

197<sup>m</sup>

HENRY SOMERVILLE AND CATHOLIC SOCIAL THOUGHT

HENRY SOMERVILLE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF  
CATHOLIC SOCIAL THOUGHT IN CANADA:  
SOMERVILLE'S ROLE IN THE  
ARCHDIOCESE OF TORONTO  
1915-1943

by  
JEANNE RUTH MERIFIELD BECK, M.A.

A Thesis  
Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies  
in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements  
for the Degree  
Doctor of Philosophy

McMaster University

August 1977



DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (1977)  
(History)

McMASTER UNIVERSITY  
Hamilton, Ontario

TITLE: Henry Somerville and the Development of Catholic  
Social Thought in Canada: Somerville's Role  
in the Archdiocese of Toronto 1915-1943.

AUTHOR: Jeanne Ruth Merifield Beck, B.A. (Toronto)  
M.A. (McMaster).

SUPERVISOR: Dr. G. S. French.

NUMBER OF PAGES: xiii, 485.

## ABSTRACT

Throughout the nineteenth century the Roman Catholic Church in Ontario was concerned principally with its growth as an institution in a rather hostile social environment. Hence its leaders sought to develop the parochial structure and to promote the extension of the Separate School system. As a religious community whose members were often poor, and in many instances recent immigrants, it continued to rely heavily on the leadership of the clergy and in general was unsympathetic to new ideas.

In the Catholic Church at large, however, as in the Protestant Churches, there was increasing sensitivity to the need for redefining the role of the Christian Churches in society. This resulted in the promulgation in 1891 of the Encyclical Rerum Novarum and subsequently of Quadragesimo Anno in 1931. In these statements the Papacy presented a critique of contemporary society and a set of moral precepts designed to promote social harmony and justice without committing the Church to the endorsement of either liberal or socialist principles.

The first figure to introduce the Church's new social teaching in Canada was Archbishop Neil McNeil, who was appointed in 1912 as Archbishop of Toronto, the largest



English-speaking diocese in the Canadian Catholic Church. McNeil was instrumental in bringing to Canada, Henry Somerville, a young self-educated, English-Catholic layman, an outstanding journalist who became the chief exponent of Catholic social teaching in the country. Somerville was an editorial writer for The Catholic Register, the principal English language Catholic newspaper, from 1915 to 1918. After a period in England in which he acquired a broader understanding of contemporary economics and social issues he returned, at McNeil's request, as editor of The Catholic Register, a position he held from 1933 to his death in 1953.

Somerville was principal adviser on social and economic questions to Archbishop McNeil and subsequently to Archbishop James McGuigan. In his writing, he sought to explain simply the teaching of the social encyclicals, to demonstrate its relevance to Canada, which, in his time, moved from boom to depression; to persuade the Catholic clergy and laity that the Church must support the development of secular labour unions and the passage of just labour legislation.

Distressed at the hostility of the Church towards the C.C.F. as a "socialist" party, he strove successfully to remove the hierarchy's restrictions which inhibited Canadian

Catholics from joining the new party. Somerville was conscious that Canadian Catholics could not play an effective part in implementing in Canadian society the ideas he popularized unless the Church had an educated laity. Thus he encouraged the formation of study groups for working men, the strengthening of Catholic educational institutions, and greater exposure of the clergy to the importance of Catholic social teaching in resolving the problems of Canadian society.

Somerville's writings stand as testimony of the range and the quality of his efforts to alter the perception of English-speaking Canadian Catholics of the part which the Church should and could play in furthering the establishment of a just social order in Canada. To assess the extent of his achievement is as exceedingly difficult and elusive as to reach a similar judgement about any notable figure in Canadian intellectual and social history. The crucial fact is that Somerville was addressing a religious group which comprised altogether more than forty percent of the Canadian population. His words were read principally by English-speaking Catholics, and more particularly by Catholics in Ontario. That he was heeded by some important members of the Canadian hierarchy is clear. Subsequent events would suggest that Somerville's influence extended widely among

clergy and laity. He may well have been a principal figure in setting the stage for the reception in the Church in Canada of the social ideas and changes which emerged from Vatican II.

Somerville and those who shared his views were limited throughout his career by the conservative traditions of the Church in Canada, the division between the French and English branches of the Church, and by the Church's necessary concern for simple survival as an institution. In effect, the study of Somerville's career provides an insight into a highly significant and yet little understood part of Canada's social and religious history.

## ABBREVIATIONS AND NOTES

A.F. of L.	American Federation of Labour
C.C.F.	Co-Operative Commonwealth Federation
S.J.	Society of Jesus or the Jesuits
C.S.S. R.	Redemptorist Fathers
C.S.B.	Congregation of St. Basil
Msgr.	Monsignor
R.N.	<u>Rerum Novarum</u>
Q.A.	<u>Quadragesimo Anno</u>
C.S.G.	Catholic Social Guild
C.H.R.	Canadian Historical Review
C.J.E.P.S.	Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science
A.H.R.	American Historical Review
P.A.C.	Public Archives of Canada
<u>The Register</u>	<u>The Catholic Register</u> 1912-1942 <u>The Canadian Register</u> 1942-1953

## Notes

1. The McNeil and McGuigan Papers are not yet catalogued.
2. Somerville's spelling of the word "labour" was not consistent. He alternated between "labour" and "labor" even within one article.

3. The ecclesiastical jurisdiction over which Archbishops McNeil and McGuigan presided was the "Archdiocese of Toronto". But since it was, in all respects, a diocese, the terms "archdiocese" and "diocese" have been used interchangeably. In the Roman Catholic Church, the holder of an archbishopric held formal primacy over the dioceses in a given ecclesiastical province, but his main task was to exercise the functions of a bishop in the archdiocese.
4. The articles and editorials cited from The Catholic Register have not been listed in the bibliography as this would have extended its length excessively and the newspaper is now available for reference on microfilm. The only exception was Somerville's 1936-37 series on Communism which were intended to be a study club instruction book.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I was aided in my research by many individuals and institutions to whom I would like to express my sincere appreciation. The project began in the offices of The Catholic Register, Toronto, where I was made welcome by all the staff. I particularly appreciate the interest and generous help of Alfred de Manche and Stanley Koma who provided working space and equipment as well as personal interviews. To the staff of Madonna House, Combermere, Ontario, my thanks for their gracious hospitality when doing research there; I am particularly indebted to the founder, Catherine de Hueck Doherty, and staff members Murray Ballantyne and Fathers Peter Nearing, Eugene Cullinane and Thurston Smith for interviews and documents.

I am also indebted to those who obtained or arranged for special research material for me: Dr. Kathleen Going, St. Thomas More Institute, Montreal; Father Alphonse de Valk, St. Thomas More College, Saskatoon; Dr. Gregory Baum and Father Robert Scollard, St. Michael's College, Toronto; Father Frank Somerville, S.J., Leeds, England; Monsignor J. G. Hanley, Kingston; Father Michael Ryan, St. Peter's Seminary, London; and Sister Louise Sharum, Lubbock, Texas.

To Their Excellencies, John Sherlock, Bishop of London, and Paul Reding, Bishop of Hamilton, my thanks for their helpful interviews; and to Fathers Matthew Ustrzycki and Edward Sheridan for arranging access to material loaned by Bishop Reding.

Like all researchers, I give thanks for librarians whose skills in conserving, cataloguing and locating information were essential to this work. I am especially indebted to the following: Father Vincent Mackenzie, S.J. and the staff of Regis College, Toronto, Miss Lois Coté, St. Peter's Seminary, London, M. Mathieu, Laval University, Quebec, Rev. C. G. Lucas, Archivist of the United Church of Canada and his staff, Miss M. Cole of the MacLennan Graduate Library, McGill, Peter Mitchell, King's College, London, and the staff of St. Michael's College Library, Toronto. I am particularly indebted to Dr. William Ready and the staff of Mills Memorial Library at McMaster for their gracious and expert responses to my endless requests for information and sources.

I have especially appreciated the assistance of Father James McGivern, S.J., Archivist of the Archdiocese of Toronto; his kindly encouragement, practical help and vast knowledge were given frequently and fully.

To all those who granted interviews I express thanks:

they have supplied information unavailable in documents and personal contact with them was for me, one of the great rewards of doing research.

To all of the Somerville family, particularly Mrs. Henry Somerville, Janet, Father Peter and Father Stephen in Toronto, I express my deepest appreciation. Their hospitality refreshed me many times and their frank, thoughtful answers to my innumerable questions and their granting full and unrestricted access to all sources concerning Henry Somerville made this project possible.

For guidance in transforming research material into a thesis I offer my thanks to my committee, Dr. James Daly of the History Department and Dr. James Dale of the English Department. Dr. Daly's skillful critiques of my work as it progressed were mingled with wit and encouragement. Dr. Dale's careful reading of the final draft eliminated many incongruities in the text. In addition, his informed historical comments resulted in many useful clarifications of the argument. To my supervisor, Dr. Goldwin S. French, I owe the greatest debt of all. From my first tentative steps in research to the final draft, he has cheerfully spent many hours patiently advising, encouraging and, when necessary, tactfully correcting. He, and the committee have given of themselves so freely that



any errors still extant are my own responsibility.

Graduate School has been a joyful experience because of the camaraderie which exists between the graduate students. To Peter Cahalan, John Davis, Sister Barbara Frank, Dr. James Greenlee and my office-mates, Dr. Geoffrey Sherington and Tom Socknat, my thanks for your friendship and professional expertise.

I am especially grateful to McMaster University for help in financing my studies through generous scholarships for several years.

To Helen Scott Hadden, whose librarian's expertise was invaluable in compiling the bibliography and to Margaret Belec who typed the manuscript with incredible speed, accuracy and good humour, my deepest gratitude for working long and late hours to meet deadlines.

Finally, to my husband, Robin, and our daughter Jody to whom this dissertation is dedicated, my thanks for your unflagging support and encouragement which made its completion possible.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CHAPTER I -- INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 2 -- THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN ONTARIO TO 1913	24
CHAPTER 3 -- ARCHBISHOP NEIL McNEIL AND CATHOLIC SOCIAL THOUGHT	67
CHAPTER 4 -- THE ENGLISH WORLD OF HENRY SOMERVILLE	101
CHAPTER 5 -- THE YOUNG REFORMER IN CANADA 1915-1918	141
CHAPTER 6 -- THE MATURING OF SOMERVILLE: ENGLAND 1919-1933	182
CHAPTER 7 -- CATHOLIC TORONTO IN BOOM AND DEPRESSION: THE WORK OF ARCHBISHOP McNEIL	240
CHAPTER 8 -- SOMERVILLE, AS EDITOR, TEACHER, AND GAD-FLY, 1933-38	283
CHAPTER 9 -- THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE C.C.F.	363
CHAPTER 10 -- CONCLUSION	425
BIBLIOGRAPHY	444

## INTRODUCTION

### I

In the latter half of the nineteenth century and on into the twentieth, Western European society was undergoing industrialization and urbanization. These related processes created a large group of new and distinctive social issues. The churches, along with all other institutions in Western society, were obliged to adapt their positions on moral and social issues in order to deal effectively with these new problems. All of the churches found this an unusually difficult task because their conceptions of social ethics were developed in the context of a traditional hierarchical and rural-dominated society. The principal Protestant churches and the Roman Catholic Church responded to this new situation in very different ways. The Protestant response initially took the form of the Social Gospel, especially in America, and this in turn helped to shape social philosophy in the twentieth century.

The Roman Catholic Church began to demonstrate an acute interest in this question with the publication of the Syllabus of Errors in 1864. This statement was generally interpreted as, and was intended to be, an important part of a conservative counter-offensive against liberal and radical

ideas in philosophy, theology, and politics, and the tensions which accompanied them. But, in the next two decades it became increasingly evident that a defensive posture was not sufficient to protect the Church's position and influence.

Spurred in particular by the continuing crisis in the Church's relationship with industrial society, Pope Leo XIII issued Rerum Novarum in 1891, an encyclical which was conceived to be a balanced, and on the whole conservative statement with respect to the role of the Church in society. But, whatever was intended, Rerum Novarum proved to be a catalyst for the ongoing development of a constructive response by the Church to the kinds of social issues with which it was confronted. In England, in the United States, and eventually in Canada, the discussion stimulated by Rerum Novarum was instrumental in re-shaping the Church's position on the phenomena which were developing within the capitalist economy -- labour unions, widespread poverty made more severe by cyclical depressions, and the growth of an international socialist political movement which was in part a counter-balance to the formation of international links between large corporations in the Western economy.

In Canada, the period during which the English-speaking sector of the Catholic Church began seriously to consider these questions, began with the appointment of

Dr. Neil McNeil as Archbishop of Toronto in 1912. From that time forward there was intermittent discussion within the Archdiocese of Toronto about the meaning of Catholic social thought. It is clear in retrospect, that during these years other sections of the English-speaking Catholic Church in Canada became much more aware of the implications of the shifting patterns of Catholic social views as Church authorities sought to apply these to the resolution of the increasingly critical social and economic difficulties with which English-speaking Catholics as well as other Canadians were faced.

