of historical research, as are the microfilmed files relating to Canada from those fonds - Comintern (Communist International) fonds (MG 10K 3) - at the NAC in Ottawa.

8

The Finnish-Canadian Left, the Popular Front and the Coming War

At the FOC's 1931 national convention, the assembled delegates, who had come from the organization's locals across Canada, focused their attention on domestic issues in response to the unholy devastation wrought by the Great Depression. The FOC delegates decided that, given the callous indifference with which capitalism responded to the desperate situation of the unemployed, only radical solutions would suffice in alleviating the widespread misery and suffering of the masses.¹ Hence, this convention charged the FOC to continue its involvement in the revolutionary class struggle under the ideological leadership of the CPC. It further urged the FOC to take the initiative in the development and promotion of mass action (strikes, street demonstrations, and movements concerning the unemployed, youth, sports, etc.) with the aim of inculcating a greater sense of class consciousness in the ranks of ordinary workers and guiding them onto the path of organized political struggle against their capitalist oppressors. The resulting programme was mapped out in the convention's discussions and resolutions, which were then published under the title of *Vallankumouksellista joukkotyötä kohti!* (Towards Revolutionary Work among the Masses!).²

The delegates to the FOC's 1933 national convention faced a new set of challenges, the most distressing of which included Adolf Hitler's stunning rise to power in Germany and the accelerated spread of Nazism and Fascism across the face of Europe. Those ideologies and their proponents presented a grave threat

1 For example, see "Työttömän mietteitä," an unsigned article in *Työtön Työläinen*, 1 22 November 1933, the mimeographed publication of the Finnish Section of the Toronto Unemployed Council.

2 The original proceedings are in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 5, file 38; cf. Unemployed Councils of Canada, *Building a Mass Unemployed Movement* (Toronto, n.d.), and the Finnish translation of that booklet, *Työttömäin joukkoliikkeen rakentaminen* (Sudbury, 1933).

to the continued well-being of the international working-class movement and the security of the Soviet Union. Stalin persuaded the convention to redirect the organization's energies and resources to foreign as well as domestic issues with his declaration that the Soviet Union had to be defended at all costs as the fatherland of the working-class movement at home and abroad and as the only place in the world where there existed "socialism in one country." Thereafter, the FOC increasingly channelled its attention and material assistance into the peace and anti-fascist movements - and away from the earlier objective of keeping up the class struggle in this country. That shift of priorities in FOC policy was signalled in the convention's published proceedings, which appeared under the name of *Nälkää, Sotaa, Fascismia ja Sosialifascismia vastaan* (Against Hunger, War, Fascism and Social-Fascism).¹

At this point, we should remind ourselves that the FOC and its adherents were better aware than most others of the dangers posed by Fascism, for they had already directly and indirectly experienced heavy body blows from a closely related political phenomenon - the rise of ultra-conservative Finnish nationalism in Finland and Canada. The FOC was always at odds with the representatives of bourgeois White Finland, its institutions, and their allies in this country. It also knew that Akseli Rauanheimo, the Finnish Consul-General in Montreal and the "Father of the Finns" according to his supporters there, simply reflected the same extremes of anti-communist White nationalism that permeated the highest levels of the Finnish government. Finland, which got caught up in the throes of a growing rebellion fomented by the semi-fascist Lapua Movement in the period from 1929 to 1932, almost slid into the same rabidly Nazi and Fascist abyss that claimed so much of Eastern and Central Europe. It was midst the turmoil of those times that the Finnish government also launched a new period of repression against the followers of the still outlawed Communist Party of Finland, targeting those above-ground institutions (labour unions, sports clubs, etc.) the Communists were still allowed to operate and control under existing Finnish law. As one scholar put it, the Finnish government then "inaugurated what might be termed the second phase of the civil war, the final settling of accounts with the Red threat which plagued White Finland."²

1 For the original proceedings, supplementary reports and correspondence, see the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 5, files 41-42. Cf. Communist Party of Canada, *Tie sosialismiin: Työväestön ohjelma taistelussa nälkää, fascismia ja sotaa vastaan* (Toronto, 1934), being the Finnish translation of *The Way to Socialism*, the manifesto and principal resolutions of the Party's seventh national convention in the Communist Party of Canada fonds, NAC, MG 281V 4, vol. 11, file 37; G. Dimitrov, *Yhteisrintama fascismia ja sotaa vastaan* (n.p., n.d.), being the key address to the seventh congress of the Comintern concerning the Popular Front.

2 Quoted from Kirby, *Finland in the Twentieth Century*, 84.

By the opening of the FOC's eleventh national convention in 1935, the whole of the Communist-led working-class movement in Canada had become so thoroughly alarmed by the burgeoning threat of Hitler's Germany to the peace and security of Europe that it was ready to dedicate most of its energies and resources into creating a broadly based Popular Front to fight the Nazi menace. For the same reason, the delegates to the 1935 FOC convention also voted to join the Popular Front and called upon all other progressive Finns to do likewise in *Canadian suomalaisen siirtolaisväestön yhtenäisyys* (The Unity of the Finnish-Canadian Immigrant Population), the name under which the printed proceedings of that convention had been published as a booklet by *Vapaus*.¹ Whatever initial response their appeal may have garnered from other sectors of the Finnish-Canadian community, the plea of the FOC's convention delegates was fully supported by the FOC's own affiliates and by such associated organizations as the YCFO and the CASF.²

By the late 1930s, it is clear that the FOC and the more moderate leftist elements in the Finnish community had arrived at some sort of *modus vivendi* under the aegis of the Popular Front, which fed their common belief in the doctrine of collective security as being the only means for ensuring a lasting peace in Europe. The degree of reconciliation that the moderate and extreme Finnish Left had achieved was shown in the significant warming of their relations and by the increasing tempo of inter-organizational co-operation.³ In time, most Finnish-Canadian progressives across the political spectrum happily toiled shoulder to shoulder with each other in the Popular Front. That project actually succeeded in uniting most of the leftist movement across Canada until that fragile coalition shattered into confused disarray as the result of last-minute shifts in the devious waltz of European diplomacy on the eve of World War II. Because so much of the energies of the Communist-led working-class movement had been increasingly diverted from the class struggle in Canada to the rapidly escalating war on Nazism and Fascism abroad, the so-called battle of the streets of the early 1930s between the radicals and the Canadian establishment quickly receded into mere memory.⁴ While the authorities may have welcomed its lessening emphasis on

1 The original proceedings and related documents are found in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 6, files 1–3. For a discussion of Soviet foreign relations, the Comintern and the Popular Front, see Adam B. Ohm, *Expansion and Coexistence: The History of Soviet Foreign Policy* (New York, 1968), 209–234, and Aloysius Balawyder, *Canadian-Soviet Relations between the World Wars* (Toronto, 1972), 188–193.

2 Eklund, *Canadian rakentajia*, 455–459; Alerts AC Historical Committee, *Sports Pioneers: A History of the Finnish-Canadian Amateur Sports Federation 1906–1986*, ed. Jim Tester (Sudbury, 1986), 11–12.

3 For example, see "CTKL:n ja CSJ:n yhteinen kuoro toimi hyvin," *Vapaus*, 16 January 1939.

4 Cf. Jalava, "Radicalism or a 'New Deal'?", 189, wherein he suggests that the radical Finns finally broke off their "battle in the streets" in Sudbury because their "place in the sun could not be achieved by confrontation but by cooperation."

domestic revolutionary activity, the working-class movement's growing interest in international affairs was fated to create a new and more serious source of conflict with the federal government.

In effect, the whole idea of a Popular Front against German Nazism and Italian Fascism ran afoul of the government's foreign policy which, by late 1935, was seeking to keep Canada free of all international entanglements that could conceivably draw it into a general European war. The drift in Ottawa's official policy away from the doctrine of collective security to one of isolationism stemmed in large measure from the desire of the newly installed Liberal government in Ottawa to accommodate the concerns of Quebec. Its French-speaking, Roman Catholic majority was irrevocably opposed to any repetition of Canada's previous military adventures abroad on behalf of British Imperialism as had occurred during the Boer War and World War I.¹

Yet, the matter of anti-British Imperialism was by no means confined either to Quebec's right-wing nationalists or the leftist movement in Canada. As one prominent Canadian historian noted, the isolationism fostered by O. D. Skelton, under-secretary of state for external affairs, and his most distinguished career diplomats - that is, Norman Robertson, Hume Wrong, and Lester B. Pearson - continued the development of a Canadian foreign policy that was fundamentally directed against British Imperialism after the Imperial Conference of 1926.² Ernest Lapointe, who was again appointed justice minister in the new Liberal cabinet in 1935 (having served before in the same capacity from 1924 to 1930 in an earlier Mackenzie King government), had the unenviable task of reconciling the contending and conflicting interests that emerged in the course of fulfilling his other duties as the prime minister's Quebec lieutenant and those arising from his preferred role as the chief defender of his province's interests.³ As the result of Lapointe's unshakeable resolve to keep Canada free of foreign entanglements for the sake of his Quebec constituency and Skelton's corresponding determination to assert Canadian sovereignty to the full, it was natural that the two men again became close partners and allies in ensuring Canada's right to remain neutral even though Great Britain were to be plunged into a full-scale European war.⁴

Despite Skelton's stature as the most influential civil servant in the federal bureaucracy, Lapointe held the highest political trump card in their partnership because Quebec's opinion really mattered. After all, it was Quebec that had helped

1 H. Blair Neatby, *William Lyon Mackenzie King, vol. 3: 1932-1939: The Prism of Unity* (Toronto, 1976), 191-194, 288.

2 Donald Creighton, *The Forked Road: Canada 1939-1957* (Toronto, 1976), 14.

3 John MacFarlane, "Mr. Lapointe, Mr. King, Quebec and Conscriptio[n]," *The Beaver* 75 (April/May 1995): 27.

4 For their correspondence and related documentation concerning this, see the Lapointe fonds, NAC, MG 27 III B 10, vol. 50, file 38.

the Liberals to defeat the incumbent Conservative government in the general election of 14 October 1935 by giving them fifty-five of their hundred and seventy-one seat majority in the House of Commons.¹ Moreover, the very size of the Quebec caucus on the government side of the House further ensured Quebec's wishes would be heeded by the incoming prime minister, the Right Honourable William Lyon Mackenzie King. By the same token, it behooved Mackenzie King's government either to avoid or defer as long as possible any word or action offensive to Quebec's interests if only to maintain the confidence of the House - a policy which the self-serving federal Liberals described as preserving the unity of the country. Consequently, Mackenzie King's foreign policy clove tightly to a position of strict neutrality in European affairs until the British government and its enthusiastic allies in English Canada finally succeeded in pressuring him to voice his opposition to Hitler's occupation of the remnants of free Czechoslovakia on 15 March 1939.²

Even when Mackenzie King knew the jig was up, he still tried to delay the inevitable as long as possible. So fearful was he of Quebec's reaction to this change in his government's policy, the unhappy prime minister waited all of five days before he dared to inform Parliament that, in the event of a German attack upon Great Britain, "We would regard it as an act of aggression, menacing freedom in all parts of the British Commonwealth." In a last-ditch effort to allay Quebec's greatest concerns regarding Canada's involvement in European affairs, he tried to qualify that statement by adding: "If it were a case, on the other hand, of a dispute over trade or prestige in some far corner of the world, that would raise quite different considerations."³ Nothing availed him. Quebec refused to be appeased, and a mighty storm of protest arose out of the province.

The extent of Quebec's opposition to Canada's involvement in "all extraterritorial wars" was exemplified in the 29 March 1939 correspondence of Alphonse de la Rochelle, chef du secretariat, Societe Saint-Jean Baptiste de Montreal, to Ernest Lapointe, and its accompanying enclosure - "Opposition absolue de la population de la province de Quebec a toute participation du Canada aux guerres exterieures" (The absolute opposition of the population of the Province of Quebec to all participation by Canada in external wars). That attachment was a copy of a telegram sent to Prime Minister Mackenzie King. Its contents had been endorsed by the *creme de la creme* of French Canada's institutions, including the Societe Saint-Jean Baptiste de Montreal in its own name and on behalf of other Societes Saint-Jean Baptiste in Quebec and Ontario, the Ligue d'Action nationale, the Union catholique des Cultivateurs, the Jeunesses patriotes du Canada francais, the

1 *The Canadian Parliamentary Guide 1936*, ed. Major A. L. Normandin (Hull, Que., 1936), 367.

2 Neatby, *William Lyon Mackenzie King* 3, 298–299.

3 Quoted from Dominion of Canada, House of Commons, *Official Report of Debates* (hereinafter, House of Commons, *Debates*), 20 March 1939, 2043.

Bloc universitaire, the Confederation des Travailleurs catholiques du Canada, the Conseil central des Syndicats catholiques nationaux de Montreal, the Alliance catholique des Professeurs de Montreal (sections masculine et feminine) and the Association catholique de la Jeunesse canadienne-française.¹ Thus, the Czechoslovakian crisis clearly indicated just how divided French and English Canada were on the issue of rallying to Great Britain's side.²

French Canada, of course, shared nothing of English Canada's love of Great Britain as the benevolent Mother Country of yore. Nor had it any desire to sacrifice the blood of its *Canadians* in Britain's defence, for French Canada was inspired by another less kindly remembrance of the British presence in their past. Just as the motto of Quebec - *Je me souviens* (I remember) - asked them to do, many French Canadians still harboured memories of the perfidious Albion that had conquered and despoiled their ancestral society of eighteenth-century New France through deceit and trickery. For that reason, a reservoir of anti-British sentiment coursed through the soul of every French-Canadian nationalist. After all, had not Great Britain been responsible for imposing an unwanted, alien English-speaking, Protestant presence in their midst that even now threatened to deprive them of the mastery of their own destiny? That notion was particularly prevalent in Quebec, the only province in the country wherein French Canadians still comprised the majority of the population.

1 Lapointe fonds, NAC, MG 27 III B 10, vol. 24, file 80A.

2 Neatby, William Lyon Mackenzie King 3, 299.

9

The Finnish-Canadian Left, Duplessis and the Padlock Act

French Canadians saw themselves as constituting a distinct society within their own ancestral homeland of Quebec - the last bastion of French Canada, whose religious and linguistic bedrock was constantly being threatened with terminal erosion by the surrounding sea of English-speaking North Americans and the growing flood of immigrants from abroad. Included in the latter category were some three thousand Finns who had been attracted to Quebec's burgeoning resource extraction, construction and manufacturing industries during the 1920s. The radicals among them eventually established active FOC locals in such places as Montreal, Kenogami, Rouyn and Val-d'Or.¹ As long as the members of those locals kept to themselves, they aroused no particular alarm among their French neighbours in Quebec. All that changed as soon as the radical Finns and their comrades from other non-Francophone leftist organizations sought to radicalize the French-Canadian masses through such means as assisting the French comrades in the publication of a French-language working-class paper - *La vie ouvriere*.² Because it perceived those foreign influences to be undermining the very foundations of Quebec society, the elite in the provincial establishment sought to obliterate the radical Left with a rising tide of French-Canadian nationalism and clericism.³

Of course, leftist bashing was by no means restricted to Quebec. Canada's other provinces had their own share of rabid anti-communists and racists. Premier Mitchell ("Mitch") Hepburn and his Liberals, for example, were returned

1 For example, see CSJ:n Montrealign osaston Historiakomitea, "Suomalaisten historiaa Kenogamista ja ympäristöltä, vv. 1924–1925," "Canadian Suomalaisen Järjestön Montrealign Osasto N:o 65," 1950, and Oiva J. Salonen, "CSJ:n Rouynin osaston historiaa," n.d., in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 91, files 36, 44, and 54 respectively.

2 FOC, *Nälkää*, 41.

3 Neatby, *William Lyon Mackenzie King* 3, 233–34.

to power in the Ontario provincial elections of 1937 thanks to a campaign that largely directed itself in smashing the unholy alliance that supposedly existed between the forces of Communism and organized labour. Indeed, Hepburn had shamelessly built his platform with a few borrowed planks from Maurice Duplessis' Quebec campaign of a year earlier, with which the latter had successfully secured the reins of government for his Union Nationale. On the other hand, neither Hepburn nor other like-minded right-wing politicians across English Canada pursued anti-communist campaigns with the same volatile mix of nationalism and religion that Duplessis had concocted for his war against the Left in Quebec.¹

Duplessis' campaign platform, which was based on demands for greater provincial autonomy and the eradication of Communism from Quebec, whipped up the flames of xenophobia within Quebec society. It won him a sweeping victory in the provincial elections of 1936. Duplessis later amplified upon those demands, choosing to link Quebec's need for greater provincial autonomy with Ottawa's supposed softness on Communism.² Premier Duplessis, who also held a second portfolio as the attorney general for the province, quickly signalled the reactionary temper of his government by publicly praising the students of the Universite de Montreal for staging a riot in Montreal that succeeded in breaking up a meeting being held there by the supporters of the Spanish Loyalists and the Republican government of Spain. In his letter of complaint to Lapointe, Eugene Forsey described the incident in this way:

This affair was carefully organized; former students of mine have in their possession one of the notes sent round ordering the youths to meet at the headquarters of the Jeunesse Ouvriere Catholique and "bring their canes." It is obvious, also, that it has approval in high quarters. There is, in fact, a formidable Fascist movement in this province...³

Nor was Duplessis alone in denouncing all manifestations in support of the Spanish Loyalists as being Communistic, for he had been ably seconded in that task by none other than Jean-Marie Rodrigue Cardinal Villeneuve. Cardinal Villeneuve was the most influential cleric in Quebec and the *eminence grise* behind Duplessis (at least in matters relating to Communism⁴). He believed that the province's only salvation lay in right-wing authoritarianism and church-state corporatism.

1 Lita-Rose Betcherman, *The Swastika and the Maple Leaf Fascist Movements in Canada in the Thirties* (Toronto, 1975), 102–106.

2 "M. Maurice Duplessis et le communisme: Text d'une declaration energique du premier-ministre" [newspaper clipping, n.d.], in the Lapointe fonds, NAC, MG 27 III B 10, vol. 43, file 18/17.

3 Quoted from Eugene Forsey to Ernest Lapointe, 3 November 1936, *ibid.*, vol. 22, file 70.

4 According to Conrad Black, *Duplessis* (Toronto, 1977), 161: "Duplessis and Villeneuve arranged a system of complete exchange of information on what they discovered of communist activity."

Those were precisely the issues that were outlined in the notorious speech he delivered on "Liberty and Liberties" to the Cercle Universitaire in Montreal on the evening of 29 January 1938:

Perhaps, gentlemen, you would like to know now whether I am fascist, totalitarian or democratic? I shall answer in the very words of Msgr. Bilezewski, one of the great patriot bishops who presided over the reconstitution of modern Poland after the war:

"I do not admit the wild, lying, atheistic democracy which reigns today in almost all the States of the world. The masonic organizations, secret or avowed, the revolutionaries and the politicians in their pay, the scribblers, the Communist orators who have explained, and still explain, to the people that chance and a blind majority of votes shall decide the organization of power in the state, fill me with horror. The end pursued by this democracy does not really lead to the sovereignty of the people, but to the absolute power of the backstairs financiers and their lackeys. The democracy which the Church, good sense, and true love of country require is one whose first sovereign is God, where all the citizens govern together in mutual understanding, and work by charity to defend the true rights of each individual and the greatest blessings of humanity: religion, conscience, the family, life, order general welfare. I do not want any kind of democracy, I want an aristocratic democracy."¹

It was in an atmosphere charged with such ideas that Duplessis began to carry out part of his election platform with the passing of An Act to Protect the Province against Communistic Propaganda in 1937.² The Padlock Act, or Law, as this piece of legislation was more commonly known, made it illegal to use a house "to propagate communism or bolshevism by any means whatsoever" and permitted the attorney general to order a house being used for such purposes to be locked up for one year. It further allowed him the powers to confiscate or destroy any materials "propagating or tending to propagate communism or bolshevism."³ Because this law chose not to define what communism or bolshevism actually was, the interpretation of those terms was left to the discretion of the attorney general. As a result, Duplessis could, and did use the Padlock Act in a blatant attempt to muzzle all forms of legitimate dissent, which, in point of fact,

1 Quoted from a contemporary[?] translation of a speech by Jean-Marie Rodrigue Cardinal Villeneuve on "Liberty and Liberties," 28 January 1938 [from a copy in the possession of Carl Dow of Ottawa]. For the original text, see "S.E. le cardinal Villeneuve pane au Cercle Universitaire de liberte et de libertes," *Le Devoir*, 31 January 1938.

2 Black, *Duplessis*, 161–162.

3 Quoted from Canada, *Statutes of Canada*, 1937, I George VI, c. 2, Quebec: s. 2.

also included Communism and Bolshevism inasmuch as the federal government had already repealed SECTION 98 of the Criminal Code.¹

The provincial and local authorities in Montreal were especially zealous in making use of the considerable powers that were then at Quebec's disposal for purging of all traces of ethnic radicalism from the city's many immigrant ghettos. They even tried to use it for scotching the continuing defections there of scores of Ukrainians and members of other immigrant minorities away from the Roman Catholic faith and into the bosom of a proselytizing United Church of Canada. It irked them that anyone would dare desert the true religion for the dubious reason of placing themselves under the sway of those Protestant heretics who preached the virtues of the "Marxist" Social Gospel at Montreal's Church of All Nations. It was within that context that the police raided the rather nondescript greystone Protestant church, which was situated in the heart of one of the city's grimmier east-end working-class neighbourhoods for the convenience of its parishioners:

On February 26 [1938], four detectives visited the Church of All Nations (United Church of Canada), declared that they were going to close up two halls at addresses stated and "Katsunoff's International Brigade" (presumably the International Brotherhood directed by the Rev. R. G Katsunoff, D.D.). They took away publicity material concerning a concert.²

Nor were French Canadians immune from the application of the Padlock Act if they happened to be leftists or members of non-establishment unions, for example, as happened in the case of the seizure of the records of Les Ouvriers Unis Montcalm-St. Edouard.³

A storm of protest rose throughout English Canada against the injustices arising from Quebec's use of the Padlock Act and in defence of civil liberties. Organizations as politically diverse as the Orange Lodge, the Canadian Civil Liberties Union, and the Canadian League for Peace and Democracy pressed the federal government to disallow the Padlock Act.⁴ Thousands of individuals from all walks of life - including clergymen, businessmen and other pillars of Canadian society, as well as ordinary working-men and women - signed petitions condemning the

1 Ibid., SECT. 12.

2 Quoted from the mimeographed "Bulletin" of the Canadian Civil Liberties Union (hereinafter, "Bulletin"), 19 March 1938.

3 L. A. Lafleur to L. S. Woodsworth, 28 March 1937, and J. S. Woodsworth to Ernest Lapointe, 29 March 1937, in the Lapointe fonds, NAC, MG 27 III B 10, vol. 43, file 18/17A. See also House of Commons, *Debates*, 30 May 1938, 3374–3382.

4 L. W. Janes [grand secretary, Provincial Grand Lodge for Quebec, Loyal Orange Association] to County Masters and all War. Masters of all Lodges in Quebec, 14 June 1938, and Hubert Desaulniers [president, Societe canadienne des Droits de l'Homme, section de Montreal] to Ernest Lapointe, 18 March 1938, in the Lapointe fonds, NAC, MG 27 III 13 10, vol. 43, file 18/17; petitions from the Canadian League for Peace and Democracy, *ibid.*, vol. 39, file 18/1.



Photo 6. The Play *Palkkapiian kapina* (The Mutiny of the Maid) staged in Montreal in 1934. The FOC local in Montreal was extremely active before World War II. (Source: William Eklund, *Canadian rakentaja*, 371.)

law, and wrote letters to the prime minister and the minister of justice demanding its invalidation.¹ None of this had any effect upon Lapointe, for his own officials in the Department of Justice had already established that "an Act could not be disallowed just because it was considered unjust, oppressive, confiscatory or because it was in conflict with recognized legal principles" in the Memorandum on the Power Commission Act, 1935, and An Act Respecting Communistic Propaganda," which they had prepared as early as November 1937.²

Among the unsuccessful petitioners were also hundreds of Finns who, for the most part, appear to have been loyal members of one or another of the FOC's locals across Canada. This is suggested by the fact that these protesters usually affixed their signatures to lists that were tendered to the government in the name of the Canadian League for Peace and Democracy, a Popular Front organization that was heavily supported by the FOC. Without the FOC's active assistance, it is highly unlikely that such uniform petitions could have originated in and been sent so expeditiously from such widely separated Finnish communities across Canada as: Port Hammond, British Columbia; Bingley, Alberta; Coteau Hill and Tantalion, Saskatchewan; Sherridon, Manitoba; Intola, Kaministikwia, and Port Arthur, On-

1 For example, see L. V. Smith to W. L. M. King, 3 April 1938, *ibid.*, vol. 43, tile 18/20A; T. C. Davis [attorney general for Saskatchewan], to Ernest Lapointe, 29 March 1938, and Rev. John C. Mortimer to W. L. M. King, 9 May 1938, *ibid.*, vol. 22, file 71. For similar petitions, see *ibid.*, vols. 39–47, files 18/1–32, *passim*.

2 Quoted from *ibid.*, vol. 50, file 40.

tario¹. It is a minor testament to the extraordinary organizational ability of the FOC in marshalling its members on behalf of a just cause.

Even those Finns who were residents of Quebec (and, consequently, extremely vulnerable to the displeasure of the provincial and local authorities there) dared put themselves into jeopardy by expressing their disapproval of the law. Thus, it took courage for 158 Finnish Montrealers to sign a petition and send it to Ottawa.² Because the FOC fully recognized the danger facing its Quebec members (especially those living in the smaller communities of the province) should they agitate against the law, the national secretary of the organization counselled the members of the Rouyn local only to sign their petition as individuals and warned them against identifying themselves with any particular association. He then further advised them that they should first decide for themselves whether or not to forward their petition to the federal government and risk possible retaliation from the provincial authorities.³ In other words, Duplessis' legislative initiative had produced a virtual reign of terror among those who now found themselves as belonging to a class of disfavoured residents in Quebec.

On the other hand, the Padlock Act was not without its enthusiastic supporters. The federal government also received a great number of forceful counter-petitions from Quebec praising that piece of legislation. Those organizations most approving of the law included a multitude of religious and nationalist-minded associations of the likes of the Congregation des Enfants de Marie de la Cathedrale de Chicoutimi, the Societe diocesaine Saint-Jean-Baptiste de Saint-Hyacinthe and the Jeunesse Patriote Danvilloise.⁴ As well, a host of individuals reflecting similar ideals from across the province deluged Ottawa with petitions and letters favouring the law's retention. Indeed, the essence of those views from Quebec's right wing was most ably summarized as follows in one private French-speaking Montrealer's plea to the Honourable Ernest Lapointe, minister of justice in the federal cabinet and Mackenzie King's trusted Quebec lieutenant:

This law causes ill to no one if he is not one of the supporters of communism and those who hide under the cover of other groups no less suspect such as the League for Peace, the Friends of the Soviet Union, the Freedom of Speech and Assembly, the campaigns against fascism to turn the attention of people

1 For more of these petitions, see *ibid.*, vol. 43, files 18/20 and 18120A.

2 H. Vuori [Montreal FOC local] to *Kunnon toverit* [Esteemed comrades; that is, the officials in the FOC National Office], 26 April 1938, in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 11, file 7.

3 G. Sundqvist to V. Jaakkola [corresponding secretary, Rouyn FOC local], 28 March 1938, *ibid.*, file 8.

4 Th. Addlard Fontaine, M.P., to Ernest Lapointe, 12 May 1938, and enclosure: copy of La Societe diocesaine Saint-Jean-Baptiste de Saint Hyacinthe to T. A. Fontaine, 10 May 1938, in the Lapointe fonds, NAC, MG 27 BIB 10, vol. 43, file 18/17.

away from the work that they are accomplishing in the shadows with the goal of bringing about the revolution and reversing the established social order.

... The central government at Ottawa must adopt entirely the provincial padlock law and apply anew Section 98 ... which it repealed, I hope, *Monsieur le Ministre*, that you will pass the laws which protect our country against this rapacious International, against the alien-assassins who desire to establish here a second Russia in BLOOD and DEATH.

GOD PROTECT OUR CANADA, that is my dearest wish.¹

The Padlock Act had its share of defenders in Parliament, too. One of its most vociferous supporters in the House was J. A. Bradette, the Liberal member representing the constituency of Cochrane, Ontario. In his defence of the Padlock Act, Bradette offered the assembled parliamentarians a stream of confidential information that undoubtedly originated with the RCMP. Because there is no corroborating evidence to link Bradette directly to the police, it is far likelier that he received the privileged intelligence from Lapointe himself. Bradette then used that information in combination with a generous sprinkling of quotations from Cardinal Villeneuve's 29 January 1938 speech on "Liberty and Liberties" to the Cercle Universitaire in Montreal to prove his point that "we of the province of Quebec are in favour of liberty, not licence."²

As justice minister, Lapointe bore the prime responsibility for deciding the fate of the Padlock Act. His options were to let the legislation stand, to disallow it, or to refer it to the Supreme Court. He delayed in making any decision for the better part of a year (the period of grace in which he had the discretion to act on this matter), claiming in Parliament that his department was far too busy to render an immediate opinion.³ Meanwhile, he employed his staff to find every means for justifying Quebec's right to enforce the law. Then, on 9 July 1938, just three days before the period of grace was about to lapse, Lapointe finally delivered his recommendation to the government that it should not disallow or challenge the law's legality in the courts.⁴ The prime minister supported him, affirming that "the government ... concurred in the opinion of the minister of justice, that it was preferable that any question as to the validity of the Padlock Law should be

1 My translation of Albert Dore to Ernest Lapointe, 28 April 1938, *ibid.*, file 18/20A [emphasis as in the original text].

2 Quoted from House of Commons, *Debates*, 31 May 1938, 3414–3420.

3 *Ibid.*, 26 April 1938, 2298.

4 Lapointe's ostensible reasons for not intervening are contained in the signed copy of his memorandum "To His Excellency, the Governor General in Council," n.d. A French draft of this document is dated 24 June 1938, but the advice was actually tendered to the governor general only on 6 July 1938, in the Lapointe fonds, NAC, MG 27 111 B 10, vol. 43, file 18/17.

determined by the courts in a concrete case" and "that no consideration of the influence or wealth of the persons or interests affected by the legislation, either of Alberta [concerning disallowance of statutes passed by the Social Credit government there restricting foreclosures and taxing mortgage holders] or Quebec, had the slightest influence on the decision of the government."¹ One could hardly imagine that, in the case of Quebec, the leftists who were directly affected by the Padlock Act, had either wealth or influence in sufficient quantities to stir the government's favour on their behalf even on the best of days.

In sum, this episode marked exactly to what extent Mackenzie King's government was prepared to surrender its Liberal principles and to sacrifice English Canada's good opinion in order to accommodate Lapointe and the province he represented. As well, it also foretold what would be the likely fate of the working-class movement should ever the Quebec faction predominate in government policy-making in Ottawa. It was not until 8 March 1957 that the Padlock Act was finally declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of Canada. It had been successfully challenged by Frank Roncarelli, a Montreal restaurant owner and member of the much persecuted Jehovah's Witnesses, the religious sect against which Duplessis had also extended the law's provisions. Also noteworthy is the fact that Roncarelli brought his case before the Supreme Court without the least assistance from the Government of Canada.²

Throughout the interim and until its quashing in court, the Padlock Act exacted a terrible toll on the people and organizations against which it was aimed. The scope of the law was so broad that even the private homes of ordinary individuals and their families, legitimate places of business, as well as the meeting rooms and facilities of organizations identified with the working-class movement, faced the real threat of being summarily padlocked if the least shred of evidence of a communistic nature could be found on the premises. For those reasons, the Padlock Act had an extraordinarily chilling effect on the Montreal FOC local and its members. The reminiscences of one directly affected Finnish Montrealer was recorded by William Eklund on that point as follows:

Uno [also spelt as 'Uuno'] Ojalampi, a well-known resident of Montreal, also served as the manager of the Vapaus Branch in Montreal before World War II. He brought to mind that the FOC's operations there were very lively and fruitful between 1924–1939. "But then it ended," he attested. "In 1939, very heavy political pressure was applied against the organization. At that time, we also lost a lot of our local archival documentation. Police raids were an almost everyday occurrence at the Vapaus store, for example, and often they [the police] had found something there, taking away their 'discoveries' with-

1 Quoted from W. L. M. King to Lewis V. Smith, 23 July 1938, *ibid.*

2 Black, *Duplessis*, 386.

out ever returning any of them. In the spring of 1939, the FOC's members leased a small picnic grounds and there we dug a small cellar, where we hid all of the archival material that we were able to gather together. But the unknowable spoiled our best intentions. There was no ventilation in the cellar, and so, those records rotted away there. We were only able to salvage a part of the archival materials and that part is now well preserved in the Finnish Canadian Archives, in Ottawa, with the other archival material donated by the FOC." The foregoing information was taken from Uno Ojalampi's letter of 5 March 1977 to W. Eklund.¹

In short, the Montreal local of the FOC had already ceased to exist above ground well before the outbreak of war and the federal government's wartime ban on the organization and its affiliates. The Padlock Act, which Duplessis and his minions so enthusiastically applied, had driven the FOC local underground by then. Thereafter, all of the public events sponsored by its supporters scrupulously maintained a superficial social complexion and cultural decorum unmarked by the least tincture of working-class politics. That was a necessity because the eyes and ears of the FOC's enemies ranged everywhere throughout the city. More dangerous than the clueless local, provincial and federal police, who lacked the necessary intelligence to operate on their own within the Finnish community without resorting to outside assistance, was the obliging band of Finnish nationalist informers. Those snitches were drawn from the staff of the Consulate General of Finland, the membership of the Montreal Suomi Society and the congregation of St. Michael's Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church of Montreal. They made life extremely difficult for the FOC and its members.

The oppressive quality of everyday life under Duplessis' repressive regime wore most heavily upon the FOC's adherents. Other Finns who were affected by the same malaise included social democrats and other political moderates who admitted a hint of bias towards the CCF. Given the air of anxiety and unease that hovered over Montreal's Finnish community, it should come as no surprise that there soon developed a significant out-migration of Finns and their families from the city to other parts of the country. Many Finnish Montrealers also experienced a parallel spiritual, social, cultural and political out-migration of the psyche, which drove them to break away from their established roots in the Finnish community for the sake of a sudden and irrevocable plunge into the seemingly safe confines of the English-Canadian melting-pot. Almost all were left with a deeply ingrained sense of distrust, suspicion, vulnerability, and a compulsion for enshrouding their private lives in a dense fog of secrecy and away from the prying eyes of strangers. Those psychological artifacts represented the most damaging scars of the Duplessis era.

1 My translation of Uno Ojalampi to William Eklund, as cited in Eklund, *Canadian rakentajia*, 371–372.

10 Quebec, Lapointe, and the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion

Another sign of Quebec's hardening attitude towards the working-class movement was found in its succour of the fascist National Unity Party. Rather than proscribing the local fascists, the provincial and municipal police forces aided them by breaking up anti-fascist demonstrations and otherwise according them a helping hand.¹ Even Ottawa appeared reluctant to intervene when one Montreal newspaper published an exposé - including photographs as evidence - of the National Unity Party's formation of a paramilitary force along the lines of Nazi Germany's Brown Shirts and Fascist Italy's Black Shirts contrary to SECTION 99 of the Criminal Code.² The same happened when a question was raised in the House of Commons asking what had the federal government done about the alleged smuggling of arms and ammunition from the United States for the fascists in Quebec. Lapointe, the minister responsible, boldly replied that there had been an investigation and it was not in the public interest to reveal what action had been subsequently taken.³ The justice minister later informed Parliament that the information could not be substantiated because the RCMP had ascertained it had come from Communists.⁴ In effect, Lapointe had simply used the power and prestige of his office as a buffer for the prevention of outside interference in Quebec's affairs and as the means for

1 "Demonstrators Against Sale of Fascist Goods Arrested," "Bulletin," January 1939.

2 *Montreal Gazette*, 31 January 1938; "Bulletin," 19 March 1938 and 21 May 1938; Betcherman, *The Maple Leaf and the Swastika*, 110–111.

3 *House of Commons, Debates*, 29 April 1938. The question was occasioned by a report published in the *Toronto Star Weekly*, 23 April 1938.

4 *House of Commons, Debates*, 29 June 1938, 4418.

manipulating the federal government's conduct and policies in defence of his own province's right-wing predilections ¹

Unfortunately for Lapointe's peace of mind, not all of the right-wing extremists in Quebec either understood or appreciated his role in the federal government and, therefore, sometimes treated him as a *vendu* (sell-out) to Ottawa or worse.² Yet, whenever the occasion arose, Lapointe was always there to champion Quebec's particular interests and viewpoint. He even did so when its vital interests were not directly affected. One such instance occurred after lurid reports of Spanish Loyalist forces in Spain pillaging Catholic churches, murdering priests and raping nuns circulated throughout the province, whipping up the Catholic faithful there into a frenzy of burning anger. Monsignor Antoniutti, Papal legate to Canada and Newfoundland, then added more fuel to the fire by urging them to treat General Francisco Franco's rebels as an "army of heroes, justly called 'Christ's militia'" for its defence of the Mother Church and its holy martyrs in Spain against the godless legions of the red Republicans and their Communist cohorts.³

No politician of Lapointe's inestimable experience and acumen could fail to take account of the incendiary situation that pertained in Quebec after the unleashing of so much raw emotion there. He knew that he would have to translate French Canada's moral outrage against the Spanish Loyalists and its wholehearted support of Franco into concrete government action. Given English Canada's overwhelming sympathy for the Loyalists, Lapointe could not have prevailed without the benefit of certain factors that swung the political balance in his favour. Most notable of these were Mackenzie King's own conservative predisposition (which surfaced in his early admiration of Adolf Hitler) and his cautious style of government. Lapointe's task was made easier because none of his colleagues in cabinet had presented as passionate and articulate an argument on behalf of English Canada's views on Spain as he had done for French Canada. Great Britain's, France's and the United States' hypocritical adherence to a policy of non-intervention in Spain also provided Mackenzie King with his excuse to follow suit.

1 For more on this subject, Esther Delisle, *The Traitor and the Jew: Anti-Semitism and Extreme Right-wing Nationalism in Quebec from 1929 to 1939*, trans. Madeleine Hebert et al. (Montreal, 1993), and idem, *Myths, Memory and Lies: Quebec's Intelligentsia and the Fascist Temptation, 1939–1960*, trans. Madeleine Hebert (Westmount, Quebec, 1998). Delisle's work, beginning with her doctoral dissertation "Antisemitisme et nationalisme d'extreme-droite dans la province de Quebec, 1929–1939" (Ph.D. diss., Universite Laval, 1992) - and including the original French editions of the two titles above, was not well received by the direct spiritual descendants of the same intelligentsia about whom she wrote.

2 For example, see "Vendus aux Juifs," *Le Fasciste canadien*, February 1938; "Quarante millions pour acheter une majorite" and "La justice de noire ministre de la Justice," *ibid.*, June 1938; House of Commons, *Debates*, 23 May 1939, 4430.

3 Heikkinen, *Meidän poikamme Espanjassa*, 21; Victor Howard, *The Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion: The Canadian Contingent in the Spanish Civil War* (Ottawa, 1986), 35; Betcherman, *The Maple Leaf and the Swastika*, 89.



Photo 7. Finnish-Canadian Loyalists on the Front the Spanish Civil War. (Source: Migration Institute of Finland, Edward W. Laine Collection, FOC_FA, Images)

When more than fifteen hundred Canadians (perhaps as many as twenty per cent of them being Finns who, for the most part, belonged to the FOC and the Popular Front) offered to fight against Franco and his German Nazi and Italian Fascist allies in the Spanish Civil War, the Canadian government quickly responded by passing the Foreign Enlistment Act of 1937. The act, which was drafted by the Department of Justice, was shepherded through Parliament by a beaming Lapointe.¹ Once passed, the act made it illegal for Canadians to serve in the Spanish Civil War and invalidated Canadian passports for travel to Spain. The Canadian government thereby mimicked the rest of the Western democracies, arguing that only by carrying out a policy of non-intervention in the Spanish conflict could a general European conflagration be prevented.

The fact that 1,546 Canadians actually went overseas as volunteers of the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion meant that Ottawa's prohibition against travel to Spain was not altogether effective. For example, Untamo Mäkelä, a Finnish Canadian who carried a 1938 Canadian passport stamped "Not valid for Spain,"

¹ Lapointe gave note of his intentions to modify the Imperial Foreign Enlistment Act of 1870 in House of Commons, *Debates*, 29 January 1937, 386–387.

appears not to have been too greatly inconvenienced by the rider that had been added to his travel document. His estate papers included not only the passport, but also a testimonial from the Republican government of Spain attesting to his valuable service in the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion with the Loyalist forces in the Spanish Civil War.¹ One of his Finnish-Canadian comrades, Jules Päiviö, described how he went "to Spain via Montreal, Toronto, New York [by train?], and then by a French liner to Le Havre." Because France had sealed its border with Spain in keeping with its non-interventionist policy, Päiviö and the other volunteers he met en route either crossed over the French-Spanish frontier by boat from Marseilles or went overland through the mountains on foot. Once in Spain, they took the train to their staging-areas and began their heroic service in what proved to be a tragically doomed cause.²

The war went badly for the Loyalist forces almost from the start. Bilbao, the last Republican centre in the North, fell in June 1937. In March 1938, the Nationalists launched a three-month series of sustained attacks that brought them to the shores of the Mediterranean, thereby cutting the territory still under the control of the Spanish Republic into two. Franco then mounted a major offensive in late 1938 against Catalonia, leading to the fall of Barcelona, its capital and the seat of the Republican government, in January 1939. The loss of Catalonia signalled the hopelessness of the Loyalist cause and marked the near end of the Second Republic that the Spaniards had joyously proclaimed in 1931. Both Great Britain and France recognized Franco's authoritarian regime in February 1939. With absolute victory so close at hand, Franco rebuffed the every Republican effort to reach a negotiated peace. That set the stage for his triumphal march into Madrid on 1 April 1939.

As for the Canadian volunteers, their entire experience in the Loyalist forces had been a dangerous and heartbreaking one. The war itself must have seemed to them an endless series of lost battles and retreats. Perhaps the most disheartening of all was the way in which their involvement in it came to a sudden end. It was in October 1938, right in the midst of Franco's autumn offensive against the Loyalists in Catalonia, that most of the soldiers of the International Brigades, including the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion, were taken out of the line and marched over the border into France.³ Many of the volunteers were forced to languish there in hastily prepared collection camps until they were finally repatriated by their home governments. The least fortunate of the lot, however, were those comrades who had been left behind in Spain during the withdrawal from the front.

1 For this, see the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 89, file 7.

2 Quoted from Jules Päiviö, "Finnish Canadians and the Spanish Civil War, 1936–1939," *Polyphony* 3 (Fall 1981): 77–80.

3 Frank Rogers, "Tieto takaisin lähettämisestä saapuu rintamalle," in Heikkinen, *Meidän poikamme Espanjassa*, 155.

The federal government refused to pay the travel expenses associated with the repatriation of Canadian volunteers after their terms of service in the conflict had ended.¹ Moreover, the RCMP sought to have re-entry into Canada denied to those volunteers who had lost their passports during the fighting and who, for the purpose of obtaining the necessary landing permits for gaining readmittance into Canada, had to identify themselves to the immigration authorities. The justice minister initially supported the RCMP's view that all veterans of the Spanish Civil War be refused readmittance into Canada.² He later relented in the face of counter-arguments presented by the Department of External Affairs, as signified by the handwritten notation "shown to Mr. Lapointe who indicated his general approval" which J. E. Read appended to his memorandum entitled "Return of Canadian volunteers from Spain," a document that concluded "it would be difficult for this country to stand alone in refusing to help in the settlement of the Spanish mess."³ When its attempt failed, the RCMP initiated a long-standing campaign of harassment against the returnees as one Finnish-Canadian veteran of the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion attested.⁴ MacBrien's successor as commissioner of the RCMP still sought to have as many of the veterans refused re-entry as possible because he believed them to be dangerous Communist revolutionaries.⁵ Eventually a number of Finns and other "Spanish Belligerents" were given temporary landing certificates to facilitate their return to Canada.⁶

In fact, it was not until 1980 that these "soldiers of conscience" and "freelancers against fascism" were officially relieved of the threat of prosecution for their disobedience to the Foreign Enlistment Act more than four decades earlier.⁷ At that time, Marcel Dionne (Liberal; Chicoutimi) forcefully reminded the House of another less benign view of the Mac-Paps by recalling the words of Maxime Raymond, an earlier MP from Quebec regarding his concern - or, more properly,

1 For a summary of the government's subsequent actions concerning Canadian volunteers in Spain, see O. D. Skelton, "Memorandum for the Prime Minister: Spanish Volunteers" and enclosures, 1 February 1939, in the Lapointe fonds, NAC, MG 27 111 B 10, vol. 22, file 70.

2 Ernest Lapointe to Major General Sir J. M. MacBrien [commissioner, RCMP], 13 September 1937, in the Department of External Affairs fonds, NAC, RG 25 G 1, vol. 1388, file 291-E-37, Part 1; H. L. Keenleyside, memorandum on the "Return of Canadian Volunteers from Spain," 24 February 1938, *ibid.*

3 Quoted from Keenleyside, "Return of Canadian Volunteers from Spain," *ibid.*

4 Yrjö Korpi, interview with Einar Nordström, March 1979, 45 min., Multicultural Historical Society of Ontario (hereinafter, MHSO), FIN-9009-KOR, a copy of which also exists in the William Eklund fonds, NAC, MG 31 H 80, Moving image & sound 1986-0173.

5 S. T. Wood to O. D. Skelton, 1 December 1938, in the Department of External Affairs fonds, NAC, RG 25 G 1, vol. 1388, file 291-E-37, Part 1, and 11 August 1939, *ibid.*, Part 2.

6 Immigration Branch, NAC, RG 76, vol. 429, file 635107, Part 2. See also individual case files respecting the repatriation of Canadian residents from Spanish nationalist prisoner-of-war camps in the Department of External Affairs fonds, NAC, RG 25 G 11, vol. 1388, file 291-H-37, Parts 1-3.

7 John Campbell, House of Commons, *Debates*, 15 December 1980, 5766.

lack of - for the Mac-Paps: "Here, in Canada, our own country, there are volunteers who have boarded ships to enlist in the Spanish Red Army, something over which, I must confess, I do not grieve. If only they did not come back, we would be rid of these undesirables."¹

All the actions that the Liberal government of the day directed against the welfare of the Mac-Paps were undertaken for the sake of preserving Canada's neutrality in international relations (and perhaps with the idea of punishing them for having jeopardized it?).² However, the real reason for the government's continuing harassment rather than outright jailing of the returning Mac-Paps was given in a memorandum to the prime minister by O. D. Skelton:

Aside from the question of whether any prosecution should be initiated by the Federal or local Provincial authorities and aside from the question of the difficulty of establishing definite proof, it may be noted that no other country, so far as we are aware, which has a Foreign Enlistment Act, is taking steps to apply penalties, certainly neither the United Kingdom nor the United States is doing so.³

In 1980, with the benefit of some forty years of hindsight, John Campbell, the parliamentary secretary to the minister of veteran affairs of another Liberal government, had this to say in the House of Commons respecting the Canadian veterans of that conflict:

One can certainly congratulate those men who went to Spain and waged war on the fascists. One can applaud their bravery in the face of a better manned and better equipped enemy. As soldiers they were superb, and Canadians in general regard the performance of the Mackenzie-Papineau Brigade as heroic....

History has proven them right. They were among the first to take on fascism.⁴

William Kardash, a veteran of the Spanish Civil War, took Campbell's statement to task six years later. In his comments, Kardash dryly noted: "Despite these fine words the request of the Mac-Paps for full recognition was turned down by Mr.

1 Quoted from *ibid.*; cf. Maxime Raymond, *ibid.*, 15 February 1938, 910.

2 See copies of O. D. Skelton's memoranda for the prime minister concerning the "Return of Spanish Volunteers to Canada," n.d., and "Spanish Volunteers," 1 February 1939, in the Lapointe fonds, NAC, MG 27 III B 10, vol. 22, file 70.

3 Quoted from Skelton, "Spanish Volunteers;" 1 February 1939, 2, *ibid.*

4 Excerpted from a statement by John Campbell, in House of Commons, *Debates*, 15 December 1980, 5765–5766.

Campbell.»¹ The Mac-Paps were finally "officially" honoured in Ottawa on 20 October 2001 with the unveiling at Green Island Park next to Rideau Falls of a monument commemorating their participation in the Spanish Civil War. The sculpture was raised by public subscription. The land was donated by the National Capital Commission. Her Excellency the Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson, Governor General of Canada, spoke movingly on behalf of the People of Canada to praise and thank the Mac-Pap veterans and their fallen comrades for their service to Spain and Democracy. Other speakers included Jose Cuenca Ayana, the Ambassador of the Government of Spain, and Jules Päiviö, President of the Association of Veterans and Friends of the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion. Päiviö, Maurice Constant and Arne Knudsen were the only three of the dozen surviving veterans of the Mac-Paps able to attend the ceremony. The Government of Canada, however, was not to be seen there in its official capacity, for it neither attended the unveiling nor shared in the costs of bringing this memorial project to fruition.

Yet, if the above seems to suggest that Canada was wrong for cleaving to the sidelines as Europe lurched to the brink of war, it certainly was not alone in making that mistake. Of the Western democracies, both Great Britain and France had sought to preserve their own neutrality by acquiescing to periodic episodes of Italian and German aggression. For example, neither tried to curb Mussolini's intrusion into Africa or to prevent Hitler's re-militarization of the Rhineland and in effecting his plans for *Anschluss* with Austria. At Munich, their paralysis was such that they carried out their policy of appeasement (or, as some have suggested, their attempt to turn the Germans against the Soviets) with Hitler almost to the point of complicity in his dismemberment of Czechoslovakia.² The record from the German side of the November 1937 conversations between Lord Halifax (who was then acting as Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's unofficial emissary to Berlin) and Adolf Hitler states that Great Britain was then seeking to effect an Anglo-German rapprochement based on a community of interest in which the iniquities of the Versailles treaty against the German Reich might be removed if it would only serve as the West's bulwark against Communism.³ Nor should it be forgotten that the British and French upper classes were also then exhibiting arch-conservative sympathies that were more closely attuned to the support of Nazism and Fascism at home and abroad rather than anything as anaemic and degenerate as democracy - social or otherwise.

1 Quoted from William Kardash, "50 years ago this week - Civil war in Spain," *Viikkosanomat*, 18 August 1986.

2 Winston S. Churchill, *The Gathering Storm* (Boston, 1948), 296–297, 321; William L. Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich: A History of Nazi Germany* (New York, 1960), 416–420.

3 Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Documents and Materials relating to the Eve of the Second World War* [Moscow, 1948], Document No. I.

Throughout that time and until the Japanese surprise attack on its naval base at Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941, the United States also officially maintained an isolationist stance with respect to Europe. On the other hand, the Soviet Union had vainly striven alone to create a common front for bringing a halt to Nazi and Fascist aggression during most of the prewar period. However, once having lost patience with the Western democracies, Stalin finally decided that he would no longer "pull their chestnuts out of the fire" without obtaining adequate guarantees of military support from them.¹ It was then that the interwar notion of seeking peace through collective security, mutual cooperation and assistance was utterly and irrevocably laid to rest. When that moment arrived, the fate of the world was sealed - and among the early casualties of the ensuing maelstrom was to be the FOC.

1 Cf. B. N. Polnomarev, I. M. Bolkov et al., *Istoria Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soiuza* (Moscow, 1959), 477–478, 489–493.

11 The Outbreak of War, and the Anti-War Opposition in Canada

An early outbreak of hostilities in Europe was assured when, after prolonged negotiations in Moscow, Great Britain and France still could not come to terms with the Soviet Union for a joint military guarantee of Polish borders against German aggression. There could be no real agreement as long as the Polish government refused the Soviets the right of transit for their troops to Poland's western frontier. As the discussions progressed, it also became abundantly clear that the British and French representatives had not been given the final authority by their governments to strike an agreement with the Soviet negotiators, and that made Stalin suspect the good faith and motives of the Western democracies. He feared that Great Britain and France were really trying to isolate the Soviet Union in a way that would precipitate the movement of Hitler's armies eastward against him. So, even as the British and French negotiators allowed their talks with the Soviets to flounder, Germany seized the initiative by concluding a non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union on 23 August 1939.¹

Hitler had finally succeeded in driving a wedge between the Western democracies and the Soviet Union by promising not to attack the latter and, as well, by coming to terms with it through the outlining of mutually acceptable spheres of influence for himself and Stalin. Because the secret protocol attached to that agreement provided for the partition of Poland between Germany and the Soviet Union as well as the deliverance of Finland and the Baltic States into the Soviet sphere of influence, Hitler was now free to annex western Poland with Stalin's concurrence.²

1 For the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact, see Great Britain, *Documents concerning the German-Polish Relations and the Outbreak of Hostilities between Great Britain and Germany on September 3, 1939* (London, 1939), Document No. 61.

2 The secret protocols are published in Raymond James Sontag and James Stuart Beddie, eds., *Nazi-Soviet Relations* (Washington, 1948), 78.

On 1 September 1939, the day after the ratification of the non-aggression pact by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the German Wehrmacht marched on hapless Poland. Two days later, France and Great Britain declared war on Germany as stipulated in their pact of mutual assistance with Poland. Stalin's nervous fears of a last-minute push by the French and the British to turn Hitler, which would have him continue his *Drang nach Osten* into the Soviet Union, caused the delay in the start of the Red Army's campaign to occupy the eastern half of the country until 17 September 1939. Thus began World War II, which then mushroomed into global proportions as one country after another was drawn into the raging inferno.