This process of adjustment was facilitated and constantly stimulated by Henry Somerville (1889-1953). Through his unique and close relationship with two successive archbishops of Toronto and his work on The Catholic Register, first as a contributor and subsequently as editor (1915-18; 1933-53), the Catholic Church in English Canada was provided with a corpus of social thought adapted to Canadian conditions. The nature of these relationships and the extent of his influence were themselves shaped by the character and traditions of English-speaking Catholicism and by Somerville's own background and character. In this thesis my primary objective is to analyse the intellectual formation and career of Henry Somerville as a student and as an exponent of Catholic social thought with particular reference

to the period which he spent in the Archdiocese of Toronto. My secondary objective is to assess the extent to which the attitudes of the English-speaking clergy and laity were shaped and changed as a result of his activity, within the context of the traditions and the characteristics of Catholicism in Ontario.

Henry Somerville has been selected for detailed consideration in this thesis because he was in fact the most significant exponent of Catholic social thought in English Canada in the period from 1915 to 1946. Indeed few if any of the clergy gave systematic attention to this subject except incidentally in pastorals or general public statements.<sup>1</sup> Somerville was noteworthy, in addition, in that his work in Canada spanned a period in which occurred the three events which played such major roles in shaping the country -- World War I, the Depression, and World War II. He was editor for twenty years of the oldest and most widely circulated Catholic weekly in Canada; its influence extended beyond the Archdiocese of Toronto to the whole of English-

---

<sup>1</sup>The Antigonish Co-operative Movement, whilst an admirable enterprise, was founded and led by clergy associated with St. Francis Xavier University and oriented to the problems of rural agriculture in the Maritime Provinces. It was a practical application of the co-operative theory of the Church but it was not readily applicable to the huge industrial complexes of urban central Canada.

speaking Canada.

I have chosen to focus on Somerville's role in the Archdiocese of Toronto because the history and character of this part of the Church is a kind of microcosm of the development of Catholicism in English-speaking Canada. In the twentieth century the Toronto Archdiocese became the largest in Catholic population of any province of the Church in English-speaking Canada, and was directly exposed to the social pressures engendered by immigration, industrialization, and urbanization. For that reason it seems plausible to argue that this kind of study of this particular diocese will throw light on the history of English-Canadian Catholicism in the twentieth century and should stimulate research into the development of other parts of the Church in the same period. Moreover, I have been fortunate in securing access to Somerville's papers and correspondence through the gracious co-operation of Mr. Somerville's family. They have made it possible for me not only to locate incidental writings not readily available, but also to gain informal insights into his character through interviews with them and his friends and associates.

It is recognized that it is risky to generalize from the experience of one Archdiocese with respect to the whole range of English-speaking Catholicism in Canada. Moreover, generalizations, however accurate, with respect to this

part of the Catholic Church are not necessarily valid as applied to the Church in French Canada. The latter had different traditions, problems and objectives.

At this point one must emphasize that there is a dearth of scholarly writing about religion in general and the English Catholic Church in particular in Canada. The pioneer work of H. H. Walsh, The Christian Church in Canada (1956) is weak on the modern church and has little comment in depth on the English branch of the Canadian Catholic Church. John Webster Grant's stimulating The Church in the Canadian Era (1972) contains valuable insights and successfully places the Church's development within the larger context of economic and social change, but the sections dealing with Catholicism are relatively brief. There is no comprehensive history of Christianity in Canada comparable to the studies published by Hudson, Gaustad or Ahlstrom on the United States. These rest not only on substantial research in primary sources but also on a vast output of scholarly work on United States' religious history, including American Catholicism. It would be impossible at this time to produce a bibliography of the history of religion in Canada comparable in scope to Nelson Burr's two volume A Critical Bibliography of Religion in America (1961), because so little has been written.

One reason for the quality of the comment on the



growth of American Catholicism in works such as Ahlstrom's mammoth Religious History of the American People (1972) has been the wealth of scholarly research done in the last twenty-five years, particularly on the development of Catholic social thought. There are comprehensive general surveys such as M. J. Williams, Catholic Social Thought (1950), John F. Cronin, Catholic Social Principles (1950), and Joseph Moody, Church and Society 1789-1950 (1953), which outline the European sources of the subject as well as noting English or American exponents of Catholic philosophy. There is also a large collection of works which deal more specifically with various aspects of the American scene. Especially noteworthy are the compilations of documents and the general histories of John Tracy Ellis, the explanations of the social encyclicals by Joseph Husslein, Terrence McLaughlin, and Anne Fremantle, and the several works of Thomas T. McAvoy, Philip Gleeson and Andrew Greeley. American scholars have given detailed consideration to specific issues in American Catholic history: Henry Browne's The Catholic Church and the Knights of Labour (1949), Philip Gleeson, The Conservative Reformers: German-American Catholics and the Social Order (1968), Aaron I. Abell, American Catholicism and Social Action: A Search for Social Justice 1865-1950 (1960) and American Catholic Thought on Social Questions (1968). Interestingly, several of these

works refer to Henry Somerville as an authority, although he has not received any such recognition in any Canadian work written to date. The many biographical studies of Catholic leaders in social thought in the United States, and of prominent members of the hierarchy such as Cardinal Gibbons, by John Tracy Ellis (1952), and the excellent writings done on reformers such as Mary Harrita Fox, Peter E. Dietz, Labor Priest (1953), Francis Broderick, Right Reverend New Dealer: John A. Ryan (1963), are of great value. Finally, scholarly interest in social issues in the Catholic Church has been sustained by a vigorous press which publishes important shorter items: the Paulist Catholic World, the Jesuit America, and the lay-founded Commonweal are but three examples of many which could be cited.

Studies of Catholicism in English-speaking Canada must be grounded as well in the origins of social thought in England. Here, the sources are not so rich but there has been some fine work which helps throw light on Canadian development: K. S. Inglis, Churches and the Working Class in England (1963), Peter Jones, The Christian Socialist Revival, 1877-1914 (1968) and John Hickey, Urban Catholics -- Urban Catholicism in England and Wales from 1820 to the Present Day (1967) provide useful background material on the Catholic working class. Little has been written on the history of the English Catholic Church in the twentieth

century except articles on specific limited subjects. This makes the pioneer work of Georgiana McEntee, The Catholic Social Movement in England (1927) all the more valuable, if only because Henry Somerville figures prominently in it. A sequel to this by J. M. Cleary, Catholic Social Action in Britain, 1909-1959 (1961) although more limited in scope, is very important as it is the sole source for detailed information on the Catholic Social Guild. The latter organization through its Year Book begun in 1913, and its little journal, The Christian Democrat, provides useful information for the researcher. This organization produced studies on the progress of Catholic Action in Europe, and sponsored Somerville's brief but useful Studies in the Catholic Social Movement (1933). There is an extensive literature on the nineteenth and early twentieth century European Catholic pioneers of social thought, which is documented in the excellent bibliographies provided by both Moody and Williams. The most useful modern work of a critical nature, however, is R. L. Camp, The Papal Ideology of Social Reform (1969).

In contrast, to produce a history of the English Catholic Church in Canada or a detailed account of some particular aspect of its history would be an impossible task at present, given the extent of Canada, the different traditions of the various regions, and the inadequacy of the

primary and secondary sources. The ecclesiastical archives are, like many other archives in Canada, under-developed, and the use of the material in them at least for the twentieth century is still, in many instances, restricted. Similarly, although there have been some writings about prominent clergy in Canada, such as George Boyle, Pioneer in Purple (1951) on Archbishop McNeil, Claude Fisher's James Cardinal McGuigan (1948) and Peter Nearing, He Loved the Church: John R. MacDonald, Bishop of Antigonish (1975), there is no scholarly history of any diocese or any systematic studies of the religious orders or Catholic activities except in the field of education. Here one can cite Franklin Walker, Catholic Education and Politics in Ontario (1964), Laurence Shook, Catholic Post-Secondary Education in English-Speaking Canada (1971) and E. J. McCorkell, Henry Carr: Revolutionary (1969) which traces the career of a prominent Catholic educator.

The researcher has to rely on very modest attempts to recapture early Ontario Catholic history such as W. R. Harris, The Catholic Church in the Niagara Peninsula (1895), John Teefey, The Archdiocese of Toronto: Jubilee Volume (1895), Theobald Spitz, The Catholic Church in Waterloo County (1916), Brother Alfred, Catholic Pioneers in Upper Canada (1947), and William G. Perkins Bull, From Macdonell to McGuigan (1939), all of which contain useful

biographical sketches but are based on limited sources.

In recent years a few theses have been completed on Canadian Catholic history which have made use of important primary sources. These include Margaret Prang, "Some Opinions of Political Radicalism in Canada Between the Two World Wars" (1953), Frank Isbester, "A History of the National Catholic Unions in Canada 1901-1945" (1968), James Rea, "Bishop Alexander Macdonell and the Politics of Upper Canada" (1974), and Robert Choquette, "Language and Religion, A History of English-French Conflict in Ontario" (1975).

The scarcity of published primary sources in Canadian Catholic history is regrettable. Three of the most useful collections for this thesis have been James C. McGuigan, Pastoral Letters and Circular Letters (n.d.), Jean Hulliger, L'Enseignement Social des Evêques Canadiens de 1891-1950 (1958), and Alexander Laidlaw, The Man from Margaree, Writings and Speeches of Moses J. Coady (1971). Although many short memoirs containing valuable primary material have been produced by parishes and religious orders, only comparatively recently has there been a serious attempt to collect and collate these for bibliographies. Increasingly useful will be the History Collection: Canadian Catholic Church, compiled and collected by Alphonse de Valk, for St. Thomas More College, Saskatoon, since 1971, and the bibliography produced under the sponsorship of the Canadian

Catholic Historical Association which is being kept up to date by James Hanrahan.

Recent articles for books or journals have proved invaluable in sketching the historical and sociological background for this thesis. They include: Ambrose Raftis, "Changing Characteristics of the Catholic Church" (1963), Kenneth Duncan, "Irish Famine Immigration and the Social Structure of Canada West" (1968), D. S. Shea, "The Irish Immigrant Adjustment to Toronto" (1972), George Hoffman, "Saskatchewan Catholics and the Coming of a New Politics" (1974), Raymond Huel, "French-Speaking Bishops and the Cultural Mosaic in Western Canada" (1974), G. J. Parr, "The Welcome and the Wake, Attitudes in Canada West Toward the Irish Famine Migration" (1974), Gregory Baum, "Joe Burton: Catholic and Saskatchewan Socialist" (1976).

The growing interest in Canadian religious history is indicative of an increasing awareness among secular historians that the churches have played a highly influential role in the shaping of Canadian society. The nature of this relationship has been explained in some detail and with particular reference to the Protestant churches by S. D. Clark in his Church and Sect in Canada (1948), Goldwin French in Parsons and Politics (1962) and more recently in Richard Allen's The Social Passion (1971), a comprehensive account of the development of the Social Gospel between

1914 and 1928. In what follows I shall attempt to extend this investigation into the hitherto largely neglected history of English-Canadian Catholicism. Since the Catholic position on social issues as in other matters differs significantly from those of the Protestant churches, this study should add another dimension to our understanding of Canada's religious, social, and intellectual history.

## II

The social problems which resulted from the rapid economic and political changes in Europe and North America in the latter part of the nineteenth century were one of the major causes of the theological crises which have troubled all Christian churches, both Protestant and Catholic, up to the present time. Yet these changes have only heightened a tension which has always existed within the Western Christian religious tradition. It is within the context of centuries of Christian concern about social justice that the response of any one of the Canadian churches to contemporary social issues must be considered.

The premises of the Christian faith include two dynamic religious ideas which have always proven difficult to hold in balance. Traditionally, the churches have considered that their main responsibility was to effect the spiritual renewal of the individual soul. The churches have

always been aware, however, that the Bible contains a set of ethical precepts which can demand a degree of involvement in society transcending at times the priority which has been given to the individual's search for perfection. This has produced a paradox: man, whom the Christian tradition has declared to be essentially a spiritual being who should put the non-material world first, must work out his relationship with God the Spirit within a social and material world. Christians have never been able to escape from this dilemma, for some of the great insights of the Hebrews which were appropriated into the Christian faith were concerned with the relationship between personal religious obligations and the ethics of the whole community.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup>Many Old Testament quotations could illustrate this belief that the cultivation of the spiritual virtues must be coupled with public justice and charity. The following are but a few illustrations of Hebraic ethics which concern the duty of the worshipper of Yahveh to his neighbour. All quotations are from The New English Bible (Oxford, 1970).

"When an alien settles with you in your land you shall not oppress him . . . you shall love him as a man like yourself." Leviticus 19:33.

"When your brother Israelite is reduced to poverty and cannot support himself in the community, you shall assist him as you would an alien or a stranger. . . . You shall not charge him interest on a loan, either by deducting it in advance from the capital sum or by adding it on repayment." Leviticus 25:36,37.