Although Canada was among the first countries to rally to Great Britain's side, its participation in the war had not been unanimously supported at home. As had been the case in World War I, the staunchly Catholic and nationalist-minded element in the predominantly French-Canadian population of Quebec again expressed its opposition to any involvement in an extraterritorial war.¹ Indeed, Prime Minister Mackenzie King so feared Quebec's reaction to the coming war that he confessed to "an instant sense of relief" when he first heard the news of the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact, for he believed that French Canadians would respond more readily to a call to arms now that the Soviets were to be on the enemy side.² However, no such war against the Soviet hordes ever materialized and, therefore, Quebec remained less than enthusiastic with the one then being fought solely against the Axis Powers.³

1 For this as well as a discussion of the anti-communist and pro-fascist tendencies in Quebec, see Creighton, *The Forked Road*, 26–28; Ivan Avakumovic, *The Communist Party: A History* (Toronto, 1975), 111–112; Betcherman, *The Swastika and the Maple Leaf*, 85–88; Balawyder, *Canadian-Soviet Relations between the World Wars, 199–203*. Nor should one forget the already mentioned Delisle, *Myths, Memory and Lies: Quebec Intelligentsia and the Fascist Temptation, 1939–1960*, and idem, *The Traitor and the Jew: Anti-semitism and Extreme Right-wing Nationalism in Quebec from 1929 to 1939*, which together present the most comprehensive treatment of fascism in Quebec covering the period under review here.

2 W. L. M. King, Diary, 22 August 1939, in the William Lyon Mackenzie King fonds, NAC, MG 26 J 13, Microfiche M–211 [manuscript entries in Mackenzie King's hand] and Microfiche T–138 [typed transcript of those entries]; Neatby, *William Lyon Mackenzie King* 3, 316.

3 J. L. Ralston [minister of national defence] to Ernest Lapointe, 27 September 1940, and enclosure, "Extracts from a Memorandum prepared after a few days leave in the Province of Quebec by a French-Canadian officer employed as an Intelligence Officer in the Directorate of Military Operations and Intelligence," 18 September 1940, as well as a copy of Lapointe's reply to Ralston, 30 September 1940, in the Lapointe fonds, NAC, MG 27 III B 10, vol. 24, file 82. Cf. Edgar Packard Dean, "Canada at War," *Foreign Affairs: An American Quarterly Review* 18 (January 1940): 298–300.

At best, Quebec's leading officials, clerics and opinion makers held only a lukewarm interest in the prosecution of the war.¹ Moreover, some of the province's most prominent public figures were actively opposed to Canada's involvement in the conflict. For example, Premier Maurice Duplessis fought the provincial general elections in the fall of 1940 with a campaign "against Canadian unity and our participation in the war on the side of the [British] Empire."² For the sake of preserving the unity of the country as well as sparing the Mackenzie King government from an embarrassing repudiation of its pro-British policies, Justice Minister Lapointe and several of his Quebec colleagues threatened to leave the federal cabinet should Duplessis be returned to office. Fearful that their resignations would leave no one in cabinet to dissuade Mackenzie King from introducing overseas conscription, the Quebec electorate swept into power the provincial Liberals under Joseph-Adelard Godbout with seventy seats to the fifteen retained by the Union Nationale.³ Nor was the federal government prepared to rest on its laurels with Duplessis' defeat, for the RCMP continued to monitor his activities for signs of pro-fascist, anti-Semitic and other disloyal tendencies.⁴ Nonetheless, Duplessis was again returned to power in the Quebec general elections of 1944.

Camillien Houde, the flamboyant Mayor of Montreal, was another powerful Quebec politician who opposed Canada's involvement in the war. Houde's anti-war sympathies stemmed from his pronounced admiration of Mussolini, Petain and the fascist ideologies which they espoused, as well as from his own deep-seated sense of French-Canadian nationalism. When he openly called upon his fellow citizens not to register for military service within Canada, Lapointe personally hastened to sign Houde's arrest warrant, which led to the Montreal mayor's removal from office and the beginning of his four-year internment in August 1940.⁵ Despite the heavy hand of federal press censors during that period, the French-language press

1 For examples of Quebec's instantaneously negative reaction to Canada's declaration of war, see the following in the Lapointe fonds, NAC, MG 27 III B 10, vol. 24, file 80: Alphonse de la Rochelle [chef du secretariat, Societe Saint-Jean Baptiste de Montreal] to Ernest Lapointe, 5 September 1939, and enclosure, copy of Joseph Danserreau [president] and A. de la Rochelle to W. L. M. King, 2 September 1939; J.-R. Potvin, "Extrait des minutes d'une assemblée de la municipalité du village de St. Prime. Tenue le 5 Sept. 1939," 6 September 1939; L. Marois et al. [Laboratoire Marois] to Lapointe [telegram], 6 September 1939; A. Meunier [*La Chambre de Commerce Rouyn-Norand*] to Lapointe, 6 September 1939; Henri Dubuc [president, assemblée publique des citoyens de Sherbrooke] to Lapointe [telegram], 6 September 1939; Henri Boisvert [president, Societe Saint-Jean Baptiste de Quebec] to Lapointe, 6 September 1939; Dr. Gerard Tremblay [president, Societe Saint-Jean Baptiste de Chicoutimi] to Lapointe, 8 September 1939; Gerard Picard [secrétaire general, Confederation des Travailleurs Catholiques de Canada] to Lapointe, 11 September 1939.

2 My translation of "Cinqième colonne," *L'Autorité* (Montreal), 26 October 1940.

3 Black, *Duplessis*, 207; Creighton, *The Forked Road*, 8.

4 For example, see enclosure in S. T. Wood to the deputy minister of justice, 10 December 1943, in the Louis St. Laurent fonds, NAC, MG 261, vol. 3, file 12-3-21.

5 Black, *Duplessis*, 144, 231.

in Quebec continued to mirror popular opinion there in its constant agitation for Houde's release.¹ Even after four years of the federal government's unrelenting efforts to squelch Quebec's anti-war resistance movement, Houde was still able to command a crowd of 50,000 jubilant supporters to greet him upon his release from internment in August 1944.² Indeed, his popularity was such that Houde had no difficulty in later reclaiming his former office of Mayor of Montreal.

Nor was the Quebec caucus of the federal Liberal Party left entirely untouched by anti-war sentiments. For example, one Liberal backbencher in the House of Commons - Maxime Raymond - broke with the party over its pro-war policies. Raymond championed the anti-war cause so vigorously in Parliament that the Societe Saint-Jean Baptiste chose to lionize him as the "valorous defender of the autonomy of Canada" on the occasion of its celebration of Quebec's national holiday of the fete Saint-Jean Baptiste on 24 June 1941.³

Raymond's use of parliamentary immunity prompted this rueful comment from Lapointe's camp: "Unfortunately, things may be said in the House [by Raymond] which should not be allowed outside." It was also suggested in the same quarters that "the organizers and officers [of the Societe Saint-Jean Baptiste] are fascists."⁴

The temper of Quebec was such that, during the early war years, even staunch federalists found it extremely difficult to express their unequivocal support of Canada's war effort. For example, Cardinal Villeneuve long delayed in making public his support of the Allied cause despite the fact that he had supposedly become quite disenchanted with Nazi Germany during the course of one of his last trips to Europe prior to the outbreak of World War II. As C. G. Power (one of Lapointe's Quebec colleagues in cabinet) charitably noted of Villeneuve's views at that time: "... He was convinced that the Nazi philosophy and the Nazi aggressions were a peril and a menace to the whole world. He approved heartily of Canada's participation in the war though understandably he was a little averse to making any public announcement on the subject."⁵

When Villeneuve finally consented to speak out openly on behalf of the Allies in the beginning of June 1940 (that is, at the time of the retreat of the British and French forces to Dunkirk), Lapointe seized the initiative by arranging for the

1 For example, see "Camillien Houde: doit-il sortir?" *Police Journal* (Montreal), 28 February 1942.

2 Brian McKenna, "Houde, Camillien," in *The Canadian Encyclopedia* 3 (3 vols.; Edmonton, 1985), 835.

3 Societe Saint-Jean Baptiste, *Hommage a la famine paysanne* (Montreal, 1941), 5, a copy of which is in the Lapointe fonds, NAC, MG 27 III B 10, vol. 24, file 80.

4 Quoted from marginal notes handwritten in English and French [in Lapointe's hand?], *ibid.*, 4, 5.

5 As cited in Black, *Duplessis*, 206.

immediate distribution of the cardinal's address to newspapers across the country.¹ Before long, the newspaper press was carrying stories from coast to coast of Canada's highest-ranking Roman Catholic cleric and the acknowledged spiritual leader of Quebec uttering such pro-war statements as "the Church does not bless the war, but it blesses the sword of those who are using it for good."² Not only did this make good propaganda on behalf of Canadian unity and the war effort, but it also served to strengthen Lapointe's political hold over Quebec by giving the appearance that he enjoyed the unqualified support of Cardinal Villeneuve and the Roman Catholic church.

Lapointe, too, was a reluctant champion of Canada's war effort. Before the war, he had been always ready to use the powers of his high office as federal minister of justice and Mackenzie King's Quebec lieutenant to keep Canada free of European entanglements. In wartime, however, he sometimes seemed less inclined to shoulder the responsibilities and burdens of that office. For example, he balked at countersigning Canada's declaration of war in his capacity as attorney general, and stubbornly withheld from affixing his signature to that document until firmly instructed to desist from such "childishness" by his deputy minister. Lapointe finally succumbed to the chiding of his deputy minister, for the enclosed declaration of war - being a printed copy from the *Canada Gazette*, 10 September 1939 (extra), the text of which had been rushed to press before actually having been signed by him - now bore his signature as well as those of the governor general and the prime minister.³

Again, it was only with the greatest reluctance that he finally agreed to fulfill another painful duty that of broadcasting a radio address in French to his fellow Quebecers on 23 June 1940 to announce the federal government's plan for the general mobilization of the entire population across Canada. The depth of Lapointe's discomfiture was, perhaps, most poignantly revealed in this passage from his radio talk:

I must tell you that only the imperative sense of duty holds me to the office that I now occupy. Moreover, as long as I am in this office I promise you to fulfill my duty, all of my duties to my compatriots, to my well-loved country and to my conscience.⁴

1 G. B. Lash [director of public information] to Ernest Lapointe, 5 June 1940, including two enclosures - G B. Lash "to the News Editor," 4 June 1940, and the accompanying news release, in the Lapointe fonds, NAC, MG 27 III B 10, vol. 22, file 71A.

2 Quoted from "A Cardinal Lashes Hitlerism," *Toronto Globe and Mail*, 5 June 1940.

3 Quoted from W. S. E., "Memorandum for the Minister of Justice," 13 October 1939, in the Lapointe fonds, NAC, MG 27 III B 10, vol. 50, file 42. "Childishness" was the exact word used.

4 My translation of *Texte complet des discours sur la mobilisation générale prononcé à la radio, le dimanche 23 juin 1940 par Le Très Honorable Ernest Lapointe ...* (Ottawa, [1940?]), 9.

Ironically, the other major source of opposition to the war came from the other side of the ideological fence, that is, from the internationalist-minded, pro-Soviet radicals and Communists. Indeed, it was the Communist movement that galvanized anti-war sentiment elsewhere across the country until Germany's attack upon the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941 under the code name of Operation Barbarossa. Up to that time, most left-wing radicals interpreted the foreign policy of the Western powers, and especially that of Britain, as an elaborate imperialist plot to trick the Germans and Soviets into annihilating each other.¹ Thus, the Communist press in Canada tended to greet the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact of August 1939 as an instrument of peace for averting global conflict.² That was in direct contrast to the uniform condemnation accorded the pact by such mainstream capitalist papers as the *Toronto Globe and Mail*, which labelled it "Soviet trickery" and "Nazi bribery."³ *Vapaa Sana*, the one-time social-democratic Finnish-language newspaper in Toronto, also adopted much the same line as the *Globe and Mail*.⁴

Vapaus, on the other hand, treated the unfolding events in Berlin as straight front-page news stories. Thus, the first hint of a Nazi-Soviet *rapprochement* - the commercial treaty agreed to on 22 August 1939 - was first reported in the newspaper without additional editorial comment.⁵ On the front page of the next day's edition, *Vapaus* followed this up with an equally terse report on the just concluded non-aggression pact.⁶ Reaction to the abrupt change in Soviet foreign policy was left to a second-page article that had been tendered by Tim Buck on behalf of the Central Executive Committee of the CPC. Headlined "In Keeping War Out of the World, We Are Keeping Canada Out of the War," it emphasized that the whole purpose of the Soviet Union's foreign policy was aimed at defending itself and the lesser European nations from external aggression. This article also stressed the

1 Cf. Tom McEwan, *The Forge Glows Red* (Toronto, 1974), 207–209; John Kolasky, *The Shattered Illusion: The History of Ukrainian Pro-Communist Organizations in Canada* (Toronto, 1979), 27–28; John Sawatsky, *Men in the Shadows: The RCMP Security Service* (Toronto, 1980), 63–64; James H. Gray, *Troublemaker! A Personal History* (Toronto, 1978), 81–82.

2 For example, see *The Clarion*, 26 August 1939.

3 23 August 1939; for like reaction in the English-language press, see also the *Ottawa Citizen* and the *Winnipeg Free Press* of the same day. The same view of the "unholy nature" of the Nazi-Soviet accommodation is still being perpetuated in the Canadian press, for example, as in David Levy, "The Tragic Consequences of Hitler-Stalin Pact Live On," *Ottawa Citizen*, 26 August 1986.

4 *Vapaa Sana*, 23 August 1939.

5 "N-liiton ja Saksan välillä hyväksytty uusi kauppasopimus," *Vapaus*, 22 August 1939.

6 "Saksa ja Neuvostoliitto neuvottelevat hyökkäämättömyyssopimuksesta," *ibid.*, 23 August 1939; cf. "Venäjä ja Saksa tehneet hyökkäämättömyyssopimuksen," *Vapaa Sana*, 23 August, 1939. The latter includes photographs of Hitler and Stalin with the caption "Hylkäsivät ideologiansa" (They disowned their ideologies).

fact that the Soviet Union had not signed an alliance with Germany, but rather a non-aggression pact in the cause of world peace.¹

The CPC's interpretation of the Soviet Union's *volte-face* in its foreign policy towards Germany was also adopted by the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement, for example, as outlined in the *Vapaus* editorials "The Soviet Union and Germany's commercial agreement" and "The Soviet Union and Germany's Non-Aggression pact."² However, the evident bewilderment of the radical Finns was such that Gustaf Sundqvist, national secretary of the FOC, was forced to reiterate those salient points regarding the altered international political situation a week later.³ Clearly, the membership of the FOC had been as completely taken aback by the turn of events as the rest of the world.

1 For this, see "Pitämällä sodan pois maailmasta pidämme myös Canadian pois sodasta," *Vapaus*, 23 August 1939.

2 "Neuvostoliiton ja Saksan kauppasopimus" and "Saksan ja Neuvostoliiton hyökkäämättömyyssopimus" *ibid.*, 23 and 25 August, 1939 respectively.

3 "CSJ:n sihteerin G. Sundqvistin selostus nykyisestä kriitellisestä tilanteesta," *ibid.*, 30 August 1939.

12 The Winter War and the Finnish-Canadian Community

Rather than risk outright confrontation with the authorities over its pacifist stance respecting Canada's involvement in the war, the FOC's spokesmen thereafter continued to hammer home the notion that: "Russia wished to preserve the independence of the little nations with that agreement. Russia will never attack. Russia did everything for the sake of peace."¹ As well, they increasingly stressed the fact that the FOC was a cultural organization, for example, as in the 18 September editorial of *Vapaus*, which exhorted the delegates to the FOC's upcoming thirteenth national convention to direct the organization to add more substance to its cultural activities.² In other words, a new phase had been initiated in the further de-politicization of the FOC and its continuing reinforcement as a cultural institution, thereby accelerating the process that had begun with the bolshevization of the CPC in 1925.

However, the depiction of the FOC as a purely cultural organization - especially as described by P. Mertanen, chairman of the national executive committee - was hotly disputed by *Vapaa Sana* which, by then, was embarked on an intensive campaign to discredit both the FOC and *Vapaus* as unremitting agents and tools of Moscow.³ So extreme did *Vapaa Sana's* attack become that the FOC was presented with the opportunity (according to its legal counsel) to press a successful libel


1 For a hostile account of this FOC contention, see "A. T. Hill Kirkland Lakella," *Vapaa Sana*, 27 September 1939.

2 Editorial, *Vapaus*, 18 September 1939.

3 Ibid., 28 September 1939; *Vapaa Sana*, 4 October 1939.

EXTRA

Tweedsmuir



THE CANADA GAZETTE
LA GAZETTE DU CANADA

<p>OTTAWA, SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1939</p> <p>PROCLAMATION</p> <p>TWEEDSMUIR (L.S.)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CANADA</p> <p>GEORGE THE SIXTH, by the Grace of God of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas KING, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India.</p> <p>To ALL TO WHOM these Presents shall come or whom the same may in anywise concern,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">GREETING:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A PROCLAMATION</p> <p>ERNEST LAPOINTE, } WHEREAS by and Attorney General, } with the advice of Canada, } Our Privy Council for Canada We have signified Our Approval of the issue of a Proclamation in the <i>Canada Gazette</i> declaring that a State of War with the German Reich exists and has existed in Our Dominion of Canada as and from the tenth day of September, 1939;</p> <p>Now THEREFORE We do hereby Declare and Proclaim that a State of War with the German Reich exists and has existed in Our Dominion of Canada as and from the tenth day of September, 1939.</p> <p>OF ALL WHICH Our Loving Subjects and all others whom these Presents may concern are hereby required to take notice and to govern themselves accordingly.</p> <p>IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF We have caused these Our Letters to be made Patent and the Great Seal of Canada to be hereunto affixed. WITNESS: Our Right Trusty and Well-beloved John, Baron Tweedsmuir of Elsfeld, a Member of Our Most Honourable Privy Council, Knight Grand Cross of Our Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Knight Grand Cross of Our Royal Victorian Order, Member of Our Order of the Companions of Honour, Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of Our Dominion of Canada.</p> <p>AT OUR GOVERNMENT HOUSE, in Our City of Ottawa, this tenth day of September, in the year of Our Lord one thousand nine hundred and thirty-nine and in the Third year of Our Reign.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">By Command, W. L. MACKENZIE KING, Prime Minister of Canada.</p> <p>OTTAWA—Printed by J. O. PATENAUDE, I.S.O., Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty.</p>	<p>OTTAWA, DIMANCHE, 10 SEPTEMBRE 1939</p> <p>PROCLAMATION</p> <p>TWEEDSMUIR (L.S.)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CANADA</p> <p>GEORGE SIX, par la Grâce de Dieu, Roi de Grande-Bretagne, d'Irlande et des Territoires britanniques au delà des mers, Défenseur de la Foi, Empereur des Indes.</p> <p>A TOUS CEUX À QUI les présentes parviendront ou qu'elles pourront de quelque manière concerner,—SALUT:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PROCLAMATION</p> <p>ERNEST LAPOINTE, } ATTENDU que par Procureur général du } et de l'avis de Notre Canada, } Conseil privé pour le Canada, Nous avons signifié Notre approbation relativement à la publication, dans la <i>Gazette du Canada</i>, d'une Proclamation déclarant qu'un état de guerre avec le Reich allemand existe et a existé dans Notre Dominion du Canada à compter du dixième jour de septembre 1939;</p> <p>A CES CAUSES, Nous déclarons et proclamons par les présentes qu'un état de guerre avec le Reich allemand existe et a existé dans Notre Dominion du Canada à compter du dixième jour de septembre 1939.</p> <p>DE CE QUI PRÉCÈDE, Nos féaux sujets et tous ceux que les présentes peuvent concerner sont par les présentes requis de prendre connaissance et d'agir en conséquence.</p> <p>EN FOI DE QUOI, Nous avons fait émettre Nos présentes Lettres Patentes et à icelles fait apposer le Grand Sceau du Canada. TÉMOIN: Notre très fidèle et bien-aimé John, Baron Tweedsmuir d'Elsfeld, membre de Notre très honorable Conseil privé, Chevalier grand-croix de Notre Ordre très distingué de Saint-Michel et de Saint-Georges, Chevalier grand-croix de Notre Ordre royal de Victoria, membre de Notre Ordre des Compagnons d'honneur, Gouverneur général et Commandant en chef de Notre Dominion du Canada.</p> <p>EN NOTRE HÔTEL DU GOUVERNEMENT, en Notre cité d'Ottawa, ce dixième jour de septembre en l'an de grâce mil neuf cent trente-neuf, le troisième de Notre Règne.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Par ordre, W. L. MACKENZIE KING, Premier ministre du Canada.</p> <p>12-3</p> <p>OTTAWA—J.O. Patenaude, O.S.I., Imprimeur de Sa Très Excellente Majesté le Roi.</p>
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Ernest Lapointe

Photo 8. Proclamation of War by the Dominion of Canada. (Source: *The Canada Gazette – La Gazette du Canada*, 10th September, 1939)

suit against its rival.¹ The FOC chose not to pursue the matter in the courts however, having decided that "the present moment is not an opportune time for such action."² Had the case actually gone to court, the FOC could well have found itself in the awkward situation of either having to renounce its revolutionary Marxist heritage or suffer the consequence of being outlawed as a subversive organization under the War Measures Act. In any event, there are strong indications that the FOC may have actually reached an out-of-court settlement with *Vapaa Sana*.

Moreover, *Vapaa Sana*'s primary focus had already begun to shift to the European scene due to the worsening relations between Finland and the Soviet Union. It had launched a campaign to drum up public support for the Old Country on 4 November 1939 with an editorial calling upon Finnish Canadians to aid Finland.³ Thereafter followed countless articles on a variety of patriotic Finnish themes as well as regular news reports on the failing Finno-Soviet talks over Stalin's proposed boundary readjustments. All this was but a prelude to the greater outburst of Finnish nationalist fervour that appeared in the pages of *Vapaa Sana* subsequent to its front-page headline of 2 December 1939: "Russia Has Attacked Finland!"⁴ Also, this news of war between Finland and Russia again persuaded *Vapaa Sana* to reach for the jugular of the radical Finns as noted in the newspaper's editorial of the same day which - under the title of "A Thousand Times Accursed Communism!" - proceeded to attack the FOC for defending the Soviet Union's military actions. In the same editorial, it also advised Canada and its allies not to intervene in the Finno-Soviet conflict for fear that this could draw Finland into the wider European war and make it the major theatre of military operations.⁵

With the outbreak of the Winter War of 30 November 1939, most Finnish-Canadian radicals refused to support Finland in its titanic struggle against the Soviet Union. Instead, they chose to believe that its bourgeois White government had provoked the conflict. While that view may have reflected Moscow's line, it

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- 1 G. B. Bagwell to G. Sundqvist, 25 October 1939, in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 19, file 32. For an English translation of the offending article, see "Open Attack Against the Communist Leadership of the Finnish Organization [of Canada]" by John Luoma, *ibid.*, which had been extracted from *Vapaa Sana*, 14 October 1939. The pages containing the original article are missing from the National Library of Canada's microfilm copy of the newspaper, having been purposely blanked out during the filming process with masking sheets that included the following handwritten notation: "Oct. 14 / Page 2 & 3 / No Print". It appears that *Vapaa Sana*'s recognition of its potential liability in the matter was reflected in its obvious reluctance to see the offending article reproduced on microfilm decades later.
 - 2 Quoted from G Sundqvist to G. B. Bagwell, 10 November 1939, in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 11, file 7. The FOC had probably reached some sort of private settlement with *Vapaa Sana* (as suggested in the latter's treatment of the offensive material in fn 199 above).
 - 3 "Avustamaan Suomea!" *Vapaa Sana*, 4 November 1939.
 - 4 "Venäjä hyökkäsi Suomeen!" *ibid.*, 2 December 1939.
 - 5 "Tuhannesti kirottu kommunismi!" *ibid.*

also accorded well with their own experience of the Finnish government and its unremitting hatred of the Left at home and abroad after the 1918 civil war.¹ On the other hand, Finnish-Canadian radicals did make a clear distinction between the *government* and *people* of Finland. So, the FOC collected money for transmission through the Red Cross to be used for food and medical supplies in aid of the Finnish civilian population during the height of the Winter War, a project which the Finnish consul in Montreal tried to put a stop to until the FOC asked the Canadian Civil Liberties Union to remind him that "he had no right to mix in our affairs."² Even after the end of the Winter War, the FOC continued in its efforts to aid the people of Finland, for example, by trying to bring Finnish war orphans into Canada.³

There was little else that the FOC could do in light of the difficult situation into which it had been placed by the Winter War. Events were already moving much too quickly for some supporters of the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement. A few of them had yet to come to terms with the unhappy experience of the Finnish Americans and Finnish Canadians who went to Soviet Karelia and the subsequent destruction there in the great purges of the late 1930s of the Karelian-Finnish leadership together with many ordinary Karelians, émigrés from Finland and emigrants from North America. Still discomfited by Stalin's recent agreement to the previously unthinkable Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact, the commencement of Soviet hostilities against Finland represented the last and greatest shock of all for others in the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement to accept with any degree of equanimity.

The changed European situation was first signalled in "N. liiton ja Saksan välillä uusi kauppasopimus," *Vapaus*, 22 August 1939, being a tersely reported front-page story of the just concluded commercial agreement between Germany and the Soviet Union.⁴ On the following day, *Vapaus* headlined the story "Germany and the Soviet Union are negotiating a non-aggression pact," which provided a brief front-page news report on the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact. The newspaper's first comments on both pacts were printed in an editorial on the next page, "The Soviet Union's and Germany's commercial agreement."⁵ The explana-

1 For example, see A. T. Hill, "Basic Highlights of Labor History- Lakehead and Canada" [typescript], ca. 1972, in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 93, file 7; P. Mertanen and William Eklund, *The "Illegal" Finnish Organization of Canada, Inc.* (Sudbury, 1942); and Larry Warwaruk, *Red Finns on the Coteau* (Saskatoon, 1984), 92–93.

2 Quoted from G Sundqvist to Onni Lapio, 18 December 1939, in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 11, file 7.

3 F. C. Blair to [Arthur] Roebuck, 3 May 1939 (transcript), *ibid.*, vol. 18, file 32.

4 "N. liiton ja Saksan välillä uusi kauppasopimus," *Vapaus*, 22 August 1939.

5 "Saksa ja Neuvostoliitto neuvottelevat hyökkäämättömyyssopimuksesta" and "Neuvostoliiton ja Saksan kauppasopimus," *ibid.*, 23 August 1939.

tions that followed the initial reports were not convincing enough for all of the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement.

Once Soviet aircraft began dropping bombs on Helsinki and other civilian targets inside Finland, many Finnish-Canadian progressives found it especially difficult to endorse Finland's punishment by the sword at the hands of its hereditary enemy - Russia - despite the FOC's and *Vapaus*' continued insistence that the Winter War was a just war on the part of the Soviet Union. *Vapaa Sana* and the weekly *Canadian Uutiset* hammered home the diametrically opposite view. They were the main carriers of pro-Finnish propaganda within the Finnish-Canadian community - and especially the former which, on 1 November 1939, declared that it would henceforth be published thrice-weekly rather than semi-weekly in order to increase its news coverage of Finnish affairs.

As their news stories of tiny Finland's heroic struggle against its gigantic adversary circulated here, it became even more difficult for persons of Finnish birth not to experience pangs of renewed patriotism, national pride and sympathy for their ancestral homeland - especially when many of their old friends and relatives there were directly in the line of enemy fire.¹ Hence, the Russo-Finnish conflict precipitated a major internal crisis for the FOC and its membership, the effect of which led to the defection of some of its followers. John Wiita, a Finnish-American who had served as editor of *Vapaus* under the alias of Henry Puro before returning to the United States, was one of the more prominent defectors among those individuals who had been closely associated with *Vapaus* and the FOC.²

Meanwhile, the fortunes of the FOC's conservative rivals rose to unprecedented heights as the natural champions of Finland's cause in the Finnish-Canadian community. They quickly formed local Finnish War Aid Associations across Canada to collect money and supplies for hard-pressed Finland.³ The more patriotic individuals among them were even persuaded to volunteer their services to the Finnish armed forces. Ironically, the same revisions that the Mackenzie King government had made to the Foreign Enlistment Act in 1937 to keep the "Red" Finns (if they were Canadian nationals by birth or naturalization) from volunteering with the Loyalist armies during the Spanish Civil War now prevented the enlistment of the "White" Finns in Canada for the defence of the Old Country.⁴ Therefore, the only

1 For example, see Warwaruk, *Red Finns on the Coteau*, 91.

2 J. Donald Wilson, "The Canadian Sojourn of a Finnish-American Radical," *Canadian Ethnic Studies/Etudes ethniques au Canada*, 1984, no. 2: 107.

3 Yrjö Raivio, *Kanadan suomalaisten historia 2* (Sudbury, 1979), 98–115 passim. For records of the Finnish War Aid (Suomen Sota-Apu) Associations or Committees, see the Finnish Canadian Historical Society Collection, Archives of Ontario, Series D–3, Box 27, file 1, through to Series D–9, Box 31, file 4, and the St. Michael's Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church fonds, NAC, MG 8 G 62, vol. 14, files 22–28.

4 O. D. Skelton [memorandum to W. L. M. King], "Military Aid to Finland," 20 February 1940, in the King fonds, NAC, MG 26.F 4, vol. 274, file 2781, C188804.

recourse for many of the would-be recruits was to enlist in the United States with the American Finnish Legion.¹

Although English Canada pressed Ottawa for a quick removal of those restrictions, the federal government made haste very slowly on the Finnish enlistment question because of its deep concern for French Canada's isolationist views.² For that reason, the government did not want to amend the Foreign Enlistment Act itself, but rather chose to wait until J. E. Read, an official with the Department of External Affairs, found a loophole in the act to solve the legal conundrum which it posed respecting the lawful enlistment in the Finnish armed forces of Canadian nationals and Finnish nationals resident in the Dominion. Read's finding was that no state of war existed between Finland and the Soviet Union under the terms of the act because neither belligerent had issued a declaration of war as required by the letter of the law. Canadians, he concluded, were free to volunteer in the Finnish military.³ However, another delay occurred when the question of the legality of Read's submission was referred to the Department of Justice for a ruling because Lapointe had declined to instruct his department to render an immediate opinion on the matter.⁴

Notwithstanding the delay in receiving confirmation from the lawyers in Lapointe's department, the Department of External Affairs had already verbally informed the Finnish consul general by 20 February 1940 that he was now free to recruit Finnish nationals in Canada and to purchase military supplies for Finland with all of the monies that had been publicly collected here for its assistance.⁵ However, the government delayed informing the French-language press until 2 March 1940 of its decision to allow Canadians to participate on both the Finnish and Soviet sides in the Winter War.⁶ By presenting its interpretation of the Foreign Enlistment Act with respect to the Winter War in this even-handed manner (although the question of Canadians wishing to volunteer for service in the Red Army had never been an issue), the government was carefully trying to

1 For example, see the "Autobiography of Matti Ensio Ylönen-Enros" [typescript], 1985, 20, in the Matti Ensio Ylönen-Enros fonds, NAC, MG 31 H 140, file 1.

2 For example, see J. W. Pickersgill to A. D. P. Heeney, "Memorandum for the Prime Minister: Re: Reactions to International Situation," 2 January 1940, in the King fonds, NAC, MG 26 J 4, vol. 357, file 3827, C246951, and W. B. Scott to Ernest Lapointe, 19 February 1940, *ibid.*, vol. 295, C249707.

3 O. D. Skelton [to W. L. M. King], memorandum "Military Aid to Finland," 20 February 1940, *ibid.*, vol. 274, file 2781, C188805.

4 O. D. Skelton to W. L. M. King, 20 February 1940, *ibid.*, vol. 357, file 3827, C246962.

5 Skelton, "Military Aid to Finland," *op. cit.*

6 "Communiqué de presse Application de la loi concernant l'enrôlement à l'étranger de 1937 relativement à l'enrôlement au Canada pour service dans les forces armées de la Finlande," 2 March 1940, in the King fonds, NAC, MG 263 4, vol. 357, file 3827, C247000--247003.

show Quebec that it was still preserving its neutrality in the conflict and keeping Canada free from foreign entanglements.¹

The Canadian government proved even slower in offering direct aid to Finland. Although English Canada pressed it to do something concrete to help the Finns, the government was too fearful of alienating Quebec to consider offering the Finns anything of real value. When it finally agreed to help Finland, the extent of its proffered aid consisted of the waiving of a five-dollar passport fee (or two dollars for a renewal) for those joining the Finnish forces.² The gesture itself, according to an External Affairs official, was "small and unimportant" even "assuming that there were 2,000 volunteers" and that "it would be the equivalent to a grant by the Canadian Government of \$10,000 to promote volunteering for service in Finland."³

Despite the trifling amount involved, certain misgivings respecting that assistance were raised in various quarters less sympathetic to Finnish concerns. For example, one official noted that "Mr. Lapointe is of the opinion that the Order [that is, the order-in-council drafted regarding the remission of passport fees] would constitute an 'unneutral' act, but would take no exception to its being passed."⁴ Lapointe had little to fear, for the order-in-council was eventually "suspended in view of reported Peace Agreement [between Finland and the Soviet Union]."⁵ Although it had already been signed and approved by Mackenzie King, P.C. 992, the document providing the remission of passport fees for Canadian volunteers going to Finland, was subsequently marked "cancelled" and the prime minister's signature was crossed out.⁶ Canada had dithered too long to provide even that minuscule measure of support.

Like the other Western democracies, Canada had ended up giving a great deal of lip service in support of beleaguered Finland - and little else. According to Lester B. Pearson, then deputy head of the Canadian High Commission in London, most of the aid in men and materials which Britain, its allies (including Canada) and other sympathetic countries were finally disposed to send to Finland, had been

1 J. E. Read, "Memorandum for the Acting Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs," 11 March 1940, *ibid.*, C247018-247019.

2 Voided P.C. 992, 13 March 1940, *ibid.*, C247011.

3 Quoted from Read, "Memorandum for the Acting Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs," *op. cit.*

4 Quoted from A. D. P. Heeney, "Memorandum for the Prime Minister: Re: Passport fees for Canadian volunteers to Finland," 11 March 1940, in the King fonds, NAC, MG 26 3 4, vol. 357, file 3827, C247015.

5 Quoted from *idem*, "For the Prime Minister for Council: Passport fees for Canadian volunteers to Finland," 13 March 1940, *ibid.*, C247016.

6 Voided P.C. 992, 13 March 1940, *ibid.*, C247011.

offered a month too late to alter the outcome of the war in its favour.¹ Moreover, it might be added, very little of that aid - whether promised by this country or by the other Western democracies - ever reached the Finnish frontlines in time to be of significant military value. Hence, Finland's heroic struggle against its huge neighbour was destined to end in bitter defeat.

1 L. B. Pearson, "Wednesday, February 21st to Tuesday, March 5th [1940]," Diary, in the Lester Bowles Pearson fonds, NAC, MG 26 N 8, vol. 1, Diaries 3, Part 2. See also Jukka Nevakivi, *The Appeal That Was Never Made: The Allies, Scandinavia and the Finnish Winter War, 1939-1940* (Montreal, 1976), and J. A. Bayer, "British Policy towards the Russo-Finnish Winter War of 1939-40," *Canadian Journal of History/Annales Canadiennes d'Histoire* 16 (April 1981): 27-65.

13 The *Illegal* Finnish Organization of Canada and Its War-time Surrogates, 1940–1943

Not unexpectedly, relations between the radical and conservative factions in the Finnish-Canadian community deteriorated as Finland's military situation worsened. The latter naturally used every means in its arsenal to bring ruination to the "traitors to the fatherland" and, therefore, actively petitioned the Canadian government to suppress the institutions of the "Red" Finns.¹ Such pleas, while not sufficient in themselves to spur the authorities into action, certainly strengthened the hand of those particular agencies and officials of the federal government - that is, the RCMP, the Department of Justice and Ernest Lapointe, the cabinet minister responsible for both of these agencies to Parliament - whose main aim was to crush the working-class movement in this country.

The RCMP, for example, was quite prepared to use the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact as its pretext for quashing the working-class movement. Indeed, Commissioner S. T. Wood of the RCMP had written as much to Justice Minister Lapointe in a letter dated only two days after the pact's signing. Therein Commissioner Wood suggested that, "in the event of hostilities," any measures undertaken against domestic Nazis and Fascists be supplemented by "a more rigid and extended surveillance of Communist Agitators, particularly those active among industrial workers" and that "the Government outlaw by Order-in-Council under the 'War Measures Act' ... the Communist Party of Canada and its subsidiary organizations."² Nor is it difficult to ascertain exactly which subsidiary organizations the RCMP had in mind, for the *RCMP Quarterly* had years before identified the FOC and *Vapaus* as being "most intractably Communistic."³ The *RCMP Quar-*

1 Mertenan and Eklund, *The "Illegal" Finnish Organization of Canada, Inc.*, 14–15.

2 Quoted from S. T. Wood to Ernest Lapointe, 25 August 1939, in the Lapointe fonds, NAC, MG 27 111 B 10, vol. 50, file 41.

3 For example, see "Training Young Communists," *R.C.M.P. Quarterly*, January 1935: 135–139 passim, and Supt. F. J. Mead, "Communism in Canada," *ibid.*, July 1935: 46.

terly was then edited by C. Rivett-Carnac, chief of intelligence and a later commissioner of the RCMP. He was thoroughly convinced that Communism - and neither Nazism nor Fascism - remained Canada's principal foe.¹ The RCMP, however, was not altogether successful in obtaining immediate approval for its agenda to smash those organizations once war had been declared.

When Lapointe first broached the matter of the banning of left-wing organizations with Prime Minister Mackenzie King on 16 November 1939, he was armed with a proposal that had been drafted by his officials at the Department of Justice on the advice of the RCMP. Of that meeting, Mackenzie King recorded the following in his diary:

Lapointe brought in [an] order in council to suppress subversive activities, particularly communistic and nazi activities.

I favoured strongly the principle but felt the men who had drafted the order had gone too far. As usual, the prime minister's main concern was politics rather than principle. In his view, neither he and his Liberal colleagues could allow others like the CCF and civil libertarians to claim [that] we were suppressing freedom and liberty, and that they were the true liberals.²

Even so, the prime minister decided not to refuse Lapointe's request outright and, instead, referred it to the inner committee of the cabinet.

On 23 November 1939, the committee met to discuss the justice department's draft order-in-council. Despite Lapointe's passionate appeal for its adoption, other cabinet ministers - including W. D. Euler (Trade and Commerce), I. A. Mackenzie (Veteran's Affairs) and C. G. Power (Postmaster General) - would not consent to arming the police with greater powers than they already had.³ So, the head of the RCMP also tried to lobby Prime Minister Mackenzie King on the following day. Of that meeting, the prime minister noted: "Commissioner Wood showed me copies of letters, etc. which have come into the possession of the police giving evidence, first of all, of efforts of communists to create dissatisfaction and sabotage...." Yet, even that did not initially succeed in persuading Mackenzie King to invest the police with the sweeping powers that Lapointe and Wood had wished for.⁴

There seemed little need for greater police powers when, as the liberal element in the senior ranks of the civil service had observed, the existing regulations

1 C. Rivett-Carnac to N. A. Robertson, 24 January 1939, and enclosure, in the Norman A. Robertson fonds, NAC, MG 30 E 163, vol, 12, file 137.

2 Quoted from W. L. M. King, Diary, 16 November 1939, in the King fonds, NAC, MG 26 J 13, transcript, 1240. CCF points to the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation - a social democratic party founded in 1932 (note by the editor).

3 *Ibid.*, 1253.

4 Quoted from *ibid.*, 1254.

in Canada respecting "free speech, control of the press and liberty of the subject" were already far more restrictive than even the tightened British Defence Regulations of 23 November 1939.¹ Indeed, the notion was voiced that SECTION 21 of the Defence of Canada Regulations "which gives the Minister [of Justice] unlimited power to detain any person ... has a tinge of the infamous Star Chamber which is bound to be a target of all persons truly British."² Nevertheless, the justice minister and RCMP commissioner continued to press for an extension of police powers, and their persistence was finally rewarded with the passage of P.C. 37 of 4 January 1940, an order-in-council which amended REGULATIONS 39, 39A, 58 and 62 of the Defence of Canada Regulations. Among other things, P.C. 37 granted the police wide discretionary powers of search and seizure if they believed that "an offence was about to be committed" in order to "prohibit certain subversive activities by individuals" and to "prohibit subversive activities by associations, organizations and societies."³

In the end, Lapointe and Wood finally succeeded in obtaining greater police powers not because of any clear and present emergency, but because even the most liberal members of the government establishment distrusted the alien elements in the Canadian population. Therein lay the overriding reason for the federal government's imposition of tighter controls over the general public in Canada than had been the case in Great Britain:

In Canada ..., we have not a race of one political ideology. If we had only to deal with the Anglo-Saxons and French Canadians of Canada, (including those of foreign origin who have through a generation or two become similar thinkers) we should be able to meet the problem with the facility that England has met hers. But we do have foreign elements on a large scale; for instance, in round figures there are almost one-half million Germans in Canada, one-quarter million Ukrainians, 150,000 Poles, 100,000 Italians, 90,000 Russians, 55,000 Hungarians, and so on. Each of these races by their native traditions and culture are bound to carry along with them in great measure the political ideals of their native states. And we must not forget that in several of those states there has grown some of those great doctrines of political upheaval: Communism, Fascism, Nazism. It is because of these elements that we must go further than the British regulations in restricting civil liberty for the purpose of carrying out our war aims. If, however, we had not certain of those

1 "A Comparison of Canadian and British Regulations Affecting or Dealing with Free Speech, Control of the Press, and Imprisonment Without Trial," 29 December 1939, in the Robertson fonds, NAC, MG 30 E 163, vol. 12, file 143.

2 Quoted from "Defence of Canada Regulations," n.d., *ibid.*

3 Quoted from a signed copy of P.C. 37, 4 January 1940, *ibid.*

elements to contend with we would not need any stricter form of control than at present obtain in England.

From the angle of newspapers as publishers of propaganda the situation is much the same. With the majority of the English and French papers, presuming that all of them are advocates of a form of democratic Government, we have just the same problem as in England, that is to guard against statements of propaganda which go beyond the bounds of fair criticism and enter into the realm of statements prejudicial to the State. But besides these journals we have many foreign language papers catering to those elements mentioned above and whilst the majority of these do not advocate the totalitarian forms of Government they are, nevertheless, carrying on that traditional culture of the old land in which revolutionary policies have grown. However, some of these foreign language papers do advocate undemocratic forms of Government and it is quite understood that if they are not controlled they will seize the opportunity of criticism in emergencies, not with an idea of criticism to for the general good of the country but rather to use those emergencies and that prevailing liberty to foster their own subversive ends....

The matter is briefly this: With the democratic papers we need only guard against a too free use of criticism. With the non-democratic papers we must guard against subversive doctrine. There is no way out of the difficulty, we must have regulations to hold the worst possible offender in check, and such regulations will certainly smack of an attack on Free Speech and Civil Liberty....

It is worth while pointing out that whilst this power of suppressing the press has been in the hands of the executive, during the very critical period and trying period of war preparation, only two newspapers have been suppressed, the *Clarion* and the *Clarté*, both definitely and indubitably communistic publications. Of course this point is proof of nothing other than that the power has been wisely used.¹

Given this fear of the alien presence, it is hardly surprising that panic and near hysteria ensued when news of Belgium's sudden collapse supposedly at the hands of fifth columnists arrived here in early June of 1940.² Individual members from the Canadian public then even threatened vigilantism, that is, to shoot every

1 Quoted from "Defence of Canada Regulations," op. cit.

2 For this, see "Summary of Representations Regarding Enemy Aliens and the so-called 'Fifth Column' Menace" and attached "Representations re the Fifth Column and Enemy Aliens," n.d. [May 1940?], in the King fonds, NAC, MG 26 J 4, vol. 348, file 3771, C239958–239960; "Internal Security," 27 June 1940, *ibid.*, C239972–239976; E. H. Coleman [under secretary of state for Canada] to W. L. M. King, memorandum "Re: Naturalization of Enemy Aliens," 29 July 1940, *ibid.*, C239978–8].

suspicious-looking person on sight. The prime minister was advised that "during the past few days a deluge of telegrams and other messages have been reaching this office, indicating the serious possibility of panic conditions developing over alleged alien and subversive activities" and, therefore, he was urged to ensure that "the Minister of Justice should consider making a definite statement at the earliest possible moment in very strong terms, indicating that the government is sparing no effort to keep the situation in hand..."¹ Thus, the federal government felt constrained to do something in order to protect or, at least, appear to protect the security and integrity of the country. Its solution was to promulgate P.C. 2363 of 4 June 1940, an order-in-council which prohibited the operation "within Canada [of] numerous organizations of a subversive character which are intended, or are likely, to be prejudicial to the safety of the State or the efficient prosecution of the War."²

Among the sixteen organizations proscribed in that document were the FOC and the CPC together with a half-score of the latter's affiliates and allies. The remainder of the list specified the names of a few pro-Nazi and pro-Fascist organizations as an afterthought. In the view of Reg Whitaker, a well-known academic specializing in the affairs of the Canadian Left, the war had simply provided the anti-communist forces in the federal government with the opportunity to intensify their campaign against the working-class movement in Canada - which, in his quotation of the words of Minister of Justice Lapointe, should occur - "regardless of what military Pacts were signed."³

Once P.C. 2363 had been duly proclaimed, the government proved itself ready to take immediate action in quashing the proscribed organizations. Much of this state of readiness can be credited to Lapointe for, through his exchange of letters with the prime minister, he had established exactly what the government's policy should be concerning the use of the RCMP in rooting out subversive organizations and what to do with the properties of those declared to be illegal.⁴ Thereafter, all that remained was to enact the actual regulations governing the seizure, confiscation and custody of such properties. That was finally accomplished with the promulgation of P.C. 2667 of 20 June 1940.⁵

The government's declaration of open hostilities against Communism and the working-class movement across Canada had been undertaken largely as a

1 Quoted from W. J. Turnbull to W. L. M. King, memorandum "Re: Enemy Aliens," 22 May 1940, *ibid.*, C239961.

2 Quoted from P.C. 2363, in the Privy Council fonds, NAC, RG 2 1, vol. 1423.

3 As cited in Reg Whitaker, "Official Repression of Communism During World War II," *Labour/Le Travail*, 17 (Spring 1986): 136–138.

4 Ernest Lapointe to W. L. M. King, 30 May 1940, and King to Lapointe, 3 June 1940, in the King fonds, NAC, MG 26 J 1, vol. 290, 245093–245094.

5 P.C. 2667, 20 June 1940, in the Privy Council fonds, NAC, RG 2 1, vol. 2057.

means for retaining Lapointe's and, by extension, Quebec's support. The extent to which the government was still prepared go in guaranteeing that support was subsequently shown in its outlawing of the Jehovah's Witnesses, a religious sect which Catholic Quebec regarded as anathema. Of that initiative, John Diefenbaker, an admittedly partisan observer, later wrote:

The treatment of the Jehovah's Witnesses during the war can never be justified. They were a small group. The 1941 census listed their number at 7,007... In any event, their religion was banned under the Defence of Canada Regulations in July 1940. To be a Jehovah's Witness was an offence. I believe that the King government was not motivated simply because the Witnesses refused to serve in the war, or because their interpretation of the scriptures envisaged a kind of theocracy in which they were responsible only to God. To proscribe the Jehovah's Witnesses was worth votes among some people.¹

In making use of the powers of the State to crush these religious "subversives" along with the Communists, the government was finally marching into the only "war" with which Lapointe and his Quebec constituents were at all enthused.

In that conflict, there was no uncertainty on the part of the RCMP as to who or what were to be the main targets of the extraordinary police powers that they had acquired. As late as February 1941 - after more than a year and a half of war against Nazi Germany - Commissioner Wood of the RCMP still insisted that:

Many may be surprised to hear that it is not the Nazi nor the Fascist but the radical who constitutes our most troublesome problem. Whereas the enemy alien is usually recognizable and easily rendered innocuous by clear-cut laws applicable to his case, your "Red" has the protection of citizenship, his foreign master is not officially an enemy and, unless he blunders into the open and provides proof of his guilt, he is much more difficult to suppress. Since Communism was outlawed, most of his work is carried on under cover of other organizations and associations pretending to be, or in reality, loyal to the Constitution. It is important to remember this for the reason that this type of fifth column activity is least understood by our Canadian people, and yet is doing most harm at the present time.²

Given the enthusiasm for the quashing of Communism in the highest echelons of Canada's federal law enforcement agency, it is hardly surprising that the government should have decided to apply the full measure of its emergency powers against those persons and organizations that it identified as being "Communist." Perhaps,

1 Quoted from John G. Diefenbaker, *One Canada: Memoirs of the Right Honourable John G. Diefenbaker - The Crusading Years 1895–1956* (Toronto, 1975), 221.

2 Quoted from S. T. Wood, "Tools for Treachery," *The Canadian Spokesman* (February 1941): 3.

this is why so many of the provisions in the second proclamation of the War Measures Act to be directed against the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement in the span of twenty-two years proved to be much harsher and more Draconian than the first (which the Borden government had enacted at the end of World War I). As the following articles from P.C. 2363 show, government officials now possessed sweeping powers to suspend the civil liberties and due process of law for:

1. (a) [those organizations already mentioned in P.C. 2363]

(b) any [other] association, society, group or organization which the Governor in Council, by notice published in the *Canada Gazette*, declares to be an illegal organization.

2. Every person who after the publication of this regulation in the *Canada Gazette* continues to be or becomes an officer or member of an illegal organization, or professes to be such, or who advocates or defends the acts, principles or policies of such illegal organization shall be guilty of an offence against this regulation.

3. In any prosecution under this regulation, if it be proved the person charged has attended meetings of an illegal organization; or spoken publicly in advocacy of an illegal organization; or distributed literature of an illegal organization by circulation through the Post Office mails of Canada, or otherwise; it shall be presumed, in the absence of proof to the contrary, that he is a member of such illegal organization.¹

Moreover, those powers entrusted to the authorities were reinforced by paragraph (4) of P.C. 2667, which stipulated that the property of illegal organizations be dealt with as though it were that of the enemy:

All property, rights and interests in Canada belonging to any illegal organization shall be vested in and be subject to the control and management of the Custodian, as defined in the Regulations respecting Trading with the Enemy, 1939.

Subject as hereinafter provided, and for the purpose of the control and management of such property, rights and interests by the Custodian, the Regulations respecting Trading with the Enemy, 1939, shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to the same extent as if such property, rights and interests belonged to an enemy within the meaning of the said Regulations.

1 Quoted from P.C. 2363, 4 June 1940, in the Privy Council fonds, NAC, RG 2 1, vol. 1423.

The property, rights and interests so vested in and subject to the control and management of the Custodian, or the proceeds thereof, shall on the termination of the present war be dealt with in such manner as the Governor in Council may direct.¹

Once armed with such formidable powers, the government quickly demonstrated that it was quite prepared to use them against the "Red" Finns. Some of the more prominent FOC members and officials - among them, A. T. Hill and Gustaf Sundqvist - were arrested and interned.² As well, the premises of the FOC and its locals were first raided and searched for incriminating evidence by the RCMP, and then shut down and padlocked. Evidence of such raids appears in certain documents that were seized by the authorities and later returned to the FOC.³ Following those formalities, the properties and other assets of the FOC and its locals were confiscated by the federal government and turned over to the Custodian of Enemy Property. Some observers hostile to the FOC interpreted the government's actions as just retribution for Finland's earlier defeat at the hands of the Soviet Union in the Winter War.⁴

Of the FOC's scores of pre-war locals, only its Toronto and Vancouver affiliates were temporarily able to escape closure and the confiscation of their properties. As separately incorporated and duly constituted societies in their own right under provincial law - that is, as the Finnish Society of Toronto and the Finnish Society [of Vancouver] respectively - these two locals were legally entitled to continue their operations until the government actually declared them to be illegal, which it did in the following year through the issuance of several additional orders-in-council to include them among the proscribed organizations.⁵ The properties and assets of the Finnish Society of Toronto were then allowed to pass into the hands of the *Yritys* Athletic Club of Toronto for the duration of the ban against the society.⁶

Those events were reported in the following recollections of Mrs. Helen Tarvainen:

1 Quoted from P.C. 2667, op. cit.

2 Eklund, *Canadian rakentajia*, 581. For accounts of the experiences of some of those left-wing internees, see William Repka and Katherine Repka, *Dangerous Patriots* (Vancouver, 1982), and Peter Krawchuk, *Interned Without Cause: The Internment of Canadian Anti-fascists during World War Two* (Toronto, 1985).

3 For records of the *illegal* Finnish Organization of Canada that had been in the possession of the Custodian of Enemy Property or had been created under its jurisdiction, see the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 24, file 17, and vol. 21, file 22,

4 Eklund, *Canadian rakentajia*, 581.

5 P.C. 1223, 19 February 1941, in the Privy Council fonds, NAC, KG 2 1, vol. 1454, and P.C. 4651, 25 June 1941, *ibid.*, vol. 1469. Note that the naming of the Finnish Society of Toronto as an illegal organization first occurred with P.C. 4651.

6 FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 36, file 2; vol. 45, file 16; vol. 60, file 43; and vol. 61, file 1.

After the beginning of World War Two, on June 4, 1940 the Canadian Government declared by Order-in-Council the Finnish Organization of Canada to be an illegal organization. All FO of C halls and properties were seized and closed.