"You shall not oppress your neighbour or rob him. You shall not keep back a man's wages till next morning. You



As political and social structures became more complicated, theologians continued to wrestle with the paradox of the spiritual and the secular. St. Augustine, in his analogy of the two kingdoms, and St. Thomas Aquinas, in his analysis of the natural law, the political state, and Christian society attempted to supply solutions for their times. St. Thomas, in particular, declared that social justice and Godliness are inextricably linked. Man fulfills his obligation to God by adoration, by obedience to laws of personal purity and by the constant application of justice and charity to his fellow man. The history of the Church since his time illustrates how difficult is the task of keeping these two in balance.

At times, the need for personal regeneration and union with the Deity has been emphasized. The individual's inner piety was stressed by the mystics of the pre-Reformation era and the Anabaptist mystics of the sixteenth century. Socially active groups such as the Quakers and the Franciscans combined mysticism with deeds of personal love and charity to the needy. Others, such as the "Diggers" during the English Civil War, formed political movements

---

shall not pervert justice, either by favouring the poor or by subservience to the great." Leviticus 15:13,14,16.

with the aim of changing the structure of society to conform with their notions of Godliness and justice.

In the past the Roman Catholic Church has not been often identified with this latter type of reform movement because for many centuries it claimed to be and was accepted as an institution which functioned within the integral structure of the state. As it claimed jurisdiction over education and much of the law, attempts to make changes in these areas which were so related to social change were likely to be interpreted as direct attacks on both the Church and the State.

In contrast, after the Reformation, when the concept of the religiously pluralistic society became accepted by many states, the Protestant churches initiated movements which sought to reform many social institutions in the name of religion. One of the most famous of these was the anti-slavery crusade in England and the United States. Using arguments based on the Christian ethic, the churches sought a drastic change in the structure of the slaveholding societies.

From the beginning of settlement the Christian churches in North America had assumed that the alleviation of social problems was part of their mission. The Catholic religious orders were the only dispensers of charity, education, and medical care in French Canada, and all the

churches did their best to help poor and ill settlers in a developing Canada when government aid was largely non-existent.

Despite these earlier developments, none of the churches in Europe or America were equipped to meet the challenges posed by the Industrial Revolution or modern warfare. Severe social and economic hardship stimulated the advocacy of new solutions by secular writers who had no sympathy for the religious and social traditions of the churches. These critics argued that the source of injustice was not so much in the individual actions of particular men, as in the faulty structure of Western society. Only a major and possibly violent upheaval would bring about the destruction of the chief culprit, the capitalist system, and its replacement by a new collectivist or co-operative society.

The Roman Catholic Church was particularly hostile to these ideas although it had never accepted the arguments promulgated by the nineteenth century liberals who had justified the laissez-faire state and the capitalist economy. The turmoil of the nineteenth century made the Vatican hierarchy aware that it would have to fight much more vigorously and constructively for social justice if the Church was going to retain a position of moral leadership. Karl Marx and Pope Leo XIII saw similar kinds of handwriting on the wall, but the Papacy from the beginning fought bitterly

against the Marxian solution. It shared in the growing concern of all the Christian churches about social, economic and political issues in the late nineteenth century: the promulgation of Rerum Novarum coincided with the first phase of the Protestant Social Gospel movement.

### III

Roman Catholic theology defined the Church as a divinely founded institution whose specific mission is to save souls. Only under its authoritative leadership would the Kingdom of God be brought closer to actuality on earth. Nevertheless, the Church shared two assumptions with those who formulated the Social Gospel: Catholics and Social Gospellers, unlike those who upheld the Calvinist tradition, believed that the primordial rebellion against God had impaired, but not destroyed, mankind's innate potentiality for good; hence both were optimistic about the possibility of moral progress.

The world, the Church believed, was not intended to be a place of permanent alienation from God, for the universe, being divinely created, was still essentially good. This was proven by the existence of the natural law to which all things were subject. Order in the world and in human society, after the Fall, came from man's understanding of and adherence to the law through his own reason and the teaching

of the Church.

This theology had been enunciated by St. Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century. Popes Pius IX and Leo XIII believed it to be particularly applicable to the condition of man and society in the nineteenth century; thus they sponsored its revival during their papal reigns. From the Thomistic conception of natural law evolved another assumption which Catholicism shared with the Social Gospel.

Essentially the implications of the theology of Redemption were defined more broadly than in the past. Not only was the individual saved by Christ, but, through the activities of dedicated Christians, there existed the possibility of social progress and peace as benefits of the Redemption which could encompass those who were outside the Church. Others could and should share in some of the benefits of the Kingdom when it was brought into realization on earth. This would be accomplished by obedience to the precepts of social ethics, which, if they were in accord with the principles of natural law, would be the means of achieving social justice and progress.

The difference between the Catholic and Protestant positions at this point is the identity of the authority which defined social ethics. As has been pointed out by Jeremiah Newman, the Protestant social ethic was less fixed, less legalistically defined in that it was shaped by

"reliance rather on the Word of God as perceived by the intuition of the believer with the help of a reverent reading of the Bible and of prayer".<sup>3</sup> More than the Protestant, the Catholic, however, relied on the guidance of the Church on moral issues because he accepted its contention that it had been given its teaching authority by God, and was thus authorized to be the supreme ethical guide on both general and individual religious and moral issues. These two positions, which Newman has dubbed an "ethic of inspiration" and an "ethic of ends"<sup>4</sup> were not mutually exclusive. Both claimed scriptural authorization but they did result in different approaches to the means of achieving social reform.

The article of faith which separated these two concepts most emphatically was the Thomistic premise that the organizational structure of the Church is part of the whole divinely ordained structure of the universe in which

---

<sup>3</sup>Jeremiah Newman, Change and the Catholic Church (Baltimore and Dublin, 1965), 100-101. This Catholic sociologist gives a thoughtful analysis of the differences between the Roman Catholic and the Protestant theological positions on the role of the Church in social change. See his chapter 2.

<sup>4</sup>Newman, Religion, 99.

all parts are in an organic and hierarchic relation to one another. All men were equal before God in that they were all accountable to Him at all times for their actions, but some men, by divine commission, had more responsibility and more authority than others within the Church. Episcopal authority specifically did not derive from any idea of consensus, or delegation of authority by equals. Clergy and laity accepted the bishop's authority on faith and morals, because the rite of consecration to the episcopacy involved a conferring by God on the Pope or the Bishop, of the right and obligation to exercise authority on all matters over which the Church claimed jurisdiction. The corollary of this was the Catholic belief that the Pope and the hierarchy must provide the Church's intellectual leadership and initiate action in all major areas of the Church's concerns.

As has been noted, in the latter half of the nineteenth century the belief that vigorous Christian involvement in remedying social injustice is an essential part of Christian witness was not an idea unique to the Protestant churches in Europe or America. Some European Catholic bishops attempted, as early as the 1860's, to stimulate papal interest in this area and they were joined by English and American bishops in the 1880's. They were not much heeded for a time because the Church had difficulty in adjusting

to the political, economic and social changes which had occurred in Europe during this period. Little positive direction was given until 1891 to those prelates who were grappling with the social problems festering in the urban centres of Europe and America.

The threatened defection of the new industrial proletariat to socialism forced the Papacy in 1891 to heed the warning of a few perceptive bishops. As were the early advocates of the Social Gospel, these bishops were convinced that the Catholic Church under their leadership must move into the turbulent marketplace and endeavour to bring the social order into conformity with Christian concepts of social justice.

In Canada the Church was slow to respond to the changing attitude of the Papacy towards the Church's involvement in social problems. The tradition of episcopal leadership and initiative was strong and, for historical reasons, both the bishops and laity defined the Church's role largely in confessional terms. Any move to formulate a Catholic response to new social issues thus would need to be espoused by a leading member of the hierarchy. The appointment of Neil McNeil as Archbishop of Toronto offered him an opportunity to introduce the Church's new teaching on social questions to a large and influential sector of the Canadian Church. In this task McNeil was given immense assistance



by Henry Somerville. But, McNeil, Somerville, and their supporters were limited throughout by the traditions and character of the Church in Ontario.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN ONTARIO TO 1913

Although they were isolated from the Protestant community and the intellectual ferment that took place between 1890 and 1935 among the advocates of the Social Gospel, some Canadian Catholics were, nevertheless, participants in the intellectual adaptation which the Catholic Church underwent during the same period. From 1913 this task was taken up by several Canadian Catholic leaders, whose main concern was to identify the main weaknesses of the Church, and to adapt the general social directives of the Vatican to the specific requirements of Canadian Catholics in forms that would be acceptable to the non-Catholic Canadian community.

Two of the most outstanding of the Catholic leaders in this period were Neil McNeil, Archbishop of Toronto from 1913 until his death in 1933, and Henry Somerville, the editor of The Catholic Register from 1933 until his death in 1953. In order to understand what they sought to accomplish and the limitations which they faced, one must first understand the historical development of Catholicism

in Ontario. Certain forces and events shaped the Church and were responsible for the attitudes which McNeil and Somerville sought to alter. In this chapter therefore the nature and growth of Ontario Catholicism before 1913 will be examined.

The Roman Catholic Church flourished in Canada in the three centuries which followed its initial implanting by the French. It grew markedly in Quebec and Ontario. In Quebec, the Church's success, based initially on the majority position of the French Canadians, was maintained by the phenomenal birthrate, the legal position afforded it by the Quebec and Constitutional Acts, and by its effective espousal of the nationalist aspirations of the French Canadians.<sup>1</sup> The Quebec Act was noteworthy in that it had guaranteed more political and social recognition to the sixty thousand French Canadian Roman Catholics in Canada than was permitted at that time to the Catholics in either Great Britain or other parts of British North America.<sup>2</sup> But it was this linking of religion with national-

---

<sup>1</sup>J. C. Falardeau, "The Role and Importance of the Church in French Canada", in Marcel Rioux and Yves Martin, eds., French Canadian Society (Toronto, 1964), 1:349-50.

<sup>2</sup>D. A. O'Sullivan, "The Quebec Act and the Church in Canada", The American Catholic Quarterly Review (1885);601-615. See also J. Ambrose Raftis, "Changing Characteristics of the Catholic Church", in J. W. Grant, ed., The Churches and the Canadian Experience (Toronto, 1963), 83.

ism which facilitated the emergence in the Quebec Church of a fortress-like mentality, which identified the security of religion with cultural survival.<sup>3</sup>

In contrast, the development of the Church in English-speaking Ontario took place under entirely different circumstances and here it came to have a distinctive outlook which in many respects differed from that of the Church in Quebec. Following the Quebec Act it was assumed by the French-Canadian clergy and accepted by the British colonial officers that the rights enumerated in this act would apply to any new Catholic immigrants because the Quebec Act had not excluded non-French Catholics; in addition, the jurisdiction of the Diocese of Quebec extended at that time to the western limit of the former French possessions in North America.<sup>4</sup>

Because of the political and economic opportunities which this policy seemed to guarantee, Catholics were, from an early period, attracted to settlements in the future

---

<sup>3</sup>Laurier LaPierre, "The Clergy and the Quiet Revolution", in Arnold Edinborough and Philip LeBlanc, eds., One Church Two Nations (Toronto, 1968), 76.

<sup>4</sup>John S. Moir, Church and State in Canada, 1627-1867 (Toronto, 1967), xvi.

province of Ontario. They came in three major waves before 1850. The common factor was that each group of settlers was recruited from the poor and disoriented sectors of British society.

The earliest Catholic immigrants to Upper Canada were Scots, mainly military personnel, Highlanders in the King's Royal Regiment from New York who settled at Glengarry in 1786. A scattering of Catholic Scots were among the seven hundred United Empire Loyalists who came to Kingston after the Revolution, and there were a few Catholic soldiers in the regiments guarding the frontier at Kingston and Niagara.<sup>5</sup> All of these received the land grants which were given to the troops in 1803.<sup>6</sup> A few Catholics who settled in York (Toronto) managed to build a small chapel in 1805, but the total Catholic population in Upper Canada during the first two decades of the nineteenth century was so small that they had little social or political importance. Served by a few itinerant priests responsible to the Bishop in far-away

---

<sup>5</sup>Gerald Craig, Upper Canada: The Formative Years (Toronto, 1963), 48. Craig noted that the pro-monarchist Macdonell pointed out that Highlanders who received land grants would be a bulwark against the principles of republicanism which were being "diffused" by the citizens of the United States.

<sup>6</sup>W. R. Harris, The Catholic Church in the Niagara Peninsula, 1625-1895 (Toronto, 1895), 179.

Quebec, they did not have vigorous local leadership.

The first large-scale Catholic immigration into Ontario began in 1825 when 415 families, 2591 people, arrived from Cork at Peterborough where Ulster Irish had settled a few years earlier.<sup>7</sup> They were anxiously watched by their Protestant compatriots as a potentially unruly addition to the community, for they had emigrated from depressed areas where violence was common.<sup>8</sup> On the whole, however, these early Catholic immigrants were accepted, as they arrived in comparatively small groups and were easily absorbed into the rural areas where they filled the growing demand for farm labourers and domestic servants.<sup>9</sup> The poorest and most unskilled took labouring jobs building the vast transportation network of roads and canals, the lifelines of the pioneer communities. Irish labourers dug the Lachine Canal between 1821 and 1826; they moved on to the

---

<sup>7</sup>William Forbes Adams, Ireland and Irish Emigration to the New World (New Haven, 1932), 145.

<sup>8</sup>Hereward Senior, Orangeism: The Canadian Phase (Toronto, 1972), 10.

<sup>9</sup>Early pioneer memoirs frequently commented on the mores of the Irish Catholics in the district. Mrs. Susannah Moodie observed in Life in the Clearings in 1852, that although they were superstitious and careless, the Irish were good domestic servants, diligent and good-natured. (Toronto, 1959), 8-9.

Rideau between 1826 and 1832.<sup>10</sup>

The second major wave of Irish Catholic immigrants to Canada came between 1840 and 1843. These were unskilled labourers from the industrial cities of England and tenant farmers from Southern Ireland. The Irish who emigrated from the English ports had left Ireland during the 1830's, when depressed economic conditions had driven over 200,000 poor to seek new job opportunities in the factories and foundries of England. They were crowded into the industrial slums of Liverpool, Manchester, and London where they became an alien, despised minority. Unskilled, illiterate,<sup>11</sup> poorly paid, frequently unemployed and despised because of their religion, they developed a ghetto mentality. Ignored even by the English Catholic gentry who might have given them some leadership,<sup>12</sup> they clung together, a resentful, suspicious group whose social disorientation and poverty

---

<sup>10</sup>H. C. Pentland, "The Development of a Capitalistic Labour Market in Canada", The Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science, 25 (1959), 450-461. See also Kenneth Duncan, "Irish Famine Immigration and the Social Structure of Canada West", in W. E. Mann, ed., Canada: A Sociological Profile (Toronto, 1968), 15.

<sup>11</sup>T. W. Freeman, Pre-Famine Ireland (Manchester, 1957), 135. The Irish Census of 1841 listed an illiteracy rate which was as high as 72% in some counties.

<sup>12</sup>John Hickey, Urban Catholics -- Urban Catholicism in England and Wales from 1829 to the Present Day (London, 1967), 166. See also Henry Pelling, Popular Politics and Society in Late Victorian Britain (New York, 1968), 29 and 32.

bred crime and disease rates which were notable even in Victorian slums.

In the early 1840's these urban Irish poor in England were eager to emigrate as were the tenant farmers in Ireland who had been uprooted by the Irish Poor Law of 1836.<sup>13</sup> The coincidence of poor potato crops and a decrease in ocean fares caused over 85,000 of these poor people to come to Canada.<sup>14</sup> They met with more hostility than had the Irish settlers of an earlier era because their reputation for squalor and violence had preceded them. However, their labour was still needed, although projects such as the Welland Canal paid barely subsistence wages.<sup>15</sup> Yet they had an easier time than the third wave of Irish immigrants, the starving victims of the Great Potato Famine of 1847.

---

<sup>13</sup>The Poor Law of 1838 stated that farmers and landlords must pay a poor rate averaging ten pence on the pound for their tenants requiring aid. In order to keep their taxes down, many landlords gave financial assistance to tenants who were indigent and wished to emigrate. See Helen Cowan, British Emigration to British North America (Toronto, 1967), 178.

<sup>14</sup>Adams, Ireland, 415, Immigration Table.

<sup>15</sup>Harris noted the penury of the workers who arrived in the St. Catharines-Thorold area to build the extension to the Welland Canal in 1841. See 260.



The immigration which resulted from the Famine was one of the potent influences which shaped Canada, as these Catholics greatly altered the social and religious composition of the communities in which they settled. Nearly 100,000 people fled Ireland in the holds of the grain and timber ships, "probably the most diseased, destitute and shiftless [settlers] that Canada has ever received".<sup>16</sup> They were so physically weakened by many years of deprivation that they were lethargic and had to be given food before they could proceed to settlements inland.

The immigration officials hoped that they would provide farm labour,<sup>17</sup> but this scheme failed for four reasons. First, they were not welcome in rural Ontario because they brought cholera, typhus and tuberculosis into the farming communities.<sup>18</sup> Second, they were not skilled farmers because in Ireland they had only scratched a subsistence living from small garden plots.<sup>19</sup> Third, they had

---

<sup>16</sup>Gilbert Tucker, "Famine Immigration to Canada, 1847", American Historical Review 36 (April 1931):534.

<sup>17</sup>G. J. Parr, "The Welcome and the Wake, Attitudes in Canada West Toward the Irish Famine Migration", Ontario History 66 (1974):105.

<sup>18</sup>Duncan, "Irish Famine", 5.

<sup>19</sup>Freeman, Pre-Famine Ireland, 21-22.

no money or equipment to start farming and the government had no funds for so many who needed aid. Finally, the Irish did not like the lonely life which was the lot of the Canadian homesteader. They were gregarious and preferred to live with the neighbours and priest close by. Very few of those who tried life in the hinterlands stayed there long. The majority of the Irish Catholics eventually settled in the cities and towns of southern Ontario; in Toronto, Hamilton and London they tried to re-create their familiar surroundings. The epithets, "Corktown", "Cabbagetown", or "Shantytown" indicated their low social and economic status.<sup>20</sup> Life in a semi-hostile environment often reinforced the traits for which the Irish had already acquired notoriety. In Toronto, between 1850 and 1860, two thirds of all men and four fifths of all women charged by the police were Irish. Most of these were arrested for being drunk and disorderly.<sup>21</sup>

The protests of Canadian officials to the British

---

<sup>20</sup>Duncan, "Irish Famine", 14.

<sup>21</sup>D. S. Shea, "The Irish Immigrant Adjustment to Toronto", Canadian Catholic Historical Association Study Sessions 29 (1972):60.

government against the dumping of "diseased Irish paupers" led to stricter emigration and passenger regulations after 1847.<sup>22</sup> Thus the rate of immigration declined during the 1850's, but the majority of the newcomers were still Irish Catholics, "who became a substratum of the population in every sizeable town in the province".<sup>23</sup> The Irish influx contributed significantly to the phenomenal increase of the population in Upper Canada from 486,000 in 1842 to 952,000 in 1851. In this same period the Roman Catholic portion increased from 78,000 to 167,000. In Toronto alone by 1851, Catholics comprised over one quarter of the population of 30,000 and by 1860 they numbered 12,000 out of 44,800 citizens.<sup>24</sup>

The number of Irish immigrants to Canada fell during the latter years of the nineteenth century, but the Irish remained the dominant ethnic group in the Catholic Church in Ontario until after the First World War. The city of Toronto and its environs had the largest Catholic component,

---

<sup>22</sup>Frances Morehouse, "Canadian Migration in the 40's", Canadian Historical Review 9 (1928):321.

<sup>23</sup>Pentland, "The Development", 460.

<sup>24</sup>Census of Canada, 1851-52, I, xv, xx, xxi, 308, 69, 128.

Hamilton and London were the other two large Catholic centres in central Ontario. By 1911, Catholics comprised twelve percent of the population of Toronto (46,368 out of 376,538), and approximately 70,000 of the province's 484,997 Catholics lived in the Archdiocese of Toronto. The cities of Hamilton and London contained 13,000 and 5,000 Catholics, respectively, and were thus the other major English Catholic centres in the province.<sup>25</sup>

The majority of the priests and bishops who ministered to the Catholics in Ontario between 1850 and 1913 were also of Irish descent. The exceptions were usually in areas where European Catholic immigrants founded communities large enough to support a priest of their own language and culture.<sup>26</sup> Because they were in the majority, it was the Irish laity and clergy whose attitudes shaped Catholicism in Ontario in the nineteenth century. They had brought with them a heritage of social values and traits, born of years of persecution and privation. Their ex-

---

<sup>25</sup>Canada Year Book, Second Series, 1912, 28-29, 30-31.

<sup>26</sup>Examples of these settlements were found in Waterloo County where German immigrants founded many parishes during the nineteenth century. See Theobald Spetz, The Catholic Church in Waterloo County (Toronto, 1916).

periences in Ireland were at first the primary influence in shaping their behaviour in Canada.

The most evident traits of the Irish settlers and the ones which aroused the apprehensions of Protestants were their distrust of constituted authority, their penchant for violence and their loyalty to their religion. These all had their origin in the frustration and hatred which had cracked Irish society for over two centuries, and in the progressive disintegration of that society, in the face of massive population growth and persistent exploitation.<sup>27</sup> The Penal Code of 1695, the political overlordship of the British and the land tenure system were the particular foci of the Irishman's impotent rage. The latter in particular was characterized by the frequent summary eviction of the poor cotters (tenant farmers) most of whom lacked leases, and who received no compensation for any improvements to the property when they lost their holdings.<sup>28</sup> If no work was available they were forced to beg, steal or starve, as there was no provision for the poor in Ireland until the Poor Law

---

<sup>27</sup>Adams, Ireland, 4-5; Freeman, Pre-Famine, 35.

<sup>28</sup>Cecil Woodham Smith, The Great Hunger (London, 1962), 36.

of 1838. In desperation, the dispossessed frequently directed their hatred at the tenants who had taken over the lands of the evicted. Secret societies carried out inhuman acts of vengeance which the local courts were powerless (or indifferent) to redress. Lawlessness and cruelty permeated this society, and evasion of unjust laws was accepted as morally permissible by the Church.<sup>29</sup>

Living conditions for the cotters were found by the Devon Commission of 1845 to be deplorable. Primitive sod huts, cold, damp and dirty, bred disease and despair.<sup>30</sup> The Catholic tenants' enterprise had been so stunted by years of repressive legislation that they had become habituated to poverty, persecution and violence. Very few cultural resources existed for these folk; those they had were legacies from the past and were supplied mainly by the Church. The Irish poor found their solace not only in the cheap, illegally distilled liquor, for which they were notorious,<sup>31</sup> but also in their religion. Liquor briefly obliterated their misery on earth and their faith reminded them that as children of God they were destined for Heaven.

---

<sup>29</sup>Woodham Smith, Great Hunger, 28.

<sup>30</sup>Freeman, Pre-Famine, 148.

<sup>31</sup>Adams, Ireland, 24 quotes the Poor Inquiry Commission Report, Parliamentary Papers, 1836, 43:30.

Through their participation in religious rituals and festivals, a sense of social solidarity was created which preserved their religious and ethnic identity in Ireland.

The transference of these improverished and dis-oriented people to Canada could not immediately alleviate their problems. The English-speaking Protestants, most of whom came from much less deprived backgrounds, were suspicious of the Irish both as Catholics and as poor people.<sup>32</sup> Incidents of violence in Canada before 1847, in which the Irish had been involved, already identified them as a possibly unruly lot.<sup>33</sup> They would find it difficult to achieve prosperity because they arrived destitute and desperate. They would continue to be found in the meanest occupations and the lowest economic levels throughout the nineteenth century. For many years they had neither the incentive nor the means to acquire professional skills and their continuing poverty entrenched their social and religious isolation in a land where economic expectations

<sup>32</sup>Parr, "The Welcome", 113.

<sup>33</sup>Michael S. Cross, "The Shiners War, Social Violence in the Ottawa Valley in the 1830's", Canadian Historical Review, 54 (1973):1-26. Harris, The Catholic Church, 255-261. These two authors describe riots and violence by Irish labourers in the Ottawa Valley and in the St. Catharines area in which the community became alarmed at the excesses of the Irish mob. See also S. D. Clark, The Social Development of Canada (Toronto, 1942), 246.

were high. Emigration did remove the civil and religious restrictions which had impeded them in Ireland, and the Irish would eventually make a niche for themselves in Canada, but the full realization of their opportunities would take many years. In the process of social and economic adaptation to Canadian conditions, the Catholic Church would continue to play a major role.

Serving these immigrants were clergy who also brought to Canada attitudes born of their experiences in Ireland which colored their reaction to the English Protestant milieu of nineteenth century Ontario. The clergy sought to meet what they perceived to be the most pressing needs of their Irish Catholic flock, but simultaneously they were limited by the economic and social handicaps of their people. As they became particularly conscious of the hostility and pressure which they felt were directed at the Catholic Irish by those outside the faith, the establishment of the Church as a vital religious and social institution became their primary priority. They were aided in this project by the foundation which had been laid by the first bishop in Ontario, the energetic and respected Alexander Macdonell.

The talented and diplomatic Macdonell was a Highland Scot who had come to Canada as the Catholic chaplain to the Glengarry Regiment. In recognition of the increasing



numbers of English-speaking Catholics, he was created auxiliary bishop of Quebec in 1819 and assigned to the western or Upper Canadian part of the diocese. He soon found that the weaknesses of the Catholic Church in Ireland were being transported by the immigrants and their priests to the new settlements in Canada.