This was a big blow to *Yrityts AC* [that is, *Yrityts Athletic Club*], which at the time had some 200 members. The executive, of which I was a member, held several meetings to discuss the matter. A number of small meetings were called to talk over the problem. Then a big meeting was held with some 500 people in attendance, including members from the banned Finnish Society of Toronto. A committee of three was elected to approach the government authorities and seek permission for *Yrityts AC* to open and operate Don Hall and Camp Tarmola. The committee of three was E. Mäkelä, V. Peterson and myself.

A series of discussions were held with federal officials. *Yrityts AC* activities through the years, as well as FCASF history, were thoroughly investigated. It must be said that all officials with whom we dealt were sympathetic to our request, but it took a lot of hard work and lengthy discussions before our club was given permission to unlock the doors at Don Hall, and the gates of Camp Tarmola [summer camp and athletic grounds then on the outskirts of Toronto].

A basic condition of the club's take-over of the facilities was that *Yrityts AC* had to be bonded. In those days, money was still hard to come by, but with the help of loyal club members we managed to raise sufficient funds to cover the cost of bonding. In a short time, membership of *Yrityts AC* increased to nearly 400, with many Finnish Society of Toronto former members joining the sport club.¹

One reason for the federal government's then seemingly benevolent attitude towards *Yrityts Athletic Club* of Toronto may have stemmed from the fact that the Soviet Union had just been thrust into the Allied camp by the German attack upon its borders, thereby putting the Canadian government into a quandary in deciding what to do with those "Red" Finns it had declared earlier to be "enemies of the State" because of their pro-Soviet sympathies - especially when those same "Russophil Finns, who have hitherto been the trouble makers, may be expected to cease their troubling."² Another reason may been that the authorities now had to appear more reasonable and accommodating towards *Yrityts* because, by then, public opinion in Canada had begun to shift against the government's heavy-handed use of its police powers.

1 Quoted from *Helen Tarvainen*, "Some Toronto Recollections," in *Sports Pioneers*, 181.

2 Quoted from Robertson, "Memorandum for the Prime Minister: Relations with Finland," 22 June 1941, in the King Papers, NA, MG 26, J 4, vol. 274, file 2766, C188452–188454. Cf. J. L. Granatstein, *A Man of Influence: Norman A. Robertson and Canadian Statecraft, 1929–68* (Ottawa, 1981), 169.

That mood change was reflected in the English-language newspaper press as well. For example, one *Toronto Star* editorial declared that "in war, as in peace, the imprisonment of human beings is a matter to be finally determined by the courts, not by the police." It, therefore, suggested that the government should create "second tribunals of appeal" for those wartime internees who had appeared before a tribunal of the first instance that had recommended their release, but were still being held at the "absolute discretion of the minister of justice."¹ In a later editorial, the same newspaper was even more forthright:

The whole procedure, as the *Toronto Star* has already said, is one which cries out for reform, and a Liberal government should be the last to perpetuate it. It may be necessary in wartime to carry people off to internment camps on suspicion in the way that they actually are carried off, but it is also necessary to recognize their right to an adequate and prompt trial, with a verdict not to be set aside on the recommendation of some official in Ottawa.²

The RCMP naturally held an entirely different and opposite view of the situation. Commissioner S. T. Wood's stock response to his liberal critics was to tar them all with the one brush as the simple-minded dupes of the Communists and their fellow-travellers:

Wherever possible the Communist takes advantage of the public press to air his grievances. On several occasions he has succeed in gaining the editorial ear as a martyr to religious and political intolerance and has thus temporarily embarrassed a conscientious Government. Fortunately, the great majority of editors place country above party in such times as this, affording a splendid guarantee of good government and the perpetuation of democratic principles, and only through deception can they be so used. For instance, it was largely due to lack of *facts* that some papers severely arraigned the Government for interning "labour leaders" when these were in reality Communist leaders; for persecuting religion in the guise of Jehovah's Witnesses when, in truth, these are active enemies of Christianity and Democracy; for employing Gestapo methods through the Police in investigating and seizing "harmless citizens," when the Police had ample evidence that these citizens were plotting against the State. The intermittent attack on the Defence of Canada Regulations is almost entirely due to lack of editorial understanding, taken advantage of by extremists and pacifists who are well aware that it is the Regulations alone that prevent them from accomplishing their anti-British designs, It is noticeable, for instance, that cases of "injustice" cited in print are not the "parlour pinks" but the leaders who, in certain European countries, would probably

1 Quoted from "The Problem of Internees's Trials," *Toronto Star*, 15 October 1940.

2 Quoted from "The Right of Internees to a Trial," *ibid.*, 18 December 1940.

have been shot for treason. The public should be advised, through every possible channel, that its very salvation lies in the Defence of Canada Regulations and in their scrupulous enforcement. The sooner this is realized by the so-called idealist and the man-in-the-street alike, the better.¹

If the RCMP had ever erred in the use of its powers under the Defence of Canada Regulations, Wood declared, it had always been on the side of leniency. As evidence of this, he cited a report issued by a special committee of the Montreal Board of Trade on the question of the internment of suspected enemies of the State:

The report, unanimously approved by the Board's council, said the committee had been unable to find "any case in which criticism of the actions of the Department of Justice or police on grounds of severity, harshness or unjustified applications has been sustained."

It added that if any criticism of "Government or police action is warranted, it is that too much lenience has been shown, both with regard to internments and the release of those interned."

The Committee was of the opinion that police activities have "severely hampered the work of subversive organizations, and that the criticism largely emanates from those sources and from persons misled by such subversive groups."²

Despite such glowing endorsements of the RCMP and the Department of Justice from the business community, not everyone in the government bureaucracy subscribed to the police state advocated by Wood and Lapointe. Nazi Germany's attack on the Soviet Union finally provided the liberal element within the Ottawa mandarinat with the ideal opportunity for launching its own assault upon the existing security policies and their proponents. It was Norman Robertson, the under-secretary of the Department of External Affairs, who fired the first shot by arguing that recent changes in the European theatre now compelled the government to revise its attitude towards such groups as the "Red" Finns.³ Robertson possessed an intimate understanding of such matters inasmuch as he was on the committee charged with overseeing the RCMP's handling of security matters with respect to the arrest and internment of aliens, etc.

Nor was he alone in arguing for a reassessment of the government's policies on domestic security. The Soviet Union's joining the side of the angels had created a sea change in Ottawa's halls of power regarding such issues, the effect of which is vividly recalled in the memoirs of Lester B. Pearson, then serv-

1 Quoted from Wood, "Tools for Treachery," 4–5.

2 Quoted from *ibid.*, 6.

3 Robertson, "Memorandum for the Prime Minister: Relations with Finland," C188452–188454.

ing with the Department of External Affairs in Ottawa as second-in-command to the under-secretary:

In Ottawa the sudden transformation of Russia into an ally caused some understandable bewilderment. I was a member of a board at that time, under the direction of the RCMP, which was responsible for domestic security. This meant, among other things, watching and, if necessary, interning suspects. These suspects included certain communist leaders who had followed the Moscow line even when it twisted to an alliance with Hitler. They therefore agitated against the "imperialist" war and were interned in consequence. This, of course, all changed after 22 June 1941 when the USSR became "our gallant ally" and whose sacrifices, in a very real sense, became our greatest hope of victory. The war suddenly became a people's war to the Canadian comrades and they grew zealous in its support. It seemed silly, therefore, to keep them locked up, let alone to continue adding to their number. But security authorities do not adapt easily to sudden changes. I recall arguing strongly in favour of new security policies, which recognized communism as a source of support, however temporary.¹

The entry of the Soviet Union into the war had, in fact, sparked a heated debate within government circles concerning what should be done with the Communists and the working-class movement in this country. Because of Lapointe's (and Quebec's) strong views on this matter, the federal government dared not lift the ban on the CPC in 1941.² The illogicality of the prevailing situation provoked one CCF member from the opposition benches to raise the question in Parliament whether the government still intended to continue with the arrest and internment of persons who were members of the Communist Party. Ironically, the Canadian government was quick to tell the British that the supposedly dangerous internees they had sent to Canada included anti-Fascist and anti-Nazi *leftists* who were obviously here by mistake and should be returned to Britain.³ Prime Minister Mackenzie King's response was that "the Communist Party was declared to be an illegal organization not because of its attitude to Russia, but because of its subversive attitude to Canada's war effort. The entry of Russia into the war is therefore in itself irrelevant."⁴

1 Quoted from Lester B. Pearson, *The Memoirs of the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson 1: 1897–1948* (Toronto, 1972), 198. For contemporary evidence of this, see *idem*, "Memorandum for Under-Secretary of State," 12 October 1941, in the King fonds, NAC, MG 26 34, vol. 359, file 3843, C248557–248558.

2 Ernest Lapointe to G. D. Conant [attorney general for Ontario], 11 September 1941, *ibid.*, vol. 246, file 2529, C 165436.

3 O. D. Skelton, "Internees from the United Kingdom," 18 September 1940, in the King fonds, NAC, MG 26J 4, vol. 359, file 3843, C248514–248517.

4 Quoted from House of Commons, *Debates*, 10 November 1941, 4197.

Mackenzie King's answer, appearances aside, was hardly definitive. As his assistant J. W. Pickersgill noted, the prime minister's reply to the House had been carefully drafted so that, "should the government subsequently wish to suspend the operations of the Regulations so far as actual internment of Communists is concerned, without actually removing the ban on the party," it could do so.¹ Wily Willy - Prime Minister Mackenzie King - simply refused to allow himself to be boxed into the perpetual support of any given policy if he could find a way to equivocate.

However, the issue respecting the removal of the ban on the Communists simply would not go away. It was raised again in the following year with a new Minister of Justice in Ottawa. The incoming minister was the Honourable Louis St. Laurent, successful Quebec corporate lawyer whom Mackenzie King had persuaded to join the Liberal benches in Parliament as the successor to Lapointe's portfolio after the incumbent's death to cancer on 26 November 1941. Like his eminent predecessor, St. Laurent vigorously opposed the legalization of the Communist Party and the other suppressed leftist organizations. It was a stand in which he was heavily encouraged to continue by Cardinal Villeneuve and the Catholic "archbishops of the various ecclesiastical provinces of Canada."² Indeed, so strong were Catholic Quebec's feelings concerning this matter that it single-handedly forced Canada to stand alone among the Allies for having maintained its proscription on the Communist Party proper for the duration of the war and its alliance with the Soviet Union.³

On the other hand, the Communists and their sympathizers were not content to accept internment or the suppression of their organizations without a struggle. They, too, mounted equally vociferous campaigns with the public as well as the government to free their interned comrades and to raise the ban on their organizations.⁴ By mid-1942, Canadian public opinion outside of Quebec had begun to shift heavily in favour of lifting the government's ban on the radical Left as the result of those campaigns as well as in appreciation of the heroic struggle being waged by the Soviet forces on the Eastern Front against the Nazi aggressors. Even Pickersgill, the prime minister's trusty aide, advised him that, no matter "how difficult the question is in Quebec and how ready Duplessis and the Nationalists

1 For this, see J. W. Pickersgill to W. L. M. King, "Re: Internment of Communists" and "Re: Questions Raised in the House," 8 November 1941, in the King fonds, NAC, MG 26 J 4, vol. 246, file 2529, C165431.

2 Cardinal J. M. Rodrigue Villeneuve to Louis St. Laurent, 7 November 1942, *ibid.*, file 2528, C165420, and the latter's "Memorandum for the Prime Minister's Secretary," 6 January 1943, *ibid.*, file 2529, C165441.

3 Whitaker, "Official Repression of Communism During World War II," 152.

4 *Canada's Party of Socialism*, 242–44; Committee for the Release of Labor Prisoners, *They Fought for Labour - Now Interned* (Winnipeg, [1941]); Tim Buck (as chairman of the National Initiative Committee to Convene a Communist Constituent Convention), *Canada Needs a Party of Communists* (Toronto, [1943]).

would be to exploit it," the ban on the Communists should be lifted because "there is no doubt that genuine liberals in *English* speaking Canada are disturbed at the use of the Defence of Canada Regulations for any other purpose than the prevention of anti-war activity."¹

Moreover, the same view was held by a growing coterie of senior government officials who had become quite alarmed by the arbitrary manner in which the RCMP and Department of Justice were interning alleged Communists and pro-Communist sympathizers.² Among them was Pearson, as one of the members of a three-man, interdepartmental committee set up to review all the individual cases of persons detained and interned by the RCMP, complained that the police frequently bypassed his committee altogether. By the summer of 1943, the pressure against the government's anti-communist policy had assumed such proportions that H. S. Ferns, a staff member in the Prime Minister's Office, wrote the following in an apparent pique of exasperation:

The attached is a summary of Communist policy ["copy of a speech delivered in Toronto, on June 13's, by Mr. Tim Buck"³] which, in my opinion, should be placed before Mr. King.

This material was sent to me for filing. I feel, however, that Mr. King's interest is not served by ignoring serious Communist discussions while sending at every opportunity précis, etc., of the outpourings of *Le Devoir* and *L'Action Catholique*.

The fact is that the Communists support the war and on several occasions they have supported the Liberal administration... They have been driven into supporting the C.C.F., Hepburn and a number of other opportunist adventurers, by the policy of the government. Were they given decent, fair treatment by the government, they would, I believe, give general support to the government to the advantage of the Liberal Party as a whole.

I think it is stupid to continue the policy of ignoring the Communists as a vocal but unimportant clique. They have strong influence in large trade unions on the West Coast, at the head of the lakes, and to certain extent in Montreal. At a time when the C.C.F. is making a big political drive in Union circles, the influence of the Communists cannot be ignored...

1 Quoted from J. W. Pickersgill to W. L. M. King, memorandum "Re: Ban on Communist Party," 31 August 1942, in the King fonds, NAC, MG 26 J 4, vol. 246, file 2529, C165483–165484.

2 N. A. Robertson to W. L. M. King, 1 November 1941, *ibid.*, vol. 359, file 3843, C24835556; L. B. Pearson to J. W. Pickersgill, 6 March 1942, *ibid.*, C248549.

3 H.S. Ferns to W.L. King, memorandum "Re: Policy of Canadian Communists," 15 July 1943. *ibid.*, vol. 246, file 2529, C165448. For Ferns' own description of his leftist past, see H.S. Ferns, *Reading from Left to Right: One man's Political History* (Toronto; Buffalo; London, 1983).

Whether the Government likes it or not, the industrial working class is being organized as never before, principally by the adherents of the C.C.F. and Communists. Surely, it is good sense for the Government to bid for the solid backing of one of these elements.

The fear that the Catholic Church would fight the Liberals if the ban were raised is founded on the untrue proposition that *Le Devoir* speaks for the Catholic population of French Canada... The idea that Godbout's position would be prejudiced by lifting the ban is only valid if Godbout [as Premier of Quebec] allows all other issues to be subordinated to the issue of anti-communism.

The Communists are offering the Government an easy way out of their difficulties. There is no need to remove the ban; merely to state that the actions of any new party of Communists will be subjected to the same treatment and in accordance with the same standards as other political parties.¹

Whether or not Fern's memorandum was at all instrumental in changing the government's policy, or even if it had been placed before the prime minister, is not altogether certain. However, there can be no doubt that, about the end of 1943, the ban against the Communists and pro-Communists was lifted much in the manner as had been recommended by Ferns. Indeed, something very like the compromise suggested by him was also allowed to take effect with the founding of the Labor-Progressive Party as the replacement for the outlawed CPC in all but name.² If there is any lesson to be learned from this episode, it is that the hallmark of Mackenzie King's administration was not ideology, but rather simple political survival - even in matters concerning the working-class movement.

Because of Mackenzie King's reluctance to alienate the powerful defenders of the freedom of the press (principally the press itself), his government dared not ban such radical foreign-language newspapers as *Vapaus* (which the Borden government had done during World War I) despite the clamour from the "White" Finns and other conservative elements for it to do so.³ To the contrary, it even permitted the Custodian of Enemy Property to negotiate the renewal of chattel mortgages on behalf of the banned FOC (as the administrator of its seized properties) with the newspaper's publisher, Vapaus Publishing Company, Limited.⁴

1 Quoted from H. S. Ferns to W. J. Turnbull, 15 July 1943, *ibid.*, C165446–165447.

2 *Canada's Party of Socialism*, 145.

3 For example, see Gunnar E. A. Tornqvist, V. Kivikoski and Arvo Kahkonen [respectively president, secretary and treasurer of the Central Organization of the Loyal Finns in Canada, Inc., the former also being president of the Montreal Suomi Society, Inc.] to Ernest Lapointe, 12 November 1940, in the Montreal Suomi Society fonds, NAC, MG 28 V 68, vol. 8, file 28, and the Honourable Herbert Bruce [Conservative member for Parkdale and former lieutenant governor of Ontario], House of Commons, *Debates*, 12 June 1940, 728–729.

4 FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 21, file 22.

Insofar as the government had allowed it to maintain its newspaper operations, *Vapaus* was also enabled to serve as the natural rallying-point for the ex-members of the outlawed FOC.

After Germany's attack upon the Soviet Union, *Vapaus'* offices also became the hub of activity for organizing the forces of the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement on behalf of the Canadian war effort as well as for pressing the government to raise its ban against the FOC. At that time, the *Vapaus* Building in Sudbury became the central headquarters of two newly formed associations: the Finnish-Canadian Democratic League (FCDL; in Finnish, Suomalais-Canadaisten Demokraattien Liitto) and the *ad hoc* Committee for Legalizing the Finnish Organization of Canada (CS7:n Laillistuttamiskomitea). They were to serve respectively as the FOC's principal wartime surrogate and chief lobby for its legalization.¹ These organizations quickly sank into oblivion once the federal government's ban against the FOC was lifted.

Whatever else it may have done, the outbreak of the Russo-German hostilities had clearly succeeded in breathing new life into the temporarily moribund Finnish-Canadian working-class movement. Especially indicative of that was the spontaneous flurry of activity undertaken by the "Red" Finns in various centres across Canada to establish their own local wartime replacements for the still banned FOC. Locally organized Finnish-Canadian "V" Clubs began to spring up even in such unlikely places as Val-d'Or, Quebec.² Moreover, the "V" clubs in the Thunder Bay region subsequently joined together as branches of the Finnish-Canadian Anti-Fascist "V[ictory]" League (FCAFVL; in Finnish, Canadan-Suomalaisten Fascismin Vastainen V-liitto), a regional association that was headquartered in Port Arthur.³ A similar development occurred in the Sudbury area with the appearance of the Associations of Finnish Democrats (AFD; in Finnish, Suomalaisen Demokraattien Yhdistys).⁴ Before long, most of these organizational structures were subsumed by the FCDL as its branches and district committees. Through such means the whole of the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement was thus mobilized in aid of the Canadian war effort.

War on the Eastern Front in far-off Europe also produced another startling turnabout. In its bid to reverse its losses from the Winter War, Finland joined Germany as a comrade-in-arms (rather than as an ally) shortly after the latter's attack on the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941. In undertaking the so-called Continuation War, Finland also became an enemy nation in Canada's eyes. Hence, by August 1941, all of the Finnish consulates in this country were closed with Fin-

1 Ibid., vol. 21, files 23–54; vol. 22, files 1–22 and 28–31; and vol. 92, file 45.

2 Ibid., vol. 46, files 33–35.

3 Ibid., vol. 21, file 48.

4 Ibid., vol. 22, files 23–27.

land's interests in Canada being looked after by the diplomatic representatives of Sweden until the war's end.¹ On 7 December 1941, Canada finally declared war on Finland.² Mackenzie King did not table the proclamation of war in Parliament until the twenty-first of the following month.³ At that time, many "White" Finns had become quite dismayed because their sympathies were still with the Old Country. The Canadian government now had to face the vexing problem of having to deal with its erstwhile "White" Finn allies who had served it so well in their common struggle against the "Red" Finns.

Nevertheless, it is clear that the government was not wholly prepared to embrace the "Red" Finns to its bosom and turn its wrath upon the "Whites." Instead, it fashioned a rather curious compromise in the form of P.C. 9543, an order-in-council which recognized "that most persons of Roumanian, Hungarian or Finnish nationality residing in Canada are law abiding, well disposed and loyal inhabitants of this country, contributing to its war effort and disavowing any allegiance to the Nazi controlled puppet governments of their countries of origin" and, therefore, "deemed [it] expedient that such persons should not be generally subjected to the Defence of Canada Regulations relating to enemy aliens."⁴ By this means, the Canadian government relieved itself of the responsibility of having to treat the "White" Finns automatically as enemy aliens while still permitting their "Red" compatriots to aid the war effort.

As beneficial as P.C. 9543 may have been to the "Red" Finns in certain respects, they were not entirely happy with the government's application of its provisions as it concerned them. The reasons for this were detailed in a 'petition' – or 'memorandum', as its authors chose to call it – that had been printed by the Vapaus Publishing Company that was delivered to Minister of Justice St. Laurent in June 1942.⁵ The joint authors of the petition were P. Mertanen and William Eklund – respectively the national secretary of the FCDL and the editor of *Vapaus*. In their petition, they had this to say as "Ex members of the Executive Committee of the now illegal Finnish Organization of Canada, Inc.":

We welcomed heartily the Government's stand on this question and appreciated it, because it makes the lot of Finnish nationals in Canada much easier than it would otherwise be. But the practical application of this Government's policy has brought us disappointment. In the recent registration of

1 "Canada's Relations with Finland," *External Affairs* 13 (February 1961): 56.

2 P.C. 9542, 7 December 1941, in Canada, *Proclamations and Orders in Council Relating to the War* 5 (Ottawa, 1942), 343.

3 House of Commons, *Debates*, 21 January 1942, 4461–4462.

4 Quoted from P.C. 9543, 23 December 1941, in the Privy Council fonds, NAC, RO 2 1, vol. 1490.

5 P. Mertanen to Louis S. St. Laurent, n.d. [June 1942], in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 22, file 15.

Finnish nationals, many Finns who are generally known to be anti-fascists were classed as enemy aliens - were given a white ticket. We have even been told that the RCMP in some cases consulted the rebel [*sic*] Finns as to whom of the Finns should be classed as enemy aliens. We do not know whether or not any of the rebel Finns have been classed as enemy aliens, neither do we know if it is the Government's policy to class known anti-fascists as enemy aliens, or if it is entirely due to the local registrars - the RCMP. But the result is the same in both cases...¹

Although the government always insisted that it was acting in a most impartial and even-handed manner in its dealings with both "Red" and "White" Finns, a cursory look at the facts suggests otherwise.² The federal authorities in Ottawa appeared to be more than content to leave the "White" Finns alone and unmolested as long as they remained discreetly behind closed doors when expressing their unbounded adoration of Finland, their support for its current causes and their admiration for its great military leader, Marshal C. G. E. Mannerheim. Most telling in that regard was the willingness of those authorities in allowing such pro-Finnish, extreme right-wing nationalist organizations as the Suomen Rintamamiehet Montrealissa (Finnish War Veterans in Montreal) - an association whose name had recently been changed from the original Suomen Vapausodan Rintamamiehet Montrealissa (Finnish Independence War Veterans in Montreal) to accommodate the returning veterans from the Winter War - to continue with their operations unhampered and unimpeded throughout the war.³ Indeed, there is no record to which this author is privy that establishes the fact that any right-wing organization in the Finnish-Canadian community was banned by the federal government, no matter how pro-Finland it may have been.

Of course, not the least tincture of evidence of wartime wrong-doing by any of the right-wing nationalist Finnish organizations had, or has, ever been uncovered that would have merited their banning by the government after 22 June 1941. The only possible "crime" that they and their members could have been accused of was that they supported Finland with heart and soul, a country now declared to be an enemy co-belligerent on the side of Nazi Germany. By the same token, there has not been, nor is there now, any tangible proof suggesting that the organizations in the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement had actually com-

1 Quoted from Mertanen and Eklund, *The "Illegal" Finnish Organization of Canada, Inc.*, 16 [emphasis, spelling, grammar and errors as in the original text]. See also W. Eklund to J. L. Cohen [Vapaus Publishing Company's lawyer], 24 April 1942, in the J. L. Cohen fonds, NAC, MG 30A 94, vol. 29, file 2915.

2 F. P. Varcoe [deputy minister of justice] to J. L. Cohen, 17 April 1942, and W. Eklund to J. L. Cohen [in response to Varcoe's letter], *ibid.*, vol. 29, file 2914.

3 Most pointedly, no break in operations is noted in the branch's minute books, 1940–1945, in the Finnish War Veterans in Canada [Montreal Branch] fonds, NAC, MG 28 V 60. The current name is Suomen Aseveljet Canadassa (Finnish War Veterans in Canada).

mitted disloyal acts in wartime against the Dominion that would have properly required their suppression by the authorities. Their only "crime" at the time was that they, too, had supported another country that was also seen here as being in cahoots with Nazi Germany. However, in this case, their support of the Soviet Union became the actual pretext for their banning by the government. Even when that pretext no longer obtained, the government continued to exhibit extreme reluctance in raising the ban.

As late as the fall of 1942, the government authorities were still intent upon arresting, detaining and interning "Red" Finns.¹ Moreover, they also maintained that many others - including the principal members of the editorial and administrative staff of *Vapaus* and *Liekki* - should continue to be treated as enemy aliens.² The government neither lifted nor moderated its sanctions against the "Red" Finns and their organizations although it had already begun to soften its attitude towards Italian, Austrian and German nationals in Canada.³ By the beginning of December 1942, it decided to revoke Regulation 26B of the Defence of Canada Regulations "in order to remove loyal British subjects of former enemy nationality [including Germans] from the restrictions placed upon enemy aliens" and to amend "REGULATION 26C ... to cover Italian and Austrian nationals, making certificates of exemption from enemy alien regulations available to them on the same terms as to Finns, Roumanians and Hungarians."⁴ Still Ottawa did not bring a halt to its campaign against the "Red" Finns until the fall of 1943. Thus, it appears that the government continued to find it far easier to forgive those suspected of espousing pro-Fascist and pro-Nazi sympathies than pro-Communist ones.⁵

1 Cohen fonds, NAC, MG 30 A 94, vol. 31, files 2917 A-9 and A-10.

2 Ibid., vol. 29, file 2915.

3 For example, see Royal Canadian Mounted Police, NAC, RG 18, vol. 45, file D-15-2, especially the copy of N. A. Robertson to E. H. Coleman, 18 November 1942 (together with its enclosures, including a copy of his "Memorandum for the Prime Minister" dated the previous day) and the subsequent correspondence leading to the War Committee's decision to revoke REGULATION 26B of the Defence of Canada Regulations.