The Irish church had suffered for many years from a severe shortage of priests and nuns. Most of them were poorly trained because religious education was inadequate, and Catholic schools were proscribed by the government. The resulting ignorance and moral laxity of the clergy was so notorious that in 1830 the Vatican ordered the Irish episcopate to enforce higher standards.<sup>34</sup> The English Catholic Church in Canada was directly affected in turn by these deplorable conditions because it relied on the Irish church for recruits and the Irish bishops had disposed of some of their unsuitable clergy by encouraging them to emigrate. Bishop Macdonell struggled to reform or eliminate these priests and sought reliable men willing to leave Ireland, contend with a harsh climate and minister to scanty

---

<sup>34</sup>Emmet Larkin, "The Devotional Revolution in Ireland, 1850-1875", American Historical Review 77 (1972): 625-52.

and scattered Catholic communities.<sup>35</sup>

The bishop's diligent and resourceful leadership was reflected in the steady growth in clergy and churches in his diocese. Between 1826 and 1830, the clergy increased from seven to sixteen;<sup>36</sup> by 1834 the diocese had thirty-five churches and twenty-two priests. Parishes now extended beyond Toronto to Guelph, St. Thomas, London, St. Catharines and Dundas.<sup>37</sup>

After the See of Kingston was separated from the Quebec Diocese in 1826, civil recognition was accorded to the Bishop by a seat on the Legislative Council; the religious needs of Catholics were acknowledged by the Crown grants of land for churches wherever there were Catholic settlements.

One of Macdonell's most fruitful contributions to his church was his success in shielding Irish Catholics

<sup>35</sup>Bishop Alexander Macdonell, Letterbook 1820-29. Quoted by Michael Cross, "Shiner's War", 9, "Only the most incapable of Irish clergymen would make the arduous translation to Canada. . . . The Irish clergymen who were employed in this province had indeed done much injury to the cause of religion". Letter to Bishop Plessis, 1821. The Letterbook is in the Kingston Diocesan Archives.

<sup>36</sup>D. A. O'Sullivan, "Early History of the Church in Upper Canada", in John Teefty, ed., The Archdiocese of Toronto Jubilee Volume I (Toronto, 1895), 62.

<sup>37</sup>Harris, Catholic Church, 187.

from accusations of disloyalty during the Rebellion of 1837. As the political situation deteriorated during the 1830's, the Irish Catholic immigrants were placed in a particularly vulnerable position. They faced a conflict between the hatred and violence directed at the British in Ireland and their obligation to give civil obedience to the King's officials in Upper Canada. Their poverty and inferior social position made these poor people suspect as possible supporters of the rebels. Macdonell was convinced that the security which was afforded Catholics in Canada was dependent on their loyalty to the royal officials. He therefore supported the governor, and openly urged Catholics to elect "loyal legislators" to the Assembly.<sup>38</sup> In Toronto, he publicly repudiated Father O'Grady, the priest in charge of St. Paul's (the only Catholic Church in the city) when he supported William Lyon Mackenzie.<sup>39</sup> His success was

---

<sup>38</sup> A meeting was called with the Bishop's approval in Toronto on March 12, 1832 and attended by the leading Catholic citizens where they passed resolutions which declared loyalty to Lieut-Governor Colborne and "expressed sentiments of most lively gratitude towards the Home Government". See Brother Alfred, Catholic Pioneers in Upper Canada (Toronto, 1947), 30-31.

<sup>39</sup> The Bishop regarded Father O'Grady's Reform sympathies as a dangerous form of republicanism which could attract anti-Catholic feeling. Moreover, the priest's involvement in Republican politics was in defiance of the Bishop's edict. Bishop Macdonell was determined to suppress such priestly insubordination for it was a trait likely to

such, that by the time of his death in 1839, the Catholics had begun to be socially integrated into the Protestant community. Their acceptance was aided by the decline in the number of immigrants from Ireland.<sup>40</sup> In the late 1830's Catholics did not appear to be threatening the religious balance in Upper Canada.

When the tide of immigration began to flow again in the 1840's, the Vatican recognized the increasing needs and the potential of the new commercial centres west of Kingston with the creation of the Diocese of Toronto in 1842.<sup>41</sup> Michael Power, of Irish descent from Nova Scotia, was appointed the first bishop. During his episcopate and

---

weaken the Church in Canada. Father O'Grady was removed from the parish and he eventually left the Church.

<sup>40</sup>Port arrivals at Quebec from Ireland were only 1,456 in 1838 and 5,113 in 1839, compared with 28,204 in 1832 and 19,206 in 1834. See Cowan, British Immigration, Appendix B, Table II, 289.

<sup>41</sup>The original boundary of the Diocese of Toronto was defined as "West of Newcastle, from Lake Ontario to Lake Muskoka; from thence by a line directed North-west through Lakes Moon and Muskoka to Western branch of Two Rivers, emptying into the Ottawa; All West of that, including Lake Superior Districts". From H. F. McIntosh, "The Life and Times of Bishop Power", in Teeffy, ed., Jubilee History, 112, footnote.

that of his successors, priority was given to the establishment of Catholic educational and charitable institutions which could become focal points of service and inspiration for the scattered settlements of Catholics in his large diocese. At the same time, Bishop Power was particularly concerned about the large numbers who were clustering in the metropolitan Toronto area. Before his death from typhus in 1847, he had arranged for a teaching order of nuns to open a school for the children of the 3,000 Catholics who now lived in Toronto.<sup>42</sup> Although it was Bishop Power who began the policy of separate education for Catholic children, he had been able to maintain good relations with the non-Catholic community and the mutual acceptance of Protestant and Catholic seemed to be established. A few Protestants had even contributed to the building of St. Michael's Cathedral!

The appointment in May 1850, of the second Bishop of Toronto, the aggressive and determined Armand de Charbonnel, coincided with the sudden increase in the

---

<sup>42</sup>This Order was The Ladies of Loretto (The Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary), founded in 1609. They were specialists in the education of young ladies in the nineteenth century, and on arrival in Canada founded schools for girls throughout the Diocese and later expanded to the United States.

Catholic population.<sup>43</sup> The Bishop was determined that the government must now recognize the demands of Catholics for state-funded Separate Schools.<sup>44</sup> His political lobbying roused the Orange Order to vigorous protests and there were many vituperative exchanges between the respective supporters of the Public and Separate Schools. The passage of the Educational Act of 1855 recognizing Catholic claims increased the cleavage which was widening between the Protestant and Catholic communities during the 1850's.<sup>45</sup> Henceforth the Catholic hierarchy were able legitimately to press their claims on educational funds, but in so doing they heightened the isolation of the Catholic population.

Charbonnel's successors, John Joseph Lynch (1860-1889), John Walsh (1889-1898), Denis O'Connor (1898-1900)

---

<sup>43</sup> Bishop Armand de Charbonnel was a member of the French nobility who arrived from France in 1850 to take over a See left vacant by Bishop Power's death in 1847. He always felt estranged and handicapped by his inability to master the English language and by his European birth. He resigned his See in 1859 after Bishop Lynch had been appointed his Auxiliary and retired to a monastery in France where he lived as a Capuchin until his death in 1889. A man of some wealth, Bishop Charbonnel used his own funds to carry the Diocese of Toronto in the desperate days following the Famine migration.

<sup>44</sup> H. H. Walsh, The Christian Church in Canada (Toronto, 1956), 188.

<sup>45</sup> Barrie Desmond Dyster, "Toronto 1840-1860: Making it in a British Protestant Town" (Ph.D. dissertation, Department of History, University of Toronto, 1970),

and Fergus Patrick McEvay (1908-1912) continued the traditional "Irish succession" to the episcopacy and also made the extension of Catholic educational rights and facilities their first priority. Catholics responded loyally to their leadership. Although they were poor, they contributed sufficient funds to found more than seventy new parishes and enrolled their children in the new Separate Schools.

The steady increase in the Catholic population between 1850 and 1913 was reflected in the institutional growth of the church as large unwieldy dioceses were divided and subdivided. London Diocese, encompassing nine counties of south-western Ontario, Elgin, Essex, Huron, Kent, Lambton, Middlesex, Norfolk, Oxford and Perth, was created in 1855. Hamilton Diocese was created in 1856 and included eight counties, Brant, Bruce, Grey, Haldimand, Halton, Waterloo, Wellington and Wentworth. This left the original Toronto Diocese with jurisdiction over the city of Toronto and seven counties, Dufferin, Lincoln, Ontario, Peel, Simcoe, Welland and York. In 1870, these three Dioceses became the first English-speaking Ecclesiastical Province in central Canada, and Toronto was designated the Archdiocese.<sup>46</sup> It

---

Chapter vii, 439-458. Mr. Dyster gives a lively account of the deterioration in Protestant-Catholic relations during the 1850's in Toronto.

<sup>46</sup>Dates and Diocesan boundaries from The Catholic

should be noted that, despite the establishment of the Province, the Catholic Church in Canada at this time was decentralized. Each Bishop or Archbishop was not only the supreme spiritual leader in his Diocese, but he made all decisions pertaining to the physical fabric of the diocese. There was no central authority or conference which officially decreed or enforced a common social or ecclesiastical policy. The hierarchy interpreted papal pronouncements as faithfully as they could within the limits of their own cultural and financial circumstances. Although an archbishop had no jurisdictional power outside his own archdiocese, as titular head of the Province and the ranking member of the hierarchy in the area, appointed by the Pope, he could wield much influence if he were capable and aggressive.

The Archdiocese of Toronto became the most important in English-speaking Canada. It contained the largest number of Catholics, and thus reflected not only the overall growth of the Catholic population, but also the increasing urbanization of Ontario. The Irish in the city became the labour

---

Directory (Milwaukee, 1901), and Le Canada Ecclésiastique (Montréal, 1911, 1913).



force of the new industries; the church in turn strove to provide facilities to meet their needs in this burgeoning commercial and industrial centre. The following brief summary illustrates the extent of the investment in personnel and funds by the Church in the diocese between 1852 and 1913.

In 1852, with 706 students enrolled in the new Separate School system in the city of Toronto, Bishop Charbonnel brought two additional teaching orders into the Diocese.<sup>47</sup> By 1901 eight religious orders were in charge of the twenty-seven parochial schools in the Diocese attended by 6,500 Catholic students. In addition these orders staffed seven private academies, two orphan asylums, a Boys Home, an industrial school, a hospital, and a college (St. Michael's).

By 1913 the number of parochial schools had increased to thirty-nine with 7,121 students; eight academies had an enrollment of 1,368. The Catholic population by 1913 had reached 70,000; they supported ninety-five churches staffed by 109 clergy.<sup>48</sup>

---

<sup>47</sup>John R. Teefy, "Bishop Armand de Charbonnel, 1850-1859", in Teefy, ed., Jubilee History, 149.

<sup>48</sup>The Catholic Directory, 1901, 1913, and Le Canada Ecclésiastique, 1901, 1913.

This mutual suspicion was sustained by a succession of political incidents in which religious differences became the principal issue. The Orange Order had exploded in wrath when one of its members, Thomas Scott was executed by the government of Louis Riel in 1870. The Ontario and the Manitoba lodges felt that it was the Conservative government's reliance on the Catholic vote that made them reluctant to punish the rebels. When the second rebellion occurred in 1885, they demanded that Riel be executed as a traitor.

The Jesuits' Estates Act of 1889, although applicable only in Quebec and within the constitutional right of the Quebec legislature, became a fuse which fired an anti-Catholic demonstration in Toronto.<sup>50</sup> At a public protest meeting, 3,000 Toronto Protestants lamented the intrusion of the papacy into Canadian political affairs.

Dissatisfaction over the government's refusal to disallow the Jesuits' Estates Act led to the most extreme

---

at once become null and void . . . and . . . my said . . . estate shall at once . . . go to my said nephew". Records of the Surrogate Court, Series 6-1-A. Will no. 925, Mf G.S. Ont. 1 Peel, 571. Thanks to Herbert Mays, M.A., a former colleague at McMaster, for these references.

<sup>50</sup>Senior, Orangeism, 79. D'Alton McCarthy, an Orangeman and a Conservative M.P. from Orillia, took the Protestant opposition into the Federal House. He led the "noble thirteen" who, although they voted against the government, were received as heroes by the Toronto crowds.

This remarkable growth had been achieved under the leadership of a hierarchy whose members frequently reminded Catholics that absolute loyalty to Catholic principles, education and their community was necessary to preserve the faith. They encouraged withdrawal into a closely knit community in which Catholic schools, temperance societies, newspapers, and benevolent and social organizations would lessen the contact of the laity with the Protestant population.