4 Quoted from A. D. P. Heeney to Louis St. Laurent, 4 December 1942, *ibid.*

5 Whitaker, "Official Repression of Communism During World War II," 149.

14

The Finnish Organization of Canada Restored, 1943

When the government finally relented in its treatment of the "Red" Finns in October 1943, it signalled its change in policy through P.C. 8022. This order-in-council removed the FOC, the Finnish Society of Toronto and the Finnish Society of Vancouver] together with the Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple Association, Technocracy Inc., and the Jehovah's Witnesses from the list of illegal organizations enumerated in REGULATION 39C of the Defence of Canada REGULATIONS. P.C. 8022 also ordered that, with respect to those particular organizations, "all property, rights and interests in Canada, or the proceeds thereof, vested in and subject to the Custodian ... be released to the organization or person from whom it was received."¹ In compliance with those instructions, the Custodian of Enemy Property returned to the rehabilitated FOC and its affiliates their seized properties and other assets by the spring of 1944.²

This, however, did not mean that everything (including their records) had been actually returned to them or that they were to be fully compensated for the sale, loss or damage done to their interests.³ In fact, the FOC and its affiliates only received a grand total of \$37.00 of the \$52,246.64 claim for damages that they had forwarded to the government.⁴ By refusing to pay further damages, the government again served notice that its forbearance of the "Red" Finns was rather lim-

1 Quoted from P.C. 8022, 14 October 1943, in Canada, Privy Council Office, Statutory Orders and Regulations Division, *Canadian War Orders and Regulations 4*, No. 3 (Ottawa, 1943), 127.

2 For the Custodian's certificates of transfer of properties to various FOC locals, see the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28V 46, vol. 41, file 21; vol. 46, file 36; vol. 48, files 8, 19, and 21; and vol. 49, file 11,

3 For example, see the listing of the losses incurred by Whitefish FOC local, in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 190, file 28.

4 Eklund, *Canadian rakentajia*, 599.

ited. Nonetheless, the "Red" Finns continued to contribute to Canada's war effort as best as they could - whether that was done through their daily work in the war industries, their purchase of war bonds, or their enlistment in the armed forces.

Of course, the enlistment of "alien nationals of Germany, Italy, Finland, Rumania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Austria or with any other country" with which Canada found herself at war was not initially permitted. However, because of the growing resentment in this country over the exclusion of foreign nationals from military service, new regulations were issued in May 1943 that allowed "persons born in enemy countries or of former enemy nationality (except the Japanese)" to be enlisted or called up to serve in the Canadian armed forces if they had been naturalized in Canada. Even if they had not yet been naturalized, foreign nationals from those countries could enlist provided that they signed a "Declaration of Intention" to become British subjects in Canada and had not been previously interned,¹ The impact of those new regulations upon the Finnish-Canadian community was such that, by the first of the month following their adoption, at least 276 Finnish-born males were reported to have enlisted in the Canadian Army.²

Some Finnish-born males preferred to wait until they were called up for service with the Canadian military. Matti E. Enros belonged in that category. He was an unabashed nationalist "White" Finn all of his life, having witnessed as a three-year-old in 1918 an atrocity committed by the Red guards, who had forced a captive group of small shopkeepers to dig a mass grave and then machine gunned them to death. Enros immigrated to Canada as a thirteen-year old in 1928. Enros returned to Finland in the spring of 1935 to work for a firm of a family friend. As a Finnish citizen of the right age, Enros received his call-up for the Finnish Army that July, and completed his compulsory military service in 1936. He returned to Canada in 1937. In January 1940, he volunteered with the American Finnish Legion to fight in the Winter War. Having already completed his basic military training years before, Enros was able to see action against the Russians at the front before the war ended. After the war, he returned to Canada. With the outbreak of the Continuation War in 1941, he prudently applied to take out Canadian citizenship. It was on that basis, Enros opined, he received his initial call-up for service with the Canadian Army in 1944. After receiving one six-month deferment due to his employment with a crown corporation, he finally joined the Canadian Army in early 1945 in the General Service (GS) category with an offer to serve overseas. By the time Enros had finished his basic training, the war was nearly over, and so, his entire term of military service took place in Canada.³

1 Quoted from Department of National Defence [Army] to G.O.C.-in-C., Atlantic Command et al., May 1943, in the James Layton Ralston fonds, NAC, MG 27 III B 11, vol. 73, file "Aliens."

2 Brigadier Marcel N. to J. L. Ralston, 1 June 1943, Appendix A, *ibid*.

3 From the "Autobiography of Matti Ensio Ylönen-Enros," typescript, 1985, in the Matti Ensio Ylönen-Enros fonds, NAC, MG 31 H 140.

Under the circumstances, it may be assumed that the "Red" Finns constituted a high proportion of the Finnish-born volunteers in Canada's armed forces. For example, William Eklund, the editor-in-chief of *Vapaus* who had been declared an enemy alien in 1942, hastened to join the Canadian Army shortly after the armed forces' adoption of the new recruitment policy in the following year.¹ Certain well-known Finnish progressives like Eklund and Jules Päiviö were not permitted to serve overseas because the authorities still considered them to be major security risks. In that regard, Päiviö, a Spanish Civil War veteran, once told the author that he had not only been denied the opportunity to serve in a combat zone, but he had also spent his entire army career in Canada under the surveillance of a fellow soldier who had been specifically assigned to that duty. Other comrades, who were less prominent on the RCMP's list of security risks, managed to go overseas to serve at the front. Indeed, some of their names eventually appeared in the casualty lists of Canadians who had been killed or wounded abroad.

Ivan Avakumovic, a Cold Warrior of the first water, chose to say nothing of the many restrictions that had been placed on the wartime service of the "Red" Finns and others associated with the Party. Instead, he implied that the Communists' commitment to Canada's war effort was less than complete by making this point: "In fact far fewer party members lost their lives in the Canadian armed forces during the Second World War (43), than in the International Brigades during the Spanish Civil War (600)."² Even were Avakumovic's figures neither highly suspect nor misleading, his specious argument begs the crucial question. Insofar as their enlisting in the military for active service after 1941, many of the few remaining able-bodied survivors of the conflict in Spain were already too old for placement in combat units of the Canadian armed forces. Other active party members from that period were also caught by the age factor and, in many instances, by the usual family responsibilities that materialize with the advance of time. Moreover, Avakumovic should have also added into his equation the number of offspring of Party members who had been recruited into this country's military forces and their casualty rates while serving at the front. Only with those facts can we begin to gauge the actual rate of participation of the radical Left in Canada's war effort and the extent of their sacrifices on its behalf.

At least in the case of the Finns, we do know that the children of FOC members who also carried membership cards in the Party - served, bled and died in service of the Canadian war effort. This, however, does not necessarily mean that their Canadian offspring were Party members, nor that their service with the Canadian military had been delayed until after the Soviet Union's entry into the war

1 Edward W. Laine, "Eklund, William: MG 31 1-I 80," Finding Aid No. 1624 (typescript, NAC, 1986), iii.

2 Quoted from Avakumovic, *The Communist Party*, 149. Note that Avakumovic offers no documentation to support the figures that he gives.

as an ally. Whether Canadian-born or resident in this country from an early age, the youth of Finnish origin who were most eligible for military service in terms of age, were more likely to have joined up out of their patriotism for Canada or out of their desire to emulate the actions of others in their peer group within and outside the Finnish community than as the result of any attachment they might have had to the radical Left. Because so many of the men and women of Finnish descent in Canada's armed forces had come from "Red" families, Vapaus Publishing Company chose to honour all Finnish-Canadian servicemen and servicewomen in 1946 through its publication of a souvenir album, *Canadian suomalaisten sotilaiden muistoalbumi* (The Finnish-Canadian Soldiers' Souvenir Album).¹

That publication contained almost eight hundred photographs with accompanying biographies of individual Finnish-Canadian servicemen and women who had served in the Canadian armed forces at home and abroad during World War II. Even so, the *Canadian suomalaisten sotilaiden muistoalbumi* was not as comprehensive as it could have been. For example, among the Finnish-Canadian male and female veterans whose photos and biographies were missing from the *Canadian suomalaisten sotilaiden muistoalbumi* - whether from their own personal choice or through the oversight of the editor - were those of Paul Sillanpää, a second-generation Canadian of Finnish origin and a battle-hardened veteran of the European theatre.² In that regard, we do know that an unspecified number of Finnish-Canadian veterans simply declined the opportunity to be included in a publication that was the undertaking of the "Communists" at *Vapaus*. Others, too, may have been inadvertently overlooked by William Eklund, the editor of the *Canadian suomalaisten sotilaiden muistoalbumi*, or had fallen through the cracks for various reasons. Still this publication stands as a valuable documentary source on the Finnish-Canadian community's contribution to the Canadian war effort.

Even the Canadian government recognized the importance of Eklund's commemorative album. So, it symbolically joined in *Vapaus'* undertaking with a glowing tribute that the Honourable D. C. Abbott tendered to the *Canadian suomalaisten sotilaiden muistoalbumi* in his capacity as Minister of Defence. In his tribute, the grateful defence minister graciously acknowledged that:

Many hundreds of young Finnish Canadian men and women equally share with Canadians of other ethnic origins in the honour of the victory that has just recently been achieved. Their war record has been of the kind which Canadians everywhere will be forever proud.

1 *Canadian suomalaisten sotilaiden muistoalbumi* (Sudbury, 1946). This publication was edited by William Eklund (see Laine, "Eklund, William: MG 31 H 80," iv).

2 On Paul Sillanpää's wartime service, see Nelma Sillanpää, *tinder the Northern Lights: My Memories of Life in the Finnish Community of Northern Ontario*, ed. Edward W. Laine (Hull, Que., 1994), 62-72.

In the water-filled shell holes of Western Europe, in the muck and mire of Sicily and Italy, there was no question of "who you are," but of "what you are" - and what you can do. Finnish Canadians know that their sons and brothers did more than ever had been asked or expected of them. All were true sons of Canada fighting side-by-side with their other Canadian comrades on behalf of the same cause and trusting in one another for the sake of success in all their battles.¹

Rather than trumpeting the dawn of a new era of peace and harmony between the authorities and the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement, the federal government's polite involvement in the FCC's souvenir album actually marked the end of its wartime association of convenience with the FOC. Indeed, the last echoes of World War II's VE-Day and VJ-Day celebrations had scarcely faded into memory before both parties were to find themselves again at odds - estranged once more by the same ideological tensions and differences that had historically plagued their relations before that fleeting moment in time when they had been bound together as comrades-in-arms united in the one common purpose of defeating the Axis Powers.

1 My translation of D. C. Abbott, "Puolustusministerin tervehdys," in *Canadian suomalaisten sotilaiden muistoalbumi*, 3.

15 The Wages of War, the "Red" Finns and the Finnish Organization of Canada

A review of the available literature shows that, despite the recent spate of academic books and articles on the Finnish-Canadian past, comparatively little analytical work has appeared on the Finnish experience in Canada during World War II. The war is, after all, a touchy subject for all Finns across the political spectrum who had lived through those turbulent times. Everyone, whether they belonged to the Left, Right or Centre, had occasion at one time or another to feel that they were on the receiving end of the State's extreme displeasure - if only because of their ethnicity. For a people who have always prided themselves as being law-abiding contributors to the commonweal, that disapproval created an almost unbearable shock to most Finns- making that part of their experience a matter best buried and forgotten in the sands of time.

Unfortunately, the one and only monograph purporting to be an academic treatment of the subject, Varpu Lindström's *From Heroes to Enemies: Finns in Canada, 1937-1947*, offers little more than unconnected anecdotal snippets strung together into a somewhat sensationalistic hodgepodge. It lacks sufficient historical objectivity, lucid thought and vision to serve as a comprehensive narrative history of the period. Most disturbing of all is that, contrary to its subtitle, this book largely ignores the wartime experience of a major part of the Finnish-Canadian community - especially the Canadian-born second generation - who clove to the centre of the political, social and cultural spectrum. Instead, it chooses to treat other "sexier" topics at length such as the Finnish-Canadian Left in the Spanish Civil War and the difficulties it faced during World War II, the nationalist Finns who left Canada to volunteer their services to Finland during the Winter War of 1939-1940, and the internment of a small number of Finnish nationals - seamen who were taken from merchant ships flying the Finnish flag that had been captured in Canadian waters after Finland had been declared an enemy nation in 1941.

The banal superficiality that all too often cheapens the narrative in *From Heroes to Enemies* is typified in the book's summation of the FOC and its activities during the later war years. This is what the book has to say:

By the end of the war, FOC cultural and sports activities were carried out with enthusiasm. Summer camps were full of happy children, and many halls were reopened, restored, and filled to the brim during cultural and social occasions. In one year \$3,000 was raised to fix the Clinton Hall in Vancouver. In one evening alone, 20 October 1944, 800 people attended an international program presented in many languages and raised \$885 for the Clinton Hall.

The opening of the new FOC hall in Sudbury was celebrated by 2,000 people. Val D'Or [sic], Quebec, reported that the activities in 1944 had been "lively" and the organization had paid its \$500 debt. The years of Soviet-Canadian alliance were thus politically and culturally good years for the FOC and allowed the organization to regain its official status as an important, although significantly reduced, cultural and political force within Finnish communities in Canada.¹

At the heart of this paragraph is its contention that "the years of Soviet-Canadian alliance were thus politically and culturally good years for the FOC," but was that really so? As we have already seen, the Canadian government was still arresting and interning leftists at least as late as the fall of 1942. Moreover, Ottawa did not end its campaign against the "Red" Finns until the fall of the following year. Until the government finally lifted its ban against the FOC in October 1943 and released all of the organization's seized properties in the spring of 1944, the FOC simply had no legal or corporal existence upon which to rebuild its cultural, social and political programmes and activities. So much for the notion that the era of Canada's alliance with the Soviet Union resulted in "politically and culturally good years for the FOC" - at the very least for the period spanning from June 1941 and into the second quarter of 1944.

Even after the government's raising of its ban on the organization, the FOC was faced with the monumental task of repairing the considerable physical and financial damage done to its assets during the time they had been under the control and not too tender care of the Custodian of Enemy Property. Therein lay the actual reason for the many references to fund-raising in the above paragraph in *From Heroes to Enemies*. The FOC was forced to sponsor every manner of social and cultural event just to raise sufficient funds from its members to make its halls useable again and to pay off its accumulated debts, especially the municipal

1 Quoted from Varpu Lindström, *From Heroes to Enemies: Finns in Canada, 1937–1947* (Beaverton, Ontario, 2000), 198–199.

Table 2. FOC Locals Still in Operation in 1950.

NAME/LOCATION OF FOC LOCAL		
Beaver	Lake Lappi/Lappe	Sointula
Cobalt	Long Lake#	South Porcupine
Conmee	Mattawa	Sprucedale
Coteau Hill	Meadow Portage	Sudbury
Eby/Swastika	Montreal*#	Tarmola
Elsbeth New	Westminster#	Thorhild
Geraldton#	Nolalu	Timmins
Intola	Port Arthur	Toronto
Kaministikwia/Kaministiquia	Rorketon#	Vancouver (Finnish Society)
Kapuskasing#	Rouyn#	Wanup
Kirkland Lake	Sarnia#	Webster's Corners
Ladysmith	Sault Ste. Marie	Windsor#

Notes:

* Contradictory reports were received from Montreal in 1950, one saying that the FOC local there was no longer in operation and, at the same time, another saying it was. A small handful of FOC members who would not admit defeat, and they hosted dances and other social activities tacitly in the organization's name.

These FOC locals had no hall.

Sources:

Data extracted from the reports received from the locals, 1950, in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 24, file 21.

taxes accruing to its real properties that had been left unpaid by the Custodian. A basic understanding of those necessities evidently escaped the attention of the book's author.

Of course, many of the seized halls of FOC locals in the smaller communities had become so encumbered in debt and run down that the locals lacked the resources to repay the outstanding obligations and restore the halls into useable condition. Under those circumstances, the affected locals were forced to cease their operations and turn over their remaining assets - if any - to the FOC's National Office. The consequence was that, of the seventy-five locals in operation in 1936, only thirty-six reported that they were still active in 1950. Moreover, nine of the thirty-six were without their own halls.¹ (For this, see Table 2 above.)

1 Data extracted from the reports received from the locals, 1950, in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 24, file 21. Note that the earliest postwar data available on the FOC's locals and its membership figures are from these 1950 reports.

Naturally, the loss of so many locals was especially damaging to the FOC's ability to deliver its cultural programmes and services across Canada and, by extension, to its ability to maintain the same political and cultural presence in the Finnish community that it had enjoyed before the war.

Finally, the cheery depiction in *From Heroes to Enemies* of "FOC cultural and sports activities ... carried out with enthusiasm" and "summer camps ... full of happy children" belies the fact that the members of the FOC and their families were

Table 3. FOC Membership and *Vapaus* Circulation Figures, 1922–1939.

Year	FOC memberships annual total	<i>Vapaus</i> subscribers annual circulation
1922	-	2246
1923	-	2476
1924	-	3135
1925	-	2778
1926	-	3500
1927	-	3000
1928	-	3700
1929	-	3541
1930	-	3546
1931	-	3670
1932	-	4800
1933	-	3908
1934	-	3728
1935	2716	3846
1936	2354	3824
1937	2447	3842
1938	2284	4106
1939	2270	3135
1940	-	-

Notes:

No membership figures are available for the reconstituted FSOC-FOC for the years from 1922–1934, or for the FOC and *Vapaus* for the year 1940.

Sources:

FOC, *Canadian suomalaisen siirtolaisväestön yhtenäisyys* (Sudbury, 1935); idem, mimeographed proceedings of XII National Convention, 1937; and idem, mimeographed proceedings of XII National Convention, 1939, in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 6, files 4, 7, and 10 respectively; Arja Pilli, *The Finnish-Language Press in Canada, 1901–1939. A Study in the History of Ethnic Journalism* (Turku, 1982), 194.

subject to the same wartime stresses and hardships that faced all Canadians on the home front. Many had friends and loved ones serving overseas in harm's way, and they lived in dread of receiving of a telegram from the defence department informing them of the death of a father, son or brother posted on the European front. While employment was now plentiful in stark contrast to the depression years, union activities were tightly circumscribed and the mobility of individual workers deemed to be performing essential services was limited. Wage and price controls were tightly maintained. Most consumer goods were in short supply. Food, gasoline and many other everyday necessities were tightly rationed, which forced some people to buy additional supplies illegally at exorbitant prices from the black market. Taxation was relatively high, and workers were additionally expected to plough a good part of their earnings into war bonds and other of the government's wartime loan instruments for the benefit of Canada's war effort.

If all of that was not enough, the members of the FOC, both individually and collectively, had to contend with the distinct possibility throughout most of the war that, at any time, the full force of the State might well come down upon their hapless heads. That, too, posed a heavy drain on the psychological wellbeing and sense of security of person of an entire group of people who, but for their allegiance to the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement, were a rather ordinary folk who prided themselves on their work ethic and law-abiding nature. Then, to top that off, they were also locked in a bitter, unending struggle with other members of the Finnish-Canadian community who, even in the best of times, had always eschewed their beliefs and values - but now hated them all the more for being *isänmaanpettureita* (traitors to the fatherland).

The effect of the war and the impact it had on the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement, therefore, were no trivial matters to be dismissed out of hand. Every radical Finn was predisposed to react to perceived threats from government authorities, employers and the opposition within the Finnish community with the human equivalent of one of the three instinctive choices given to all immediately imperilled creatures in the animal kingdom - to fight, flee, or hide. The true believers remained faithful members of the FOC, its affiliates and wartime surrogates to continue the "good" fight against the injustices and inequities that they found to be inherent to Canada's capitalist system. Others, who could no longer withstand the pressure of being continually menaced by the hostile forces around them, chose to flee by withdrawing from the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement - only to return once the situation had improved. Among those who dropped out of the FOC and the working-class movement were also those former members who chose never to return to the fold. Instead, this latter group often hid or papered over their past as radical Finns - undergoing a process of deracination that often included a healthy dose of de-ethnicization as well - which

they did more often than not to protect their children from being stigmatized as leftists by the authorities.

Bearing this in mind, we can now begin to extrapolate the extent of the war-time damage that was done individually and collectively to the radical Finns from the figures in Table 3 above on the FOC membership and *Vapaus* circulation from 1935 to 1939. First of all, we find that a downward trend in the annual number of FOC memberships occurred at the time of the organization's adoption of the CPC's Popular Front initiatives in 1935, a decline that only reached its nadir in 1939. That exodus from the FOC's ranks was more likely due to the exhaustion experienced by some of the membership after years of carrying on with "the battle in the streets" that resulted in the arrest, imprisonment and deportation of so many comrades than from any particular dissatisfaction with the recent changes made to the organization's priorities and political direction. Whatever the case, the haemorrhaging of FOC's members over the whole of that period proved to be considerable at 16.4%. However, even those losses were dwarfed by the precipitous drop between 1939 and 1950 from 2,270 to 1,399 members - or 37.4%.¹ Despite the lack of additional membership data for the intervening years, it is safe to assume that most, if not all, of the losses from 1939 to 1950 resulted directly from the adverse effects of the war.

Vapaus' circulation totals were generally higher than the number of FOC members largely because the newspaper could be sent by mail to areas where no FOC locals had been established, for example, to isolated lumber camps and farming communities. Moreover, it was far easier and safer to show one's solidarity with the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement by subscribing to *Vapaus* than by joining the FOC. For that reason, the newspaper *Vapaus'* circulation remained quite stable throughout the period from 1935 to 1937. As we can see from Table 3 above, it even experienced a healthy 6.4% rise in subscriptions in 1938, but then suffered an almost fourfold decline of 23.6% in subscriptions in the following year. By comparison, *Vapaa Sana* reached the highest circulation in its history during the war years with 6,000 paid subscribers, a situation aided by the fact that it, unlike *Vapaus*, was dedicated to reporting as much news from the Finnish front as it could get by the wartime censors.²

Vapaus' controversial stand in disapproving of Finland's position in the Winter War may well have led to most of the cancellations and non-renewals of subscriptions in 1939. On the other hand, the simple fact of the outbreak of World War II itself may have also persuaded the more cautious *Vapaus* subscribers to discontinue their subscriptions. After all, we should also remember that every-

1 FOC, mimeographed proceedings of XII National Convention, 1939, *ibid.*, vol. 6, file 10; data totalled from the reports received from the locals, 1950, *ibid.* vol. 24, file 21.

2 Lauri Toiviainen, "Finnish Newspapers ... on this Side of the Atlantic," trans. Jouni Pieniniemi, *Vapaa Sana*, 31 October 1996. See also Reynold Pehkonen in *Vapaa Sana*, 3 November 1981.

one knew that the RCMP kept close tabs on *Vapaus'* subscribers as a means of identifying those who were sympathizers of the Finnish-Canadian radical Left. Nor were the police above using the information they obtained in every possible way to harass known readers of *Vapaus*, the "Communist rag" which they held in great contempt. For that reason, we can see why the newspaper's circulation may also be taken as a kind of barometer to indicate the effect that the authorities' use of their peacetime and wartime powers was having on the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement.

Although most scholars are quick to attribute the early wartime decline in the FOC's membership rolls and *Vapaus'* subscription list almost entirely to their opposition to Finland's policies in the Winter War, that is much too hasty and superficial an explanation for the complex processes underlying the withdrawals from the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement. For example, if we look at the membership figures of the FSOC during World War I, we find very much the same sort of phenomenon at work. There were also massive departures from the leftist ranks at that time, but that was accomplished then without having anything quite as emotionally divisive and soul-wrenching as the Winter War was to be on the Finnish-Canadian community in 1939. Although the Finnish Civil War had also divided the community into bitterly antagonistic and irreconcilable "Red" and "White" factions, the "White" Finns did not transform the "Red" Finns in 1918 into the *isänmaanpettureita* as they were to do in 1939. This shows that there had to be other common factors at work during both world wars leading to remarkable dips in the membership of the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement. To understand what those factors were, we must first sift out what was causing the fluctuations in the FSOC's membership during the period of World War I.

As we have already noted, the Canadian government's application of the War Measures Act against resident Finnish nationals during World War I was much less severe and of a much shorter duration than it was to be during World War II. The radical Finns did not appear too concerned about the possible risks to their own status and well-being at the beginning of World War I. As is shown in Table 4 below, their sense of continuing confidence in themselves was underscored by FSOC's 7.6% increase in members in 1914 from the year before. The first big drop in the FSOC's ranks only occurred in 1915, when the organization lost 1,195 members - a drop of 39%. The two most notable events affecting the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement that year were the bankruptcy of *Työkansa* and the government's stoppage of Finnish-language socialist publications published in the United States from entering into Canada. Clearly it was the latter that brought into question the government's attitude toward the Finnish ethnic presence in this country and its connection to the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement, perhaps giving cause to certain individuals to allow their memberships in the FSOC to lapse. When nothing more serious happened afterwards than

Table 4. FSOC Membership and *Vapaus* Circulation Figures, 1911–1921

Year	FSOC membership annual total	<i>Vapaus</i> subscribers annual circulation
1911	1205	-
1912	2218	-
1913	2829	-
1914	3062	-
1915	1867	-
1916	1962	-
1917	2697	-
1918*	3056	-
1919†	1990	2450
1920‡	1743	2700
1921	2084	2700

Notes:

* *Vapaus* were suppressed. The FSOC was later replaced by the *provisional* FOC.

† The *provisional* FOC was replaced by the *reconstituted* FSOC and *Vapaus* was allowed to resume publication.

‡ The *reconstituted* FSOC remained independent of all organizations until 1922, when it was transformed into the FSS/WPC.

Sources:

Finnish Socialist Organization of Canada, *Canadian Suomal. Sosialistijärjestön ensimmäisen edustajakokouksen pöytäkirja: kokous pidetty Porth Arthurissa, Ont., 19–23 p:nä maaliskuuta 1914*, ed. Aku Päiviö (Työkansa, 1914); idem, Report: Stewardship of the NEC, for the years 1914–1918; and idem, *Suomalaisen Sosialistijärjestön kolmannen edustajakokouksen pöytäkirja* (Toronto, 1922), in the FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28V 46, vol. 1, files 7, 9, and 10 respectively; Arja Pilli, *The Finnish-Language Press in Canada, 1901–1939. A Study in the History of Ethnic Journalism* (Turku, 1982), 194.

the denial of entry into Canada of several additional Finnish-American socialist publications in 1917, the faint of heart in the Finnish working-class movement regained their nerve so that, by 1918, the FSOC's membership reached the same level as it had been in 1914.

Both the banning of the FSOC and the suppression of *Vapaus* in the fall of 1918 had an immediate effect on the combined membership rolls of the *provisional* FOC and the *reconstituted* FSOC, which replaced it in 1919. Despite the re-emergence of a *reconstituted* FSOC, the organization's membership plummeted by 1,066 persons, which represented a loss of 35% from the year before. The decline in memberships continued into the following year with a further loss of 247 mem-

bers, or by another 12.4%, from the previous year. That trend was only arrested and reversed in 1921, when potential recruits for the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement could see that now they no longer had anything to fear from a government that had finally shucked off its extraordinary wartime powers. That return of confidence to past and present sympathizers of the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement in 1921 did not repeat itself after World War II for various reasons, including the fact that a greater toll had been exacted on the "Red" Finns arising from the greater harshness and longer duration of the government campaign carried on against them at that time.

By the outbreak of war in September 1939, it had been about ten years since the ending of immigration from Finland due to the onset of the Great Depression, which meant that both the pre-World War I and interwar immigrants had all aged to the extent that most were no longer quite as willing or able to make the same sacrifices for their beliefs as when they were younger. This was less the case in World War I because the membership was then much younger as it was composed exclusively of pre-1914 immigrants, most of whom arrived here during the ten years immediately preceding the war. When the post-World War II immigration from Finland did not lead to a significant replenishment of the FOC's ranks, the temporary loss of influence and status it suffered during the war became permanent.

16 The Wages of War, the "White" Finns and the Finnish-Canadian Community

If the FOC's support of the Popular Front and the disengagement of many members from its ranks signalled a lessening of confrontational activity from the "Red" side about the mid-1930s, similar developments were also taking place within the "White" ranks as well. This suggests that the intensity of intracommunal strife within the Finnish-Canadian community was then beginning to subside for the first time in decades. *Canadian Uutiset*, for example, had been stridently anti-communist, Finnish nationalist, extremely right-wing in character and with pretensions of becoming national in scope during the late 1920s and early 1930s. It subsequently moderated its tone, taking on a more commercial attitude and reconciled itself with the object of serving primarily as the local newspaper of the "Church" Finns and the other "Whites" in the Thunder Bay Region.¹ With the departure of *Canadian Uutiset* from the field, *Vapaa Sana* had only one sputtering competitor to deal with before achieving its own long-standing ambition of shouldering the mantle as the national newspaper for the entire non-communist "White" faction in the Finnish-Canadian community. *Vapaa Sana* finally realised that aim in 1937 when the parent company, Vapaa Sana Press Limited, bought out its right-wing, *kansallismielinen* (nationalist-minded) rival, *Viikko-Uutiset*. According to the company's minute books, the circulation of *Vapaa Sana* stood at 1612 subscribers that year after it folded in *Viikko-Uutiset* into its operations.²

The sale and demise of *Viikko-Uutiset* signified the fast-declining popularity of extreme right-wing Finnish nationalism in Canada. Just four days before Canada's declaration of war in 1939, one letter writer to *Vapaa Sana* opined that

1 Pilli, *The Finnish-Language Press in Canada*, 246–247.

2 Varpu Lindström, "Vapaa Sanan ensimmäiset vuodet Torontossa: Tilaukset ilmaiseksi harvestiin asti," *Vapaa Sana*, 31 October 1996.

many Finns were now abandoning the extreme right-wing Finnish National Societies not only because they were tiring of the struggle against the Communists, but also because it was their wish to assimilate into the mainstream of Canadian society.¹ Other evidence of the softening right-wing nationalist position included the growing recognition of the COLFC's failure to form a viable alternative to the FOC. The abandonment of that mission was symbolized in its renaming as the Loyal Finns in Canada, Inc., and its evolution into what might best be described as a fraternal order of right-thinking Finns. Those dual processes of withdrawing from the political fray and Canadianization were also reflected in other parts of the anti-communist camp at that time, for example, in the reconstitution of the Finnish Socialist Clubs previously associated with the SPC into innocuous Finnish Social Clubs. However, in all of their attempts to integrate themselves into Canadian society, the various right-wing associations continued to resist wholesale assimilation by emphasizing their insularity as ethnically Finnish institutions.

Despite having undergone certain integrative processes in common, those individual associations were never able to coalesce into one united institution. Perhaps the "Whites" comprised too ideologically diverse a coalition of anti-communists to form a single national organization capable of serving their varied political, social and cultural interests. It was in the absence of such an organization that *Vapaa Sana* increasingly assumed the leadership role in the opposition to the FOC in the Finnish-Canadian community. The newspaper's pages became the national meeting place for the local "White" associations and church congregations and, as well, the national podium from which they could disseminate their ideas and opinions. In short, *Vapaa Sana* served as the unifying glue for keeping the "White" Finns together as a national force within the community.

Vapaa Sana's newly won primacy, which now included the centre and right-wing elements as well as the moderate leftist faction in the Finnish-Canadian community, was all the more remarkable because the newspaper had been founded on social democratic principles in 1931. So, the process of building and maintaining the newspaper's predominance came with a cost.² In the course of time, *Vapaa Sana* had to sacrifice its original guiding principles and politics as a bitter leftist apostate fighting the evil forces of Communism and the FOC to become a somewhat more moderate and "politically independent Finnish-Canadian" (that is, non-communist) commercial newspaper. That process was greatly facilitated by *Vapaa Sana's* loosening of its ties with the Finnish Canadian Workers' and Farmers' Federation (FCWFF) and the CCF in 1936, when the newspaper's ownership was transferred over from the Cooperative Publishing Association of Sudbury

1 Vanha Canadian suomalainen, "Suomalaiset Kansallisseurat Canadassa," *Vapaa Sana*, 6 September 1939.

2 Pilli, *The Finnish-Language Press in Canada*, 222–224; Mauri Jalava, "Pehkosen puljutiini raivasi tietä Vapaa Sanalle," *Vapaa Sana*, 31 October 1996.

Limited to the newly incorporated Vapaa Sana Press Limited. Thereafter, *Vapaa Sana* became much more responsive to its readership and shareholders rather than to the executive of the FCWFF.¹

When *Vapaa Sana* ceased to serve as its official organ, the FCWFF's influence as a political force plummeted within the Finnish community. The supporters of the FCWFF made one last attempt in 1940 to revive the FCWFF's political ideals, principles and fortunes through its reconstitution as the Finnish Canadian League for Democracy. The Finnish Canadian League for Democracy, however, failed to make itself the centre of a revitalized social democratic tradition within the Finnish community or to effect a meaningful alliance with the CCF. Its subsequent descent into irrelevance brought to an end one of the few Finnish endeavours outside of the working-class movement to reach out to other political parties in the Canadian mainstream. Thereafter, with the exception of the period of the Winter War, the "White" Finns not only separated politics from their ethnic identity when presenting themselves to the rest of Canadian society, but denied that they possessed any collective political identity at all.

Many Finns, especially those occupying the political centre in the mid-1930s, became utterly distressed by the internal dissension within the Finnish community and the consequences it was having on their livelihood and interrelations with the rest of Canadian society. So, they began to downplay their ethnic identity and drift away from the community. What most moderate Finns really wanted was just to be able to distance themselves from the extremism of both "Red" and "White" camps, but their appreciation of the Canadian public's special fear and dislike of radicals - especially those of foreign birth or descent - had forced them to consider "de-politicizing" and "de-ethnicizing" their Finnish identity, too. This sentiment found expression in the words Charles M. Haapanen, a moderate who indicated just how far some non-radical Finns were prepared to go during the 1930s in that regard so they could free the Finnish-Canadian co-operative movement from ethnic "Red" control:

Any co-operative store ... can not be under the control of any group or nationality, even less under a political party, but only should be controlled by its membership regardless of colour, race, religion or worldview.²

While Haapanen's comments specifically arose out of his struggles with the "Red" Finns, the sentiments he expressed regarding the "de-politicization" and "de-ethnicization" of the co-operative movement were common to a large part of the Finnish community across the political spectrum.

1 Pilli, *The Finnish-Language Press in Canada*, 225–227.

2 As translated in Mauri A. Jalava, "The Finnish-Canadian Cooperative Movement in Canada," in Karni (ed.), *Finnish Diaspora 1: Canada, South America, Africa, Australia and Sweden* (Toronto, 1981), 98.

The coming of World War II brought with it many significant changes in Canada's treatment of its ethnocultural minorities. Because the war had created great fear and suspicion in the public mind concerning the loyalty of the "foreign" elements resident here, the Canadian government sometimes tended to respond too hastily and without reasonable cause in countering the perceived threats from so-called enemy aliens, Jehovah's Witnesses and other non-mainstream individuals and groups. None of this behaviour was lost on the non-radical elements of the Finnish-Canadian community. It gave them an even greater sense of urgency in the matter of shedding any public manifestation of their political loyalties and ethnic identities.

The outbreak of the Winter War temporarily put a halt to the corrosive process of de-ethnicization that was steadily gnawing away at and marginalizing the ethnic identity of the non-radical elements - especially that of the second-generation youth - in the Finnish-Canadian community. The Soviet Union's attack upon Finland on 30 November 1939, and the heroic resistance put up by the Finnish forces against the Soviet juggernaut raised an immense outpouring of sympathy from everyone in community (with the exception of some "Reds") for their ancestral homeland and, as well, renewed in them an irrepressible pride in their own innate Finnishness. The Canadian public's admiration and overwhelming support of Finland also served to eliminate many of the historic prejudices that it had previously harboured against Finnish Canadians *per se*. It was a long time since the possession of a Finnish-Canadian identity in this country had been considered such a real asset.

That happy situation did not last long for the sympathizers of Finland in the Finnish-Canadian community. The outbreak of the Continuation War in 1941, which began with the Finnish army's attack on the Soviet Union in concert with the German Wehrmacht, again transformed Finland into another of Canada's wartime enemies. The former pro-Finnish elements in this country were now put into the difficult situation of choosing to support either Canada or Finland, which further served to divide the Finnish-Canadian community. The choice of loyalties was made all the more critical because the Canadian government declared all resident Finns in this country were henceforth enemy aliens, including those Finnish born who had not been naturalized Canadians before 1922 as well as those who still remained Finnish nationals. That abrupt change in status confirmed to the non-radical elements in the Finnish community that their communal institutions and associations should continue to operate only as non-political or apolitical entities *vis-à-vis* the body politic in Canada. Perhaps the "White" faction's tradition of collectively distancing itself from this country's political process helps explain why so few non-radical Finnish Canadians have entered federal politics and, indeed,

only one - the Honorable Judith A. (Judy) Erola - has ever held a cabinet post in the federal government.¹

Just how much the war years had reinforced that continuing "de-politicizing" process is documented in Reynold Pehkonen's recollections of his service as the editor-in-chief of *Vapaa Sana* in the period following Finland's attack on the Soviet Union in 1941:

The war years were exciting to the editors *Vapaa Sana* in a bit different way than for other people. Newspapers and their contents were closely watched by the authorities although censoring the news and editorials was essentially left to the editors. *Vapaa Sana* was an ardent supporter of the Allied [Powers?] except of the Soviet Union and its leaders. Therefore, we had censors visiting our newspaper several times during the war advising us to tone down on the subject of the Soviet leaders, especially Stalin. The Soviet Union could be poked at if need be. We could not understand this negative stand until a censor told us the Soviet embassy in Ottawa had made demands to the government that *Vapaa Sana* be suppressed. During the war, some "comrades" had made a habit of snooping the contents of our paper and as soon as they had found, in their opinion, "dangerous" verbal bombs these were translated into English and continuously sent to the Soviet embassy. The federal censorship agency employed two Finns during the war, but they had no contact with us. After the peace was made, however, they told us that they had had to argue many times about the accuracy of the Soviet translations and that they had always won the argument as they were officers of the censorship agency and thus under oath. In addition, it can be said that these Finnish censors had a full knowledge of Finnish and English. Once, however, we were almost caught in a "trap". I was on my summer vacation and the summer editor had conceived a sharp, and as to the contents, an excellent editorial on the rights of small nations. When I returned from the vacation, I was told that we were facing the gallows. However, this fate was avoided as the federal officers were explained that the summer editor was quite inexperienced and that there was no way this blunder could have happened, had the editor-in-chief been present. The explanation saved the newspaper from the "noose".²

1 Edward W. Laine, Introduction, in Sillanpää, *Under the Northern Lights*, xxiv.

2 Quoted from a typescript translation by the Multilingual Services Division, Secretary of State, for the Ethnic Press Analysis Service, Canadian Citizenship Branch, Department of the Secretary of State, 4 January 1982, of Reynold Pehkonen, "Recollections of the Past Fifty Years of *Vapaa Sana*" [English translation of the title supplied], *Vapaa Sana*, 3 November 1981 [emphasis, spelling, grammar and errors as in the original text].

However, it is Pehkonen's final remarks in these candid recollections from the pages of *Vapaa Sana* on the return to peace that shows us why and how alienated many "White" Finns had become from mainstream politics in Canada:

When the nuclear bombs erased Hiroshima and its inhabitants from the face of the earth and World War II came thus to an end, we in *Vapaa Sana* took a deep breath of relief too, as the "bloody" *news* stopped. But the aftermath of the war seemed black to us. For example, our old country Finland had first in the Winter War (1939–40) endured an attack by the Soviet Union, and the Continuation [War] was even worse. Thus, we did not expect any favors for Finland from its aggressors and this was confirmed by the peace negotiations in Paris. When the final peace treaty between Finland and the Soviet Union was published, it was one the world's most heinous documents condemning [*sic*] the Finns into slavery for years only because they had had the "honor" of being the target of the war machinery of the aggressor. We, in our newspaper shop, cursed the unsuspecting Allied leaders as, in addition to Finland's case, all the East European countries were thrown into the arms of Moscow.

This trusting attitude of the Western politicians was in a way illustrated by a CCF member of parliament who visited us with a union leader shortly after the peace. The member of Parliament, wellknown [*sic*] in Ottawa and generally all over *the* country, declared right away all aglow that from now on, this was to be a lasting and wonderful era of peace and cooperation. I might have sounded a bit dry when I answered along these lines: Listen, Andrew, before your intoxication with peace and cooperation has cleared, the Soviets will have taken every opportunity to step on the toes of the Allied leaders. Andrew and the union leader looked at me as at a devil's advocate. However, Andrew (not his name) was not convinced....¹

In effect, Pehkonen had underscored the political dilemma of the "White" Finns. They really had nowhere to go in the matter of casting their support in favour of one of Canada's major political parties or another. Canada had been a signatory in Paris to the 1947 peace treaty that punished Finland severely for its undertaking of the Continuation War. If they could not support the Liberal government for its role in approving the treaty, there was no particular reason to look more kindly on His Majesty's Loyal Opposition in Parliament, for the Progressive Conservatives had not raised a peep of dissent respecting Finland's ill treatment. Even the CCF, which Pehkonen and his coterie supported in the early 1930s, had become much too soft on Communism and the Soviet Union during the war years. So, the only solution for *Vapaa Sana*, its readership and their al-

1 Ibid. [emphasis, spelling, grammar and errors as in the original text].

lied associations was to adopt a strict policy of neutrality respecting Canadian politics while maintaining their internalized hatred of the radical Left within and outside the Finnish-Canadian community. The withdrawal of the "White" Finns from active participation in the public life of this country, therefore, was very much a self-inflicted wound.

Although the "White" Finns may have put themselves beyond the pale, the needs of war had made this country clearly inclusionary rather than exclusionary for the first time in its history. To its credit, Canada eventually called upon all Canadians, even those residents who were of "foreign" extraction and citizenship or had been naturalized since 1922, to join in the common national enterprise - the Canadian war effort. Most of the individuals whom the federal government initially deemed to be enemy aliens were subsequently given the opportunity to volunteer their services to the Canadian armed forces and, after conscription was introduced in 1944, they also became liable to be drafted into the army. Those provisions applied to Finnish males as well as to the menfolk of the other enemy-alien groups. In that respect, Mackenzie King's government had proven to be more sensible - and perhaps even more humane - than Borden's government had been with its internment operations during World War One.

According to N. F. Dreisziger, that particular instance of Ottawa having moderated of its policies toward the ethnocultural minorities was complemented by its establishment of the Nationalities Branch within the Department of National War Services in 1942. Dreisziger has characterized the Nationalities Branch as an agency that served an "extended hand" of the government to Canada's immigrant masses, one which subsequently evolved into the Multicultural Directorate that was most recently folded (in 1993) into the Department of Canadian Heritage:

Though limited in the scope of its activities, the NB [Nationalities Branch], and the policies that accompanied its launching, was an important institution in Canadian history. It was the precursor to the state machinery (for a brief time an entire government department) that by the end of the century symbolized the emergence in Canada of official ethnic tolerance.¹

1 Quoted from N. E Dreisziger, "From Ethnic Cleansing to Apologies: The Canadian Experience in Dealing with Minorities in Wartime," in *Canadian Military History Since the 17th Century/ L'histoire militaire canadienne depuis le XVII^e siècle: Proceedings of the Canadian Military History Conference, Ottawa, 5-9 May 2000/Actes du Colloque d'histoire militaire canadienne, Ottawa, 5-9 mai 2000*, ed. Yves Tremblay (Ottawa, 2001), 539. See also idem, "The Rise of a Bureaucracy for Multiculturalism: The Origins of the Nationalities Branch, 1939-41," in *On Guard for Thee: War, Ethnicity, and the Canadian State, 1939-1945*, ed. Norman Hillmer, Bohdan Kordan, and Lubomyr Luciuk, ([Ottawa], 1988), 1-29; and Leslie A. Pal, "Identity, citizenship, and mobilization: the Nationalities Branch and World War Two," *Canadian Public Administration*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (Fall 1989): 401-426.

The Nationalities Branch had originated out of a recommendation made by small group of senior members in the federal bureaucracy - and Norman Robertson in particular - who thought that the government should undertake active measures to encourage the potentially alienated ethnic minorities to participate positively in the war effort.¹ Among the Nationalities Branch's responsibilities, therefore, were the promotion of Canada through the distribution of educational materials, the delivery of speeches, etc., to the targeted ethnic communities. However, its principal task remained the dissemination of information - that is, propaganda - on Canada's war effort to the ethnic press. The Nationalities Branch was reorganized and re-named the Citizenship Division during the course of 1945. On 1 November of the same year, it was formally transferred over to the Department of the Secretary of State. By then, its mandate had been broadened to allow for wider educational and granting programs. Its responsibilities now included the promotion of knowledge about Canada, language training and ethnic studies, with the aim of assisting the integration of both aboriginal peoples and new immigrants into mainstream Canadian life.²

If the needs of total war had then logically demanded that the majority of enemy aliens who were deemed to be loyal to Canada be made contributing members to the Canadian war effort, that rearrangement of priorities was also reflected elsewhere in the fabric of the embattled Dominion. Wartime labour shortages, for example, compelled private industry to recruit women, including those from the immigrant communities, to work in fields not traditionally given to female employment.³ The spread of "ethnic" Canadians into the mainstream after the war was further encouraged by the preferential treatment accorded to all Canadian war veterans - regardless of ethnic origin - when seeking to complete their post-secondary education and government employment,⁴ Such were some of the powerful forces unleashed in this country by the war. They challenged the very integrity and separate existence of most ethnocultural communities, including that of the Finns.

1 N. F. Dreisziger, "7 December 1941: A Turning Point in Canadian Wartime Policy Toward Enemy Ethnic Groups?" *Journal of Canadian Studies* 32 (Spring 1997): 96–99. In Canada and the United States, the Department of External Affairs and the State Department have respectively served as the principal source of civility, urbanity, sophistication and humaneness in government.

2 See Robert England, "Report on the Reorganization of the Nationalities Branch of the Department of National War Services," 12 June 1944, in the Canadian Citizenship Branch, NAC, RG 26 B 2, vol. 13A, and a draft of the same report is also included with his personal papers in the Robert England fonds, NAC, MG 30 C 181. For other somewhat differing accounts of the history of the Nationalities Branch, see the Public Records Committee series, NAC, RG 35 7, vols. 15–16.

3 For a personal account describing this, see Sillanpää, *Under the Northern Lights*, 59–60.

4 Cf. Saarinen, *Between a Rock and a Hard Place*, 177, 208–212.

Those factors leading to the marginalization here of the Finnish immigrant community and culture *among* the Finnish Canadians themselves were amplified by various other developments such as the easy integration - and, more often than not, the assimilation - of Canadian-born and Canadian-raised Finns into the mainstream society. The spread of popular culture through radio, print, and film, the shift to widespread consumerism, and the growing use of the automobile also exerted their seductive wiles on the younger generations in the community. Although the risk may have appeared to have been greatest in the small Finnish rural communities scattered across the Canadian hinterland, the same process of a disintegrating sense of community and communal spirit no less afflicted the better established Finnish ghettos and enclaves in the different urban centres, too.

In that respect, it was not only the FOC, but all ethnic Finnish associations right across the political spectrum had also lost their prewar influence and standing within the Finnish-Canadian community. Moreover, the government's actions during the war had severely compromised the integrity of the community and brought into question amongst its members the value of actually belonging to it. The extent of the damage done to the entire community during the war years was partially masked in certain quarters by the influx of postwar immigration from Finland. The arrival of the newcomers made up for some of the losses of those Finnish Canadians who had turned their backs on their ethnic associations and dropped out of the community. Because they appeared better able to attract more of the incoming stream into their ranks, the "White" Finns became the prime beneficiaries of renewed Finnish immigration here. However, the extent to which they had actually succeeded in doing so was more apparent than real because taking out a membership with any of its allied associations was not a necessary prerequisite. All that was really required for anyone to be included in the "White" camp was not to become a member of the FOC.

The "White" camp, in declaring itself to be independent, non-political and non-politically aligned, had become rather amorphous and extremely accommodating to everyone but the Communists and their allies. Indeed, anything at all to do with the Communists became a taboo subject among the "White" Finns, who, notwithstanding their declarations to the contrary, formed an extremely effective group of political activists.¹ They were always there to greet the newcomers with the advice not to become associated with the FOC lest they suffer blacklisting by potential employers. That negative "word of mouth" campaign, when taken together with other factors then coursing through postwar Canada, successfully denied the FOC many likely recruits from among the newcomers. Even so, it is still

1 Eija Kiiskinen, "Vapaa Sanan entinen päätoimittaja Lauri Toiviainen: Vielä 1960-luvun lopulla oli sopimatonta puhua kommunisteista," *Vapaa Sana*, 31 October 1996.

not entirely clear that all of those individuals automatically joined the "White" opposition to the FOC in the Finnish-Canadian community to reinforce its ranks, values and view of the Finnish presence in Canada. The damaging effects of the war on the longtime resident Finns in this country and, no less, on those who were then beginning to immigrate here from war-torn Finland still weighed too heavily on them all to allow for a clear cut decision as to who and what they would have to become to survive and prosper in postwar Canada.

17 Picking Up the Pieces – the FOC in Postwar Canada

Perhaps, the most important feature of the postwar era from the end of the war and until 1960 in the Finnish-Canadian community was the renewed immigration from Finland, which began to approach those levels experienced before World War I and in the interwar period. Like most of the radical Left, the FOC had initially opposed the opening of Canada to any kind of large-scale immigration lest it result in severe unemployment and deep wage cuts as had happened after World War I. It even made representations to the Senate's Standing Committee on Immigration and Labour to that effect. Gustaf Sundqvist, the national secretary, even appeared in person before the committee to present the FOC's case.¹ Opposition to its views on this matter came from two other sources associated with the Finnish-Canadian community. The first was the Finnish Advancement Association of Toronto (Toronto Suomalainen Edistys-liitto) of "White" Finnish businessmen, which was represented before the committee by Sven Stadius.² The Swedish American Line was the other, and it was represented at the hearings by its district manager Carl E. Waselius.³ Both argued for the opening the barriers to immigration into this country on behalf of their specific business interests.

The postwar flood of immigrants into Canada did not affect employment and wages as adversely as the radical Left had originally feared. Indeed, the country entered into a boom of prosperity as the war industries re-tooled themselves to

1 FOC Collection, NAC, MG 28 V 46, vol. 30, file 3. For G. Sundqvist's testimony, see the Senate of Canada, *Proceedings of the Standing Committee on Immigration and Labour*, no. 7 (24 July 1946).

2 For Sven Stadius's testimony and recall, see *ibid.*, no. 7 (24 July 1946) and no. 7 (8 May 1947) respectively.

3 For Carl E. Waselius's testimony and recall, see *ibid.*, no. 10 (31 July 1946) and no. 5 (1 May 1947) respectively.

satisfy the pent-up consumer demands of a public now thoroughly tired of the old wartime restrictions on their personal buying habits. Thanks in large measure to the American-sponsored Marshall Plan and the absence of any call for ruinous war reparations from the vanquished states on the part of the Western allies, the rebuilding of the war-shattered economies of the former occupied and enemy countries in Europe was able to proceed. One result was the demand for increased Canadian exports abroad of products from the agricultural and resource sectors, leading to severe shortages of workers in those areas as most returning soldiers and the Canadian youth gravitated to urban areas for employment there rather than back to land.

The same applied to the young Finnish Canadians as well, including those who had been associated with the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement. One of the most prominent of these was Paul Sirén. Sirén had been the national secretary of the Youth Clubs of the Finnish Organization of Canada from its inception in the mid-1930's until World War II. He brought both his organizational experience and sympathies for the working-class movement into a new career as a labour organization for the United Auto Workers at a war plant in 1941. Despite the threat of arrest and detention or worse under wartime regulations, he succeeded in getting his fellow workers a satisfying raise in their pay packets. Sirén later went on to distinguish himself as the long-serving national director of ACTRA (Alliance of Canadian Cinema and Television Artists). Others closely associated with the FOC and its affiliates also used the extensive experience and training they gained there in matters relating to trade unionism, business, theatre and the arts to make significant contributions to the Canadian mainstream. Like their counterparts from the right, the Finnish community found itself no longer able - especially those settlements situated in the rural areas - to hold onto its younger folk.¹

That situation created major problems for the rural-based resource industries. To address the issue of worker shortages, the federal government encouraged immigration schemes that placed the newcomers as construction, mine, farm and lumber workers. Among the Finnish-Canadian entrepreneurs to advantage of the influx of immigrants from Finland after it had normalized its relations with Canada in 1947 was Oliver Korpela, a second-generation Finnish-Canadian war hero. Korpela operated lumber camps and sawmills in such areas as Island Lake, Kormak, Nemegos and Chapleau in Northern Ontario. At one point, he became so desperate for bush workers that he chartered two airplanes to bring into Canada some 200 Finns from Finland.² In time, the immigrant Finns employed by Korpela

1 *Vapaus*, 16 October 1989. For more on this, see *Kaiku/Echo*, October 2002 (Juhla 100 Commemorative Issue Celebrating 100 Years of the Finnish Society of Toronto) and November/December 2002.

2 Saarinen, *Between a Rock and a Hard Place*, 212.

and other lumber camp operators made their stake and moved on, latching onto new employment opportunities in the continuing process of their resettlement across Canada. In that regard, they were quite unlike so many of the Finnish bush workers of the prewar era who saw their work as their vocation and were willing to take up the cause of trade unionism and the working-class movement.

The fact is that, despite the humble nature of their initial employment here, these woodsmen and the other postwar immigrants differed significantly from their predecessors. The latest newcomers tended to be much better educated workers with a broader mix of skills than those compatriots who had preceded them here in earlier decades. Indeed, compulsory universal public education, a measure that had been implemented in Finland shortly after its independence from Russia, had not only better educated them, but had also instilled in them strong views of Finnish nationalism, culture and identity together with a variety of right-wing perspectives (among them being that the Finnish Civil War was a War of Independence from Russia). Given that background and their experience of the Winter and Continuation Wars against Russia, few members of this group of new arrivals found little ideological or cultural grounds for attracting them to the FOC and the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement. The rise of the Cold War and the strong echoes of McCarthyism that had spilled over into Canada from the United States further persuaded most of the immigrant Finns (often with the active prompting of the "White" Finns) to avoid joining the Left.