In reaction, Protestants considered this defensive clannishness to be the product of a clerical conspiracy to mobilize the political potential of the Catholic Church. This hostility, stimulated by the militants on both sides, made denominational differences a constant presence in the political and social life of nineteenth and early twentieth century Ontario. It affected the fortunes of the national political parties but it also reached down into individual families in small communities.<sup>49</sup>

---

<sup>49</sup>Some wills revealed the penalties inflicted on those who married Catholics without family consent. In 1864, John Johnson of York County willed his land to his son Alex but "in no event shall he get or inherit said place if he is not brought up and profess the Protestant faith . . . and if . . . he adheres to or in any way professes the Papal creed or Religion then the bequest shall be null and void", (P.A.O. York County Register Surrogate Court, 13:590). John Burgess, Peel County, in 1883 gave all his personal and real estate to his niece Jane McDougall Burgess. If she married a Roman Catholic "the foregoing . . . shall

expressions of Ontario anti-Catholicism in the nineteenth century in the activities of the Protestant Protective Association. This secret anti-Catholic society was imported from the United States in the early 1890's, years in which economic recession and a reappraisal by many Canadians of Canada's future as a nation, fostered religious anti-pathies.<sup>51</sup> This militant Protestant association asserted that Catholics, who owed allegiance to a "foreign potentate" and who were separated from Canadian society because they clung exclusively to their own institutions, were resisting assimilation into British North America. Canada would be strengthened by the elimination of Catholic influence and to this end they urged the boycott of Catholic-owned businesses and the defeat of Catholic political candidates. Although it was denounced by the Governor-General for false, bigoted and divisive propaganda, the P.P.A. wielded much power for about six years. The membership was mostly recruited in London and Toronto where they claimed that three thousand were enrolled in twenty lodges.<sup>52</sup> Fourteen of its members were elected to the provincial legislature; by 1894 the mayors of Brantford, London, Hamilton, Chatham,

---

<sup>51</sup>Carl Berger, The Sense of Power (Toronto, 1970), 134.

<sup>52</sup>James T. Watt, "Anti-Catholic Nativism in Canada, the Protestant Protective Association", Canadian Historical Review 48 (1967):50.

Kincardine and Petrolia were all P.P.A. members.<sup>53</sup> The Association declined in numbers and influence after 1896 but a residue of mutual bitterness and suspicion lingered and continued to afflict Ontario society for many years.

Education was the focal point of Protestant suspicion and Catholic resistance. Catholics felt that one of the Church's most important functions was to design and supervise the education of Catholic children. To be exposed to Catholic truth at all times was vital to the child's spiritual progress and the preservation of the faith. To this end, the Church's educational rights had been safeguarded in Ontario and Quebec in 1867 when the provinces were given control over education. Following Confederation, Archbishop Lynch led the Ontario hierarchy in their demand that the rights which had been granted Catholics in Canada West under the pre-Confederation Acts of 1855 and 1863, must now be continued and expanded by the new Province of Ontario.

In contrast, most Protestants shared the views expressed by Egerton Ryerson, who, although he believed in

---

<sup>53</sup>Watt, "Anti-Catholic", 53.

religious instruction in the schools, felt that a Separate School system would result in inferior Catholic schools. He was convinced that the future prosperity of the country depended on an efficient school system which would produce industrious, law-abiding citizens. He was not convinced that the Separate Schools could achieve these results because they would be attended by the children of Irish Catholic immigrants who, by being separated from "intellectual competition and friendships with the children of the land", would then "grow up in the idleness not to say mendacity and vices of their forefathers".<sup>54</sup>

The Orange Order was a vigorous opponent of Separate Schools for political as well as educational reasons. The Order had been particularly indignant in the 1850's, when Bishop Farrell of Hamilton and Bishop Charbonnel of Toronto had urged Catholics to vote for candidates who would guarantee their support for Separate Schools. Moreover, they recalled that these two prelates had arranged to have the Quebec Catholics cast the supporting votes necessary to secure the passage of the Separate School Bill of 1855.<sup>55</sup>

---

<sup>54</sup>Egerton Ryerson, Annual Report, 1857, 24, quoted in Susan E. Houston, "Politics, Schools and Social Change in Upper Canada", Canadian Historical Review, 53 (1972), 264.

<sup>55</sup>A. P. Monahan, "Bishop Farrell of Hamilton as a Participant in the Political Life of His Day", Canadian Catholic Historical Sessions 27 (1960):26-27.

After 1867, and for the next two decades, the anger of the Orangemen was fueled by the outspoken Archbishop Lynch in Toronto who, when urging Catholics to support their own schools, warned that "parents sin grievously who prefer a non-religious education for their children. Here in Toronto where bigotry is still too rampant, the atmosphere of the non-Catholic school is dangerous to children".<sup>56</sup> Orangemen were even more concerned when the Catholic populace responded so loyally that by 1886 eighteen out of forty-eight Toronto schools were under Separate School jurisdiction.<sup>57</sup>

In the next decade D'Alton McCarthy, determined to thwart further Catholic educational expansion, thrust this issue into federal politics by forming the Equal Rights Association to provide organized opposition to the extension of French and Catholic education in Manitoba. After the settlement of 1896, the Association continued to be watchful and waged a successful campaign preventing the extension of Separate Schools to the new provinces of Alberta and

---

<sup>56</sup>G. de T. Glazebrook, The Story of Toronto (Toronto, 1971), 166.

<sup>57</sup>Glazebrook, Story, 167.

Saskatchewan.<sup>58</sup>

Protestant hostility to Catholic educational independence was only tempered by a belief that they could control the extent of Catholic influence in Ontario through their economic monopoly as the managers and entrepreneurs of the province. In 1913 the great majority of the Irish Catholic population still belonged to the labouring classes and there they would remain as long as the majority did not receive any education extending beyond that offered by the Catholic elementary schools. Since the hierarchy had made the elementary Separate School their first priority, very little secondary schooling was available for Catholics. When Catholic institutions of higher learning were founded, the curriculum was designed to serve the admission requirements of the seminaries in Quebec or Rome and not the educational needs of the secular Catholic community.<sup>59</sup> Moreover, although St. Michael's College had been established in 1852 and became affiliated with the University of Toronto in 1881, the academic preparation of the students for

---

<sup>58</sup>Walsh, Christian Church, 268-69.

<sup>59</sup>Laurence K. Shook, Catholic Post-Secondary Education in English-Speaking Canada (Toronto, 1971), 9.



studies in the seminary had declined so that by 1900, in McCorkell's words:

The academic standard was low . . . by 1904 it was in a state of virtual stagnation. It was merely a ghetto of Catholic boys, mostly American, in a growing Canadian city with which it had little or no contact. . . . It could not provide adequately for high school education.<sup>60</sup>

He stresses that this situation was not remedied with new courses and higher standards until the appointment of Father Henry Carr, an excellent Basilian educator, to the staff, and the establishment of a Faculty of Arts in 1910.

Their poverty and the uncertainty of their economic situation was not the only reason why so few Catholics sought professional training in public schools. Equally inhibiting was their aversion to a secular-controlled education. It was feared that such exposure could jeopardize their faith, the most precious inheritance which they could bequeath to their children. This conviction was a legacy of their experiences in Ireland, where the English government's suppression of the Catholic schools had been one of the devices used in the attempt to eradicate Catholicism. The clergy kept the memory of this alive by sermons which

---

<sup>60</sup> Edmund J. McCorkell, Henry Carr -- Revolutionary (Toronto, 1969), 6, 15-16.

frequently recalled the heroic and simple faith that had sustained the Irish in the homeland and in the isolated Canadian frontier settlements. They alluded frequently to their poverty which had been a shield against the skepticism, modernism and heresy that continually tempted Catholics who mingled with those outside the faith. Typical sentiments were expressed by Archbishop Lynch in his St. Patrick's Day Pastoral of 1875. He extolled the role of the Irish Catholics in Canada who were called to witness their faith under difficult circumstances. He lauded the poor servant girl and the lone homesteader, noting that the Catholic

is an object of suspicion, and even of dread. He does not attend camp meetings or places of worship in which he does not believe. He tries to instruct his children in the prayers of the true faith.<sup>61</sup>

With the ordeals of the frontier behind them, the Archbishop pleaded that they not slacken their zeal:

We exhort Irish Catholic parents to procure for their children a Christian Catholic education. In mixed schools, both faith and morals are in great danger. . . . What will it profit you or them if you gain the riches of the world and lose Heaven.<sup>62</sup>

---

<sup>61</sup>H. C. McKeown, The Life and Labours of Most Rev. John Joseph Lynch D.D. (Montreal and Toronto, 1886), 232.

<sup>62</sup>McKeown, Life, 243.

Because they lacked both social status and education, the Catholic laity continued in Canada, as they had in Ireland, to rely on the clergy's leadership in religious and secular affairs. Until the development of the Catholic Action movement, the laity did not obtain positions of responsibility in the parish or the diocese.<sup>63</sup> Few Catholics ventured to take leading parts in local affairs (except on Separate School Boards), unless Catholic religious and educational values were threatened. In contrast, the organizing, financial and administrative talents of many Protestant civic leaders were first recognized and used in their local churches. This was particularly effective in the Baptist, Congregationalist, Presbyterian, and Methodist denominations whose polities included laymen on Church administrative boards. It provided valuable experience for those seeking public financial and political responsibilities.

The leadership supplied by the Catholic clergy continued to be patterned on the defensive posture which had

---

<sup>63</sup>In Toronto even by 1913, only one Catholic Institution was listed as lay administered. This was Rosary Hall, a small boarding house for Catholic business girls.

served the Church so well in the Irish homeland and in the early struggles in Canada. Like the laity, their educational opportunities in Canada were limited; secular clergy could not be trained in Ontario until the establishment of St. Augustine's Seminary (Scarborough) in 1912. Young men were sent to the Grand Seminary in Montreal or to Irish, Roman, French or Spanish seminaries. It was thus difficult for them to maintain contact with local Canadian parishes or with Canadian social and economic conditions during their formative years as priests.

Compounding the isolation of the English-speaking Catholic community in Ontario was the increasing division between the Ontario and Quebec hierarchies over the practical application of Catholic social and educational principles. Their mutual agreement with the precepts expressed by the First Vatican Council and in the Papal Encyclicals did not result in similar Catholic practices or regulations in the French-Canadian and English Catholic dioceses. These were determined by the respective roles played by the Church in Quebec and Ontario. In Quebec, the Church by the late nineteenth century had become so identified with the preservation of the French-Canadian identity that its immersion in Quebec secular affairs was accepted as intrinsic to this role. The defensive posture of the Church in Ontario, and the anti-Catholicism of organizations such as the Orange

Order, made active participation in secular affairs difficult, particularly in the sensitive Archdiocese of Toronto.

Compounding these differences before 1913 were the personal rivalries of the two provincial hierarchies. These were evident as early as 1868 when the ecclesiastical provinces of Ontario and Quebec each claimed jurisdiction over the Diocese of Ottawa. The territorial and cultural rivalry was only settled by the Vatican decree of 1886 which made Ottawa a separate Archdiocese straddling the Ontario-Quebec boundary.<sup>64</sup>

Educational policy was the occasion of several public and bitter quarrels which erupted between English and French-speaking Catholics between 1900 and 1917. For instance, in 1901 they disputed over the language to be used in instruction at the University of Ottawa.<sup>65</sup> Again, in 1906, the French and English factions on the Ottawa Separate School Board squabbled over the division of funds between the English and French Separate Schools. These disputes, al-

---

<sup>64</sup>Robert R. Choquette, "Linguistic and Ethnic Factors in the French-Irish Catholic Relations in Ontario", Canadian Catholic Historical Association Study Sessions 39 (1972): 36-37.

<sup>65</sup>Choquette, "Linguistic", 37.

though embarrassing, were purely Catholic matters which were resolved by the hierarchies.

The 1910 Regulation of the Ontario Government on the certification of the Religious as teachers in Separate Schools was the occasion of a public and more serious breach between the two language groups. Bishop Fallon of London felt that he was speaking for most English-speaking Catholics when he repudiated the demands of the French for French Catholic Separate Schools in his diocese. He justified this opposition by contending that opportunities for improved relations with the Provincial government and the educational rights of English Catholics were being impaired by French Canadians who put their culture before their faith. He also pointed out that French schools would handicap these Catholics by further excluding them from full participation in Ontario's economic life.<sup>66</sup> The intransigent position of the two Catholic groups was one factor which influenced the Ontario Government to appoint the Merchant Commission in 1910 and to issue Regulation

---

<sup>66</sup>Choquette, "Linguistic", 38-39. See also John K. A. Farrell, "The History of the Roman Catholic Church in London" (M.A. dissertation, Department of History, University of Western Ontario, 1949), 134-47.

Seventeen in 1912.<sup>67</sup> The hostility of the two provincial hierarchies continued and the linguistic and cultural division was regarded as so destructive to the Church's welfare that the Papacy intervened in 1916 with a letter pleading for "peace and understanding" between the two contending cultural divisions of the Canadian Church.<sup>68</sup>

A less publicized, but ultimately more divisive issue than education, between these two Catholic communities was labour organization. Discord had surfaced as early as 1884 when Cardinal Taschereau condemned Catholics who joined an American union, The Knights of Labor, then organizing in Quebec and Ontario. His condemnation was based first

---

<sup>67</sup> Regulation 17, was part of a new circular of instructions on the bilingual schools issued in June 1912, by the Ontario Department of Education. The controversy centred on Section 3 which stated, "Where necessary in the case of French-speaking pupils, French may be used as the language of instruction and communication, but such use of French shall not be continued beyond Form I. . . . In the case of French-speaking pupils who are unable to speak the English language well enough for the purposes of instruction and communication . . . as soon as the pupil enters the school he shall begin the study and use of the English language (b) as soon as the pupil has acquired sufficient facility in . . . English . . . he shall take up in that language the course of study as prescribed for the Public and Separate Schools". Report of the Minister of Education, 1912 (Toronto, 1913), 211-13.