On the other hand, the newcomers were not altogether enamoured with the resident "White" Finns, their customs or organizations either. They often found the *kanadansuomalaiset* to be uncouth and uncultured individuals who had been further debased by their longtime presence in this country. In their view, neither the Finnish-Canadian old-timers nor their offspring spoke proper Finnish any more, but used a corrupted form of 'kitchen Finnish' frequently called 'Finglish'. Nor were they thoroughly schooled in the cultural values and identity of true Finns. Under the circumstances, those newcomers aspiring to leadership roles in the "White" community either wrested the executive positions of veteran incumbents in existing organizations or founded rival organizations of their own. In both cases, the continuing assimilation and integration into the Canadian mainstream of first and second-generation Finnish Canadians in the "White" community passed unnoticed as the reinforcements from Finland replaced them. There is an equal gap to be found between the third wave immigrants and the more recent trickle of newcomers from Finland who generally boast postgraduate schooling, professional careers, refined technical skills or backgrounds in high technology.

On the other hand, the FOC had been even more seriously devastated during World War II. Its stand favouring the Soviet Union in the Winter War, its banning by the federal government and the damage done to its properties while in the hands of the Custodian Enemy Property had all contributed to a severely weakened

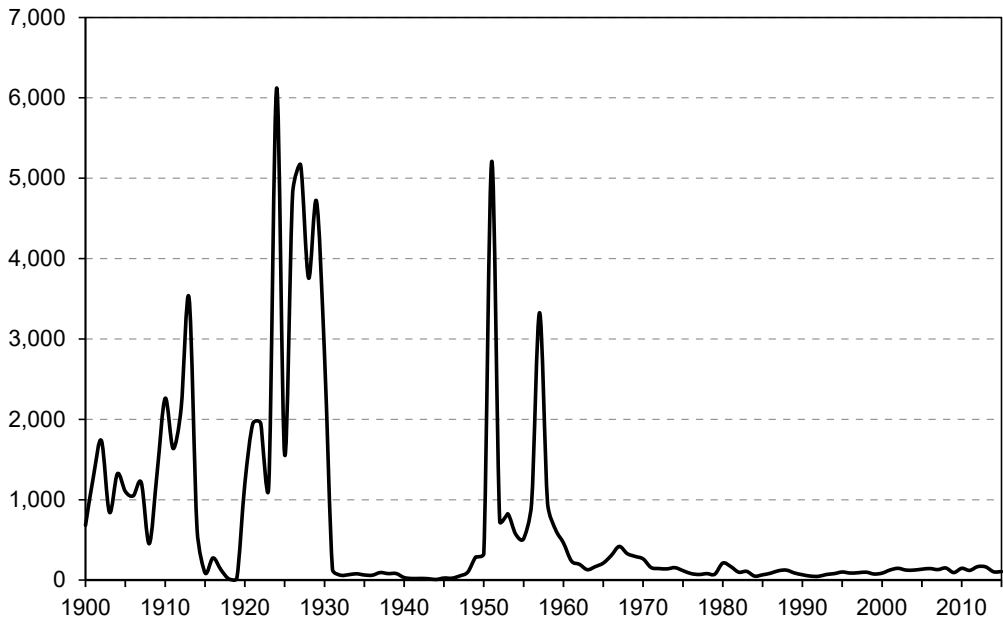


Figure 4. Annual Finnish Immigration to Canada, 1900–2015 (persons).

Sources: *Statistics Canada*, years 1900–1939; Central Statistical Office, *Statistical Yearbook of Finland*, years 1940–1979; *Statistics Finland*, Vital Statistics (Statfin), years 1980–2015. Updated version of Finnish immigration to Canada, compiled by Mr. Jouni Korkiasaari at the Migration Institute of Finland.

and much reduced postwar organization both in terms of its membership and assets. Consequently, the postwar FOC faced a massive rebuilding job if it hoped to restore itself to its previous position of pre-eminence in the Finnish-Canadian community. The central factors influencing the success or lack of success of its core endeavour to rejuvenate itself and the Finnish working-class movement in that regard included the continuing de-politicization, marginalization and Finnicization of the FOC, renewed immigration from Finland and the rise of the Cold War.

As a result of its prewar de-politicization by the CPC into an auxiliary of the working-class movement together with the restatement of its primary mission as the *seura-, valistus- ja kulttuurielämän ahjo* of the Finnish-Canadian community, the FOC had already been naturally predisposed to emphasize its own Finnishness and that of its members, a process that included the recovery of the Canadian Amateur Sports Federation (CASF; in Finnish, Canadalainen Amatööri-Urheiluliitto [CAUL]). Before the war, the CASF had served as the radical Left's vehicle for Canadianizing the Finnish-dominated left-wing sports movement. The change in status of the CASF came with the revision of its name in 1944, at which time it became known as the Finnish Canadian Amateur Sports Federation (FCASF; in

Finnish, *Suomalais-Canadalainen Amatööri-Urheiluliitto* [SCAUL]). Explicit in the new name was not the entrenchment of Finnishness per se but the notion that the main concern of the FOC and its affiliates was the celebration and perpetuation of the Finnish-Canadian (*suomalais-kanadalainen*) culture and identity. The hope was both to re-acquire and retain its old membership, and then to recruit new members from within and outside the Finnish-Canadian community. As in the case of the FOC, it only achieved a slight measure of success with these aims in the few remaining centres that featured strong support for the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement.

Despite its de-politicalization and marginalization as a leftist political organization, the FOC still retained a full measure its working-class sympathies. Individual members continued to contribute their financial and moral support to the radical Left. They continued to support labour unionism as before, for example, in lumbering, mining, the needle trades, the West Coast salmon fishery and in the organization of domestic workers (chars, maids, chauffeurs and manservants). Some of them even offered to serve as standard bearers of the Labor-Progressive Party (the stand-in for the outlawed Communist Party) and later for the legalized Communist Party itself in various municipal and regional elections. Very few of those forays were successful because the greater public in Canada, which had been caught up by the Igor Guzenko case¹ and the later witch hunt for more subversives in Canada, had become extremely fearful of the radical Left and its aims.

In contrast, the "White" Finns maintained an insular existence within Canadian society for reasons we have already related above. They primarily sought to find inspiration from the Finnish culture and identity of the Old Country. To them, 'Finnish Canadians' (*suomalais-kanadalaiset*) were purely 'Canadian Finns' (*kanadansuomalaiset*) - that is, with the emphasis on *Finns* [in Canada] rather than on Finnish *Canadians*. (Both the terminology and the message implied in it continues to dominate the vocabulary of the Finnish-Canadian community, even if it is not altogether a complimentary term.) Neither approach - the FOC's attempt to Canadianize its Finnish content nor the "White" Finns' determination to maintain their Finnishness did much to attract younger second-generation Finnish Canadians to their cause. Only in those few larger rural and urban Finnish communities that retained a critical mass sufficient of members to provide minimal services and programmes for their younger folk do we find any sort of continuity of generations.

The dynamics that created the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement were macho to a certain degree. Although it was the menfolk who belonged to it normally were the grand designers and builders of the left-wing organizations, it

1 Igor Guzenko was a Soviet Ottawa embassy clerk who defected to Canada in 1945, with a number of valuable documents. (Note by the editor of this volume)

was really the women who provided the social glue that tied them together and sustained them. Unlike the claim sometimes made of the females in the movement, they were not "Defiant Sisters" in the main, but rather traditionalists from a largely rural and agrarian background; that is, traditionalists in all things other than in their left-wing politics.¹ For example, it was they who provided the food, baked goods and other refreshments that attracted male members into attending all sorts of political, social and cultural functions. Many others were also charged with collecting funds for different projects sponsored by the movement. They also brought their children with them, thereby familiarizing them with those institutions. Indeed, the organizational activities of the left-wing Finnish women were hardly different from the tasks performed by the supposedly more virtuous ladies belonging to the congregations of the "Church Finns" as well as those in the "White Finn" associations.

Since the end of World War II the role and prominence of women in the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement has moved well beyond that experienced by their counterparts in the rest of the Finnish-Canadian community. The fact that females generally enjoy a significantly extended period of longevity in comparison to males has thrust women increasingly into leadership roles in the ageing Finnish-Canadian working-class movement and, as a result of that, they have emerged primary sustainers of its faltering organizations and traditions. As a result, the *naisten kerhot* (women's circles) became the most common vestigial institution in the locals of the FOC. In matters of interest to all of the older veterans of the FOC, but most particularly to the women of the *naisten kerhot*, were the establishment of Senior Citizens clubs and rest homes, as well as undertaking increased initiatives in seeking reconciliation with their former enemies on the right.

Indeed, the changing politics underscored the feminization of the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement. The milestone was the publication of William Eklund's history of the FOC. It marked the end of the old era from an outward-looking, proudly masculine militant movement the beginning of another with a more inward-looking, nurturing and feminine touch.² Its glorification of the organizations past - given the times and the FOC's then plummeting fortunes - had more the air of a eulogy to and tombstone for a struggle well acquitted by a small host within one of Canada's smallest ethnic minorities. The cruel fact was that, even if it had had ten times numbers that it could claim to have had in the post war era, they would not have been enough to sustain a movement when its membership was so thinly scattered across the breadth and width of Canada. On the other hand, it must be remembered that, for the first half of the past century,

1 Varpu Lindström-Best, *Defiant Sisters: A Social History of Finnish Immigrant Women in Canada* (Toronto, 1988).

2 Eklund, *Canadian rakentajia*. Cf. Helen Tarvainen, *A Short History of the Forever Young Club of Toronto, 1969–1999* (Toronto, 1999).

the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement was central to the development in this country of socialism, social democracy, communism, and the labour and union movements. It also served as an early transmitter into Canada of European and international practices and thought regarding the working-class movement. Last, but not least, the movement's unpopularity with Canada's ruling elite helped to create the latter's tradition in the use of state repression for dealing with unpopular political causes, the effects of which still echo in the legislative and regulatory measures adopted by the federal government in Ottawa after the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York City on 11 September 2001.¹

1 The following text was written, in Finnish and English, at the end of chapter 17: "*Eläköön Kanadan kansakunnan muistissa ikuisesti Suomalais-Kanadalais työväenliike – May the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement live forever in the memory of the Canadian society!*" However, we do not actually know if the text above is citation from a certain source, or is it the personal note written by Laine himself (note by the editor).

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Appendix 1

Introduction

by Edward W. Laine (dated September 13, 2002, at 1:10 PM)

Editor's note: As seen in the text below, Laine wrote this introduction when he planned to compile a two part book on the Finnish Organization of Canada. The maps and Part Two archival lists are in the hold of the Migration Institute of Finland in Turku. This introduction is worthwhile publishing since it includes some description on the creation of the FOC collection in the Canadian National Archives. This introductory word also encompasses commentaries on the state of research on Canadian ethnic and Finnish Canadian history, and comments the status of cultural policies in Canada.

CERTAIN ACADEMICS in Canada, most prominent among them being a handful of well-known political and military historians, privately hold ethnic history in considerable contempt as a speciality of little consequence because they deem it to be the study of lesser ethnic minorities that dwell on the periphery of Canadian society and, therefore, play no more than a marginal role in shaping our national experience. Their contention certainly finds ammunition in the navel-gazing works perpetrated by too many ethnic historians who are native to the communities they are studying. Too often those inward-looking purveyors of ethnic history treat their communities as though they have existed completely apart from the Canadian mainstream and could have been located almost anywhere else on the map outside of their ancestral homeland. Ethnic history of that sort unfairly diminishes the impact of the host country upon the ethnic communities and, no less, minimizes the complementary effect that those communities have had in the shaping of the host society in their new homeland.

On the other hand, the selfsame critics of ethnic history have devoted very little of their own time and effort in establishing a legitimate place for the various ethnic communities within the framework of their own national histories. Theirs is, for all intents and purposes, the study of the unexamined "truth." Too often their work chronicles to the exclusion of all else the glories of the elites of one or the other, or both, of the so-called founding nations. Within that narrowed view-

point the presence of other ethnic minorities in this country provides little else than a disquieting and disharmonious cacophony of foreign tongues and cultures. If the truth be known, the hard-liners cleaving to that perspective would find it especially difficult to believe that a tiny faction from one of the smallest ethnic communities could have played a major role in the sociopolitical development of this country's history.

Because this book proposes that such was the case, it presents itself as a truly revolutionary historical work. Its contents demolish the ingrained ethnocentric biases and suppositions of the "isolationists" in both the ethnic and nationalist camps of Canadian history, for they conclusively demonstrate that the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement and its archives embody an overarching historical experience that fully encompasses a wide array of ethnic, local, regional, national and international history. For example, the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement was among those agencies most instrumental in introducing Canada to the international phenomenon of radical left-wing politics — that is, Marxism, Socialism, Social Democracy and Communism — which first appeared in Europe and subsequently spread to the four corners of the globe. In turn, the State's disproportionate reaction to the presence of the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement and its radical politics in Canada certainly had a significant effect on the shaping of that movement and, as well, on the development of the larger Finnish-Canadian community.

For the sake of making its case abundantly clear, this book is organized into two distinct parts. Part One consists of a historical essay that outlines and ties together the history of the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement. It was originally conceived as a book-length monograph on the history of the Finnish Organization of Canada — that is, Volume One of a two-volume work on the Finnish Organization of Canada Collection. However, once the onslaught of serious health issues threatened the possibility of my ever completing such a manuscript, it became expedient for me to reduce the scope of that study to its present form. Although now somewhat abridged, this essay still conveys enough of the stuff of history on the Finnish Organization of Canada and its predecessors, which constituted the principal organizational structures of the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement, to show just how they fitted into the historical dynamics of the Finnish-Canadian community and the Canadian society as a whole.

Part Two of this book, metaphorically speaking, serves as an extended footnote to the historical essay in Part One. Part Two, in fact, offers a detailed description of all of the files in the Finnish Organization of Canada Collection. The basic format of those file listings follows a long-held practice of the National Archives of Canada, conveniently providing all of the essential data — including volume and file numbers, subject/description details, and outside dates — required by researchers in refining their searches for relevant material in the collection. The

file listings themselves are entered under the various records sub-series, sub-sub-series, etc., according to the creating agency or organization. Every records sub-series in the collection — and the occasional records sub-sub-series, too — sports a brief introduction comprised of an administrative history of the particular records-creating agency involved together with a historical note on the provenance of the records themselves. Sometimes those mini-introductions do overlap and repeat historical information that already appears in Part One. Such repetition is often unavoidable because the mini-introductions have been specifically crafted to serve as aids to harried researchers who prefer to see complete organizational histories of the records sub-series without having to locate and extrapolate the relevant data from within the body of a lengthy historical essay.

Our emphasis up to this point has largely centred on the ties binding the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement and the Finnish Organization of Canada Collection to the Canadian experience. Now we should also remind ourselves that the movement had extensive connections with the United States, Finland and, to a lesser extent, Russia and the USSR. Much of the documentation in the collection, therefore, relates to one or another of those countries. A large proportion of the printed matter in the collection has also come from there. This material now includes items that no longer exist in any of those countries and are not even listed in the on-line catalogues of their national libraries. In that respect, the Finnish Organization of Canada Collection must truly be considered an international treasure. For that reason, the different features of this book — especially the index — have been made as linguistically and culturally neutral as possible to accentuate their ease of use equally by researchers living both inside and outside the pale of the English language and Anglo-Canadian culture.

Equally important in that regard is the matter of accommodating the use of Finnish in this work because it was the other principal working-language employed by the collection's creators in most of their internal communications and, as well, in their contacts with other Finnish institutions in this country and abroad. Language only becomes an issue in this book when dealing with the proper names of individuals and institutions, titles of publications, and names of things. The general principle here has been to use whichever linguistic form, Finnish or English, of a given term when it is clearly the officially sanctioned one or, failing that, when it constitutes the use of first instance. Although the name 'Canadian Suomalainen Järjestö' has been most commonly used by Finnish speakers, the 'Finnish Organization of Canada' is the preferred form here because it is the name by which the organization was federally incorporated and under which it issued its charters to its locals. However, when a name exists only in the Finnish language as in the case of Canadian Teollisuusunionistinen Kannatusliitto or CTK Liitto, it is the Finnish name that is used although an English equivalent (the Support League of Canadian Industrial Unionists) may be supplied. Most issues concerning the

use of Finnish-English names have been worked out in the section entitled “Key to the principal names in the FOC Collection,” which is found in Abbreviations, Etc., with the rest of the preliminary matter at the beginning of the book.¹

Another unique feature in this book are the maps that I drew, especially those detailing the provinces spanning Canada from British Columbia to Quebec. They include locations for virtually all of the Canadian place names mentioned in the text. More importantly, they show the geographical locations for all but a handful of locals affiliated to the Finnish Organization of Canada and its predecessors. This is a unique resource in the field of Finnish-Canadian studies, for nowhere else do similar maps exist despite the fact that a number of geographers and historical geographers have made the Finnish-Canadian community their special subject of interest.

In a few cases, the documentation in the Finnish Organization of Canada Collection supplies place names that cannot be verified in any of the on-line geographical data bases. For example, the name Bowie, British Columbia, does not appear anywhere, but is linked in the collection to Cambie and, secondarily, with Solsqua, which do. Likewise, there is no listing for Black Spring Ridge, Alberta, although the name of Spring Ridge does exist there. Hence, Spring Ridge is included in the Alberta map as a possibility, but this does not necessarily mean that it and Black Spring Ridge were actually the same place. Again, there is no listing in the data bases for Manna, Saskatchewan, but the evidence in the collection associates it with Dunblane and Coteau Lake, implying that it was located somewhere in the same vicinity. Finally, there is no listing for Riemula, Ontario, but the evidence in the collection suggests that it was located somewhere in the vicinity of Beaver Lake and Worthington. In fact, one source claims that Riemula was the original name of the Beaver Lake local.

There were also other instances when the names of closely neighbouring communities, especially when they are variants of the same name, could not be accurately placed apart as separate entities in these scale maps. For example, Gibsons, British Columbia, should be interpreted to include both Gibsons Heights and Gibsons Landing. For the same reason, Radway, Alberta, appears in the maps, but not Radway Centre. In the same vein, Connaught, Creighton, Levack and Neelon, Ontario, are all shown on these maps, but not Connaught Station, Creighton Mines, Levack Mine nor Neelon Township. For all practical purposes, the reader should assume the two sets of geographical names to be interchangeable.

These maps, plus the new revelation that it was the Finnish miners in British Columbia rather than the Finnish tailors of Toronto who established the first purely working-class *haali* (hall) in the Finnish-Canadian community, also gives

1 See, Migration Institute of Finland, Edward W. Laine Collection, Abbreviations and various text versions (note by the editor).

lie to the specious claim that, of all the topics treated by Finnish-Canadian scholars and researchers, the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement has been overworked to exhaustion. In point of fact, none of the other associations and societies in the Finnish-Canadian community have created so extensive a cultural, institutional and archival presence. Nor, as is noted in the previously mentioned historical essay, have any of them contributed as actively to the Canadian political process as has the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement, which accounts for the lesser academic interest in them.

The last feature in this book of more than of marginal interest to many researchers are the Appendices. They include a host of information that is not readily found elsewhere. In that regard, a number of the individual appendices supply additional details to, or otherwise amplify upon, the contents of various parts of the Finnish Organization of Canada Collection. Others offer an assortment of useful historical information concerning the Finnish Organization of Canada, *Vapaus* and Vapaus Publishing Company, Limited, and the different people who were associated with them. Still others supply conversion lists and other housekeeping information related to the use of the collection by researchers.

An interim version of Part Two of this work was originally published by the Siirtolaisuusinstituutti in Turku in 1987 under the title of *On the Archival Heritage of the Finnish Canadian Working-Class Movement: A Researcher's Guide and Inventory to the Finnish Organization of Canada Collection at the National Archives of Canada*. That publication contained none of the corrections, additions and enhancements that are inherent to the present work. In fact, my retirement from the federal public service — which, in freeing me of many personal, political and institutional restraints — finally allowed me the independence to write so frank a historical essay as appears in Part One and, as well, to recast Part Two as a full archival and historical resource respecting the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement. If nothing else, self-censorship, the appreciation of my role as a public functionary and loyalty to my employer initially prevented me from providing fuller disclosure of such matters.

In the intervening years since my departure from the National Archives in 1987, I have been extremely disheartened by the state of deterioration of up to ninety-five per cent of the documents in the Finnish Organization of Collection due to the high acidity of the paper used. If nothing is done to stop or slow down the destructive chemical processes destroying the collection, most of it will be little more than dust in another thirty years or so. The same thing is happening, I should add, to many other fonds at the National Archives that have been created during the first three quarters of the twentieth century. While the government has encouraged the National Archives to amble onto the more attractive political path of putting its principal effort and resources into the digitizing of its collections for

public on-line access, this is a major crisis that must also be addressed now or we shall soon lose a large chunk of our country's precious archival heritage forever.

Likewise, as the years roll by and its dwindling band of supporters fall to the ravages of time, the Finnish Organization of Canada itself is equally in danger of receding into the dim reaches of the national memory as a half-recognized relic from the ancient past. The same fate awaits the rest of the Finnish-Canadian cultural heritage as the dwindling reserve of native Finnish-speakers in this country disappears into the linguistic mainstream. Once they are gone, our knowledge of the contents of the Finnish Organization of Canada Collection will have to be filtered through the eyes and minds of Finnish-speaking researchers from Finland until such time as optical recognition (OCR) and language-translation software, or some other still unimagined form of emerging technology, can be sufficiently perfected to take over the task of Finnish-to-English translation for us. Given the track record to date of most Finnish academics respecting their treatment of the Finnish-Canadian community, there is little hope for optimism that our needs will ever be well served from that quarter.

On the other hand, our current crop of home-grown Finnish-Canadian researchers have not always performed exceptionally well in advancing the cause of Finnish-Canadian studies either. Too often they have exploited the archival materials and experiences of their creators only to produce sensationalistic historical potboilers that distort the Finnish-Canadian past rather than illuminate it. Perhaps the field of Finnish-Canadian historical studies is still too new to have acquired a sufficient body of knowledge, thought and *gravitas* to limit the excesses of its worst practitioners. Whatever the case, some of them clearly lack a solid grounding in the core disciplines and ethics associated with the practice of history which would allow them to rise above the need for selfpromotion and the shameless axe-grinding involved in pressing forward their own professional careers and personal sectarian interests within the Finnish community. Still it would not be entirely fair to attribute all of those shortcomings to the historical immaturity of the Finnish-Canadian research community alone, for certain elements in the Canadian liberal academic establishment have also heavily contributed to, or abetted, that state of affairs.

With a few exceptions, the scholars in the Finnish-Canadian research community are the product of the Canadian university system. Unfortunately, too few dons in charge of undergraduate and graduate programmes seem to have been able to instill their charges with enough of the proper historical values. The demands of political correctness and the need to seize upon every new fad blowing through the halls of academe may have prevented them from focusing their attention on those ethical and moral issues that really matter to the practice of history and historiography. It is their proteges who are now both the source of and filter through which most of our knowledge on the Finnish-Canadian past will come

for the foreseeable future. Here in Canada, as elsewhere, when living in the cave of the blind, it is the one-eyed who are the philosopher-kings.

Why should any of this matter? Do the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement and the Finnish Organization of Canada Collection really have any wider use, value and currency for all of us? As we have already demonstrated, the answer to both questions is a resounding “yes.” The fact remains that the Finnish-Canadian working-class movement, however small and controversial a minority it comprised within the Canadian mainstream, held the national spotlight for its seminal involvement in a broad number of areas — radical politics, the labour movement, the co-operative movement, sports and culture, just to name a few. Its archival creation, the Finnish Organization of Canada Collection, extensively documents those activities and their effects upon Canada and the Canadian society. That is reason enough for our using every means to make this collection as accessible as possible to the broader Canadian public.

For the sake of the historical record, I am also appending this brief account of my experience at the National Archives of Canada. To begin with, the creation of a suitable finding aid for an archival collection entrenched in a minority language and culture for an officially bilingual institution promoting multiculturalism was an adventure in itself. It was easy enough to justify the production of the original finding aid in English because that was the official language of the National Archives of Canada, and it was also the principal working-language used by the creators of the collection in their external communications with non-Finnish institutions. The correctness of that choice was underscored by the fact that only one item in the entire collection had been written in French — the other official language of Canada. The notion of finding institutional support for the treatment of multicultural archival fonds of non-mainstream languages and cultures within such an environment always remained extremely problematical because the National Archives’ bureaucratic hierarchy had no real training, knowledge or interest in the issues involved. Therefore, all solutions respecting multiculturalism in the National Archives were inevitably *personal* and *ad hoc* rather than solidly institutional in nature.

How could it be otherwise when the actual ethnic archives programme under which the Finnish Organization of Canada Collection was acquired, arranged and made available to the public, had been politically inspired? In order to secure the support of the ethnocultural minorities for its language policy of official bilingualism, the Liberal government of the Rt. Hon. Pierre Elliott Trudeau watered the wine of his predecessor’s Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism by proclaiming a new policy of multiculturalism in June 1971. Although the historic English-French linguistic dualism was now embedded in law, a compromise had been effected that saw multiculturalism supplant the old French-English cultural dualism. In reality, nothing of the kind happened in most archives or other cultural

establishments funded by the public purse at the federal, provincial or municipal level. Although here and there they made certain adjustments and concessions to ease the passage of a few ethnocultural minorities through the travails of everyday life, the basic cultural appurtenances of the official languages continued to hold sway. For all intents and purposes, cultural dualism is still the order of the day in the major public institutions of this country after more than thirty years of official multiculturalism — an elitist predilection that is increasingly disassociated from the “real” world in which most Canadians now live.

Even so, the new policy of multiculturalism was not entirely without effect. For example, the National Archives implemented its ethnic archives programme in response to the government’s urging and the new funding that it supplied for such purposes. As a result, the National Archives quickly moved into a new field about which it knew almost nothing. Its good fortune was to recruit a clutch of committed and professionally minded experts who understood the importance of the new programme for validating the historic experience of the minority ethnic communities in this country. Those dedicated historian-archivists were the ones who actually skirted the hidden minefields buried in the morass of ethnic politics. It was they who oversaw the success of the programme, thereby shielding their uncomprehending superiors in the National Archives and their political masters from the threat of potentially damaging repercussions and providing them with the ultimate credit for a job well done. As the government’s priorities changed and its funding for the ethnic archives programme dried up, the National Archives’ interest also waned, leaving the staff and programme in virtual limbo. In that sense, the idea of multiculturalism as a cultural, rather than as a political and social, policy has been largely a fraud.

In having said this, I should again emphasize that during the early years both the policy of official multiculturalism and the National Archives of Canada still accomplished a great deal of good in preserving the heritage of Canada’s ethnocultural minorities. Indeed, it was under their aegis that the Finnish Organization of Canada Collection itself was acquired, arranged and described, and for that I am eternally grateful.