<sup>68</sup> Franklin A. Walker, Catholic Education and Politics in Ontario (Toronto, 1964), 242. For an account of the political decisions made by the Ontario governments in the Bilingual Schools issue see Marilyn Barber, "The Ontario Bilingual Schools Issue: Sources of Conflict", in C.H.R. 47 (1966):227-248; and Margaret Prang, "Clerics, Politicians

on the assumption that the rituals and secrecy of its meetings made it a lodge, a secret secular organization which was forbidden to Catholics. Even after the rituals and religious references were expunged from its constitution, he continued to condemn it on the grounds that it was a "socialist fraternity" whose demands for "a living family wage" were impractical and damaging to the economic order.<sup>69</sup>

The reaction of the Ontario hierarchy, especially the influential Archbishop Lynch, was much more sympathetic to the labour unions and very supportive of The Knights of Labour. As early as 1873 he had declared that labour needed

a society for self-protection . . . necessary in these days of money monopolies.

Nearly all the foundries in Toronto are worked under the rules of the Moulders' Unions. I was glad to see a way of securing for our people, many of whom work in these factories, the daily bread of both soul and body.<sup>70</sup>

---

and the Bilingual Schools Issue in Ontario 1910-1917", in C.H.R. 41 (1960):281-307.

<sup>69</sup>Henry J. Browne, The Catholic Church and the Knights of Labor (Washington, 1949), 254.

<sup>70</sup>Archives of the Archdiocese of Toronto, Archbishop Lynch to J. F. Wagner, Toronto, April 30, 1873, to Robert Pearson, representatives of the locomotive engineers, quoted in Browne, Knights, 17, footnote 55.



After the Taschereau condemnation, Archbishop Lynch reassured two Knights of Labour executives that he did not object to the union and urged them to continue to organize workers:

The Church will mind its own business; I am able to attend to it in Ontario without going to Rome on this matter . . . I am with you heart and soul in the work which you are at. God bless you.<sup>71</sup>

Lynch agreed with Cardinal Gibbons of Baltimore who was dismayed by the suspicion and lack of sympathy for the working man expressed by Taschereau's words against the union. Gibbons warned in 1886 that if the Church opposed this attempt to organize the workers it would be identified as the protector of the rich.<sup>72</sup>

In 1887 Archbishop Lynch joined Cardinal Manning<sup>73</sup> of England and Cardinal Gibbons in the vigorous campaign which eventually persuaded the Vatican to overrule Cardinal Taschereau's condemnation of the Knights of Labour. By his

<sup>71</sup>P. P. O'Donoghue to Powderly, Toronto, October 3, 1886, quoted in Browne, Knights, 201, footnote 55.

<sup>72</sup>Archbishop Lynch, although born and ordained in Ireland had worked in Texas and New York from 1846 to 1858. He always maintained close and cordial relations with the American dioceses. "He was from the outset and remained . . . the outstanding but unpublicized friend of labour unions in the hierarchies of both Canada and the United States", Browne, Knights, 17.

<sup>73</sup>On April 30, 1887 Cardinal Manning wrote in Tablet (published in England by the Jesuits) that "The Knights of

support of the union, Lynch aligned the Ontario Catholic hierarchy for years to come with the British and American prelates who accepted in principle the secular and religiously neutral labour union.

Although the Quebec bishops continued to be hostile to American unions, there was increasing concern by 1900 in both the Ontario and Quebec dioceses that injustices were being inflicted on the working classes by uncontrolled capitalism. The hierarchies' differences on the Knights of Labor were, to a certain extent, an illustration of the manner in which their respective historical experiences and their current position in society shaped their attitudes. Quebec prelates developed a policy which assumed that the moral authority of the Church extended to the supervision of those secular organizations whose actions could lead to moral error. Their belief that, for Catholics, social justice must be coupled with moral security, led the Quebec hierarchy to sponsor the formation of Catholic unions open only to Catholic workers. These unions were obliged to accept a chaplain appointed by the bishop with authority to veto decisions not in accord with Catholic doctrine or

---

Labor and the English trade unions represent the right of labor and the rights of association for its defence". Quoted in Browne, Knights, 270.

practice.<sup>74</sup>

In Ontario, the bishops accepted a much more limited role for the Church in secular societies. Catholics were only to avoid affiliation with secular organizations whose avowed policies and actions could be deemed morally questionable. In this the bishops followed the practice of the Church in the United States and England where the religious neutrality of political parties and unions was accepted. As Catholic social doctrine continued to develop in the twentieth century, the differences in its application would become even more apparent.

By 1913 the Catholic Church had made great progress in Ontario and it had acquired distinctive characteristics. It had retained so successfully the loyalty of the Catholic immigrants that in both the clergy and the laity it was largely an Irish-Canadian church. Although they were poor, the Irish had supported the founding of Catholic institutions for education, worship and charitable relief on a broad scale. But Catholics were not yet wholly at ease in Protestant Ontario, for although they had social and

---

<sup>74</sup>Frank Isbester, "A History of the National Catholic Labor Unions in Canada; 1901-1965" (Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 1968). This thesis analyzes the rise and eclipse of the Catholic Union movement in Quebec and draws attention to the veto powers held by episcopally appointed chaplains in the unions.

religious cohesiveness, they were, as one Catholic commentator notes, still "deeply immersed in the ghetto complex"<sup>75</sup> which had been so marked in England and even in Ireland. This mentality at one time did reflect a real social reality and it had been a natural response to the overt hostility shown by the English Protestants who distrusted them as Catholic poor. In fact, in large measure, this clannishness had helped to preserve their Catholic identity. However, the usefulness of this stance was coming to an end. Although the laity were improving their economic position as the Canadian economy expanded, the majority were still of lower social status, and few of them had become educated for entry to the professions. But, the growing complexity of Canadian society was making it increasingly difficult for Catholics to rely solely on the clergy for religious and intellectual leadership. Equally, the simplistic social ideas of clergy and laity were becoming obsolete.

The appointment of a new archbishop in 1912 in Toronto coincided with the end of an economic and political era for Canada. One of Archbishop McNeil's main tasks would be to introduce new social perspectives and personnel adapted to the needs of a rapidly changing community.

---

<sup>75</sup>Shook, Catholic Education, 7.

### CHAPTER 3

#### ARCHBISHOP NEIL McNEIL AND CATHOLIC SOCIAL THOUGHT

In contrast to the social passivity and civic insularity of Toronto's Catholic population, the Protestants were politically and socially self confident. Nothing illustrates the dramatic differences in the mood and influence of the two communities more effectively than the comparison between the Toronto press coverage of the Orange Parade of 1912 and their reports of the appointment and arrival of the new Roman Catholic Archbishop.

The Parade, held as usual on July 12, was declared by all the papers to be the most impressive and successful ever held. In fulsome prose they described the day's activities; they noted that the procession of six thousand marchers and fifty-one bands represented eighty-one lodges in Toronto and that their line of march extended for four and one half miles along the city streets. The Globe declared that the city police had directed the crowds so efficiently that tram-car service was not seriously interrupted and there was only one minor skirmish in the crowd.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>The Globe, July 13, 1912.

Excerpts were quoted from the addresses given by the civic and lodge notables to the crowd, estimated at over 25,000, rallied at Exhibition Park. The people were reminded that Orangemen guarded the unity of Canada, a nation which had been established under a Protestant monarchy. They were urged to maintain constant vigilance against all groups who would erode this unity and weaken the Protestant position by weaning citizens away from their primary loyalty to the British crown. Particularly dangerous were foreign religious creeds which demanded loyalty to a foreign potentate, the Pope. For example, Canon Dixon warned, "Rome is Rome and never would be anything but Rome". City Controller Horatio C. Hocken advised his hearers to "open your eyes to what is going on in this country at the present time. . . . Make Protestantism your politics". Acting Mayor Thomas Church exhorted Orangemen to maintain their stand for "one school, one language, one navy, one King and one Empire".<sup>2</sup>

In contrast, short and restrained statements in the Toronto press the following week announced that Neil McNeil, Archbishop of Vancouver, had been appointed Archbishop of Toronto. This was news of particular importance to the

---

<sup>2</sup>The Daily Mail and Empire, July 13, 1912.

65,000 Roman Catholics in the city as the See had been vacant for thirteen months following the death of Archbishop McEvay. The Toronto Telegram off-handedly observed that

Archbishop McNeil will have no easy task because there is a lot of work to be done and many important changes will follow his arrival. . . . He does not have the reputation of being a brilliant pulpit orator . . . he had reached his present exalted position through hard work, energy, perseverance and study . . . he is regarded as a level-headed, capable common-sense man.<sup>3</sup>

Unlike the recent Orange displays, the ceremonial surrounding the arrival and installation of the new archbishop was restrained and unpretentious. On December 20, 1912, The Globe noted tersely that the new Roman Catholic Archbishop had arrived the night before, had spent the night on the train, and would be escorted by a few of his local clergy to the Episcopal Palace that morning. His installation would take place the next day and no special invitations were being issued for the ceremony. The Cathedral would be open to all.

The omission of a public reception at the train is said to have caused Neil McNeil to ask about the absence of the Catholic laity who customarily turned out to welcome the

---

<sup>3</sup>The Toronto Telegram, July 17, 1912.

arrival of their new prelates. He was assured that he was welcome in Toronto, but that such open displays of the Catholic presence were not considered very prudent at present, as they were not well received by the strong Orange faction in the city. The new Archbishop declared that before he died he would see the traffic in Toronto stopped by a Catholic procession filling the streets.<sup>4</sup>

McNeil's awareness that changes in the English-speaking Catholic Church in Canada were long overdue was the driving force behind many of his actions during the next twenty-two years. Changes would only come slowly because he would be limited by the inherent conservatism of the Catholic community and circumstances outside the church which inevitably impinged upon its ability to adopt new policies and attitudes. In his inaugural address he noted that his own and other recent appointments in Canada were signs that the Vatican was preparing for some necessary changes in the Church in Canada. He lamented the in-

---

<sup>4</sup>Interview with Father James McGivern, S.J., grand-nephew of Archbishop McNeil and Archivist of the Archdiocese of Toronto, on June 6, 1973. See also The Daily Mail and Empire, December 21, 1912.



tellectual insularity within the Church. "We must enlarge our hearts and widen our horizons. The people of this church in Canada need to know each other better".<sup>5</sup> He referred to the defensive attitude of the Catholics, which in the past had separated them from the Canadian community outside the Church.

If we are wanting in Catholic charity we can make it seem that we had no part in the upbuilding of this great nation, as if we were innately selfish, looking after local and small issues. If we are apostolic in our faith and practice we can Christianize and settle the conflicts between capital and labour and such problems.<sup>6</sup>

Archbishop McNeil's family background, education and experience in the Church had prepared him for the role of organizer, initiator and conciliator in this, the largest and most influential of the English dioceses in Canada. He was born in 1851 in Hillsboro, Cape Breton, one of eleven children of the local blacksmith, Malcolm McNeil. His great grandfather Neil McNeil had emigrated from the Hebrides in 1802 to farm in Nova Scotia. His mother, Ellen Meagher, was a local girl of Irish descent.

---

<sup>5</sup>George Boyle, Pioneer in Purple (Montreal, 1951), 127.

<sup>7</sup>Boyle, Pioneer, 127.

The Scottish traditions and culture were treasured and cultivated in the small community. Education was particularly respected, and families of very modest means, such as the McNeils, sacrificed to enable their children to remain in school if they showed academic promise. Thus, following his graduation from the local high school, Neil McNeil entered St. Francis Xavier College in 1869.<sup>7</sup> He was then sent by his Bishop, John Cameron, to the Propaganda College in Rome where the most promising candidates for the priesthood in his diocese were enrolled. During his six years of study in Europe, he earned doctorates in philosophy and theology and studied mathematics for a year at the University of Marseilles.

Following his ordination in Rome he returned to Nova Scotia, where in 1879, at the age of twenty-eight, he was appointed to the staff of St. Francis Xavier. Four years later he was made Rector. In the following six years he was involved in activities and disputes which ultimately settled the direction of his career.

He was convinced that a strong Catholic press could be the means of drawing the Catholic community in the

---

<sup>7</sup>St. Francis Xavier College, Antigonish, Nova Scotia, was founded in 1853 as a college for Seminarians. It received a university charter and a provincial grant in 1866. See Shook, Catholic Post-Secondary Education, 80.

Maritimes together to be an effective influence in public and religious affairs. Interested in journalism and writing, he became editor of the local Antigonish weekly, The Aurora (circulation 2,500). During his four years with the paper, in addition to printing local and church news he exposed some of the vicious economic practices by which the fish merchants victimized the local fishermen.

His next venture in journalism was as editor of the local Catholic news and devotional paper, The Casket. McNeil felt that the Catholic press must be politically unaffiliated, and that all party policies should be scrutinized objectively. But his bishop was an ardent Tory and wanted him to publish a politically biased article in favour of the party. Dr. McNeil refused to publish it unless the opposition could reply in the paper. Not long after, the Bishop removed him from both the editorship and from his position as Rector of the University.<sup>8</sup> He was sent to the small bilingual (French-English) community of West Arichat on Cape Breton as the parish priest; at forty-one years of age it was his first pastorate. One of his students who became a Presbyterian minister noted later:

---

<sup>8</sup> Interview, Father James McGivern, S.J., June 6, 1973, Toronto. See also Boyle, Pioneer, 38.

It seemed to me such a pity to bury the brilliant professor in such an obscure corner, I wrote to him to some such effect, but in his reply there was no word of complaint. His letter revealed a calm confidence that things would work out all right.<sup>9</sup>

Within four years the Vatican raised McNeil to the episcopate. His bishopric was the missionary diocese of the West Coast of Newfoundland where seven thousand Catholics were scattered in the Irish, French, Scottish and English settlements which were strung like beads on the wavering thread of the rough coastline. For fifteen years he supplied practical as well as spiritual leadership as funds were scanty and skilled labour a rarity. He organized and taught the local workmen to build new churches and schools from local materials. The Globe described his efforts with the approving words: "He had done wonderful work in Newfoundland with the means at hand in one of the poorest and least organized of the eastern dioceses".<sup>10</sup>

In 1910 he was transferred to Vancouver as Archbishop to the 35,000 Catholics in a diocese which included all of the province of British Columbia except Vancouver Island.

---

<sup>9</sup>Rev. F. W. Fraser, to George Boyle, February 2, 1932, quoted by Boyle in Pioneer, 37-38.

<sup>10</sup>The Globe, July 18, 1912.

H. H. Walsh has observed that the appointment at this particular time of one of the most capable of the English-speaking bishops to a diocese in the far west was not unrelated to Catholic anxiety over the rapid expansion of the Protestant churches in the West.<sup>11</sup> Protestant missionaries were particularly active among the European immigrants and a Presbyterian-Methodist Church union which was being bruited at this time would enable even more funds and staff to be used in the new missions. Although this was undoubtedly a factor in McNeil's appointment, it is more likely that it was mainly precipitated by pressures and needs within the Catholic organization itself as the Diocese of Vancouver urgently needed restructuring.

Since its founding in 1863, the Diocese had been organized and administered by a French missionary order, The Oblates of Mary Immaculate. These French priests worked mainly among the French and Indian populations in rural and frontier settlements. However, the majority of the very recent immigrants to British Columbia were English-speaking or were in communities where English would become their new language. Compounding the Church's problems was the social

---

<sup>11</sup>Walsh, Christian Church, 296. See also John Webster Grant, "The Reaction of Wasp Churches to Non-Wasp Immigrants", Canadian Society of Church History, Papers, 1968, 3.

disorientation which was typical of communities adjusting to sudden, uncontrolled industrial and business growth. The new cities were spawning slums.

During the two and a half years Archbishop McNeil worked in Vancouver he became known and respected as a vigorous builder of new Catholic and community facilities -- churches, schools, hospitals, welfare projects. At the same time he was fearless in pointing out the social and economic obligations which all citizens owed to the victims of rapid industrial and commercial progress. He bluntly pointed out the difficulties young women experienced in confronting loneliness in the cities especially when, because of their modest salaries "they could not get admittance to the best rooming and apartment houses". He spoke out at a business mens' luncheon further on this problem:

My message to you business men of Vancouver is this: Your responsibility to these girls is not discharged when you have agreed to pay in exchange for their services.<sup>12</sup>

He went on to urge that businessmen build decent residences for their employees, not as a charity, but as business ventures which would give a proper social environment to young people rootless in the city.

---

<sup>12</sup>Boyle, Pioneer, 122-23.

He repeatedly urged his Catholic flock to be more expansive in fulfilling their social responsibilities; they should not remain sequestered from the community outside the Church. The most effective way to express the Catholic faith was to participate in local and national affairs with good will and charity. Charity, he frequently pointed out, was not mere alms-giving, but was the generosity of spirit which accepted differences without rancour or condemnation.

In Vancouver he was particularly concerned that his clergy be aware of the difficulties confronting newly organized workers during periods of economic instability. On Labour Day 1912, he spoke out on the injustice of maintaining rigid wage agreements in a time of rising living costs.

The workman sometimes agrees to accept a stipulated wage for a period of years and the employers consider it intrinsically wrong for the men to become dissatisfied with this agreement. A bargain is a bargain, and should be carried out unless some higher obligation calls for a change.

The Archbishop drew attention to the directive given by Pope Leo XIII that the first obligation of an employer is to act justly, regardless of the legality of fixed agreements.

Employers are bound in justice to pay more than a stipulated wage if the amount agreed upon becomes insufficient to support the workman and

his family in reasonable and frugal comfort.<sup>13</sup>

In this same circular to his clergy, McNeil lauded the efforts of the workers to unionize "against the greed of irresponsible wealth". He was concerned that his clergy encourage them in their efforts to use their collective strength to improve their conditions without being condemned as anarchists. At the same time, he wanted Catholic workers in positions of power in the new labour movements to ensure that the union's political orientation was an acceptable one.

Our Catholic workmen should be encouraged to take an active interest in their respective unions. Often they pay their dues and allow others to officer and manage the unions without their co-operation or opposition when opposition was called for. If they took a more active part in the election of union officers they could help to keep their unions from becoming mere appendages to a Socialist political party.<sup>14</sup>

Views such as these along with McNeil's varied pastoral experiences prepared him better than any of his predecessors to deal with the multiplicity of problems awaiting him in Toronto. In addition, the moves from coast to coast had impressed on him the difficulty of maintaining

---

<sup>13</sup>Neil McNeil, Archbishop of Vancouver, Circular to the Clergy, August 28, 1912. Quoted by Jean Hulliger, L'Enseignement Social des Evêques Canadiens de 1891 à 1950 (Montreal, 1957), 248.

<sup>14</sup>McNeil, Circular, August 28, 1912, quoted in Hulliger, L'Enseignement, 136.



political unity in a country of such geographical immensity and social and political complexity. The malaise which he perceived as afflicting this society was not, he believed, the result of a short-term disequilibrium which could be solved by the victory of one or the other political party in Canada. He was hopeful, however, that the Catholic Church could contribute to the furtherance of unity and social harmony by acting as a bridge between the different cultures, languages and classes which composed the Canadian mosaic. But to achieve this end, all Catholics, clergy and laity must become better informed about the Church's policies, particularly those on social justice. Specifically, the Archbishop's long term goals in 1912 could be summed up as the promotion of education, both religious and social, and the greater participation of the Catholic community in the solution of contemporary problems.

McNeil was a product of the Church's new approach to the problems of the industrial age which was being worked out by leading clergy and laity during his student days in Rome. His references in his Vancouver speeches to Pope Leo XIII and the expectation expressed in his Toronto inaugural sermon that Catholics could contribute to the solution of the problems of capital and labour served notice that he intended to acquaint Catholics with the social teaching of the Church which up to this time had received

little attention in English-speaking Canada. In this sense, Archbishop McNeil symbolized the changes in the Catholic Church which were to come in Canada.

His ideas, though novel in the Canadian ecclesiastical context, were not all that uncommon in this period of critical change. A number of other prominent European and American Catholic intellectuals and prelates had responded similarly to the social crisis when it first emerged in Europe and the United States in the nineteenth century. In order to understand the policies and personalities which McNeil introduced into the Church in Toronto, the Church's early responses to this crisis in Europe and the contents of the Church's first definitive analysis of the ills of modern society, the Encyclical Rerum Novarum of 1891, must be examined.

During the period between 1800 and 1878 the Church was reluctant to confront the problems of industrial society because it was recuperating from the impact of the French Revolution, when it appeared that a whole society had rejected its doctrines and leadership. In order to re-establish its position, the Church had continued its political involvement in Western Europe and had in general adopted a highly conservative stance. It was particularly wary of innovative political and economic ideas and social movements. This trend culminated in the issuance of the Syllabus of Errors

in 1864 and in the affirmation of the doctrine of Papal Infallibility at the First Vatican Council in 1870.<sup>15</sup>

It had become evident, nevertheless, to the more farseeing Catholic leaders that, if the Church was to retain any influence in the new social and economic order that had emerged in the post-revolutionary period, it could not rely simply on the reiteration of traditional dogmas and attitudes. The first official manifestation of this more constructive and flexible approach was the publication of the Encyclical Rerum Novarum in 1891. This encyclical was a synthesis of writing and comment by many scholars and ecclesiastics concerned about the social role of the Church. For over thirty years they had pressed the papacy with ever increasing urgency as the industrialization of Europe proceeded, country by country to take its toll. Bishop Von Ketteler in Germany, Cardinal Mermillod in Switzerland, Count Albert de Mun in France, Father Matteo

---

<sup>15</sup>This is the interpretation of Vatican policies adopted by recent Catholic historians of this period. Karl Von Aretin, The Papacy and the Modern World (New York, 1970) is particularly critical of this development. E. E. Y. Hales, The Catholic Church in the Modern World (Garden City, 1960) gives a more tempered criticism. The Protestant historian, Kenneth Scott Latourette in Christianity in a Revolutionary Age, vol. I (New York, 1950) provides a searching analysis of the whole period setting the Vatican policies in a comprehensive social, economic, religious, and political framework.

Liberatore S.J. in Italy, Cardinal Gibbons in the United States, Cardinal Manning in England -- all expressed concern for the plight of the worker and alarm at the exclusion of humane and moral concern from economic theory and practice.<sup>16</sup> The election of the reform-oriented Bishop of Perugia to the papal throne in 1878 gave the Catholic Social Movement the leader it required. A most dramatic prelude to the next decade's social studies by papal-sponsored councils was the pilgrimage to Rome in October 1879 of over ten thousand industrial workers to plead for the pope's protection against "the injustice of the times".<sup>17</sup>

On May 15, 1891, the first papal pronouncement specifically concerned with modern social and economic problems was issued. Addressed especially to the Catholic episcopate, it began with the blunt declaration that revolutionary change and conflict had passed from politics into economic life and that the impact of these developments was particularly evident in the hostile relations

---

<sup>16</sup>The general development of Catholic social thought is well surveyed in Joseph N. Moody, ed., Church and Society (New York, 1953), and Melvin J. Williams, Catholic Social Thought (New York, 1950). See also A. R. Vidler, A Century of Social Catholicism (London, 1964).

<sup>17</sup>George Guitton, S.J., "The Background of Rerum Novarum", America (April 11, 1931):57. See also Clarence J. McCabe, "The Background of Rerum Novarum" (M.A. dissertation, Catholic University of America, 1941).

between employers and workers. The contrast between the great fortunes of a few and the poverty of the masses, the growth of mutual combinations among the workers, the general moral deterioration of society, were all signs of crisis. The workers had been left "isolated and defenseless against the callousness of employers and the greed of unrestrained competition". Their distress was increased by "rapacious Usury" and the monopoly of hiring and trade so that "a small number of the very rich have been able to lay upon the masses of the poor a yoke little better than slavery itself".<sup>18</sup>

The document then examined the Socialist solution to these injustices, but condemned it on several points. Its most serious error was that "working on the poor man's envy of the rich, it endeavoured to destroy private property",<sup>19</sup> a step that would ultimately be detrimental to

---

<sup>18</sup>Rerum Novarum, in Anne Fremantle, ed., The Social Teachings of the Church, official translation originally authorized by The Vatican Press (New York, 1963), Section 1, 21-22. The Encyclical has been divided into 45 sections and in the following quotations the section number will be indicated in brackets, followed by the page number in Fremantle. An alternate translation is available in Joseph Husslein, S.J., Social Wellsprings (Milwaukee, 1949), I. Rerum Novarum cited hereafter as R.N.

<sup>19</sup>R.N. (2), 22.

workers who yearned to acquire their own property, particularly land. Possession of private property was defended as a natural and divinely sanctioned right, essential to the creation of the family which was the foundation of all society. The rights of the family were declared anterior to the rights of the State; the State's first responsibility was to defend these rights. Although bound to help the family in extreme necessity, it must never usurp the role of the father, or set aside his primary right to bequeath an inheritance to his children. "Our first and most fundamental principle . . . when we undertake to alleviate the condition of the masses must be the inviolability of private property".<sup>20</sup>

The Socialists' second error was their omission of religious principles and their refusal to accept religious authority. Moreover, they were not dealing justly with all men in raising their expectations to the same level and ignoring the fact that in the world "as it really is" man is unequal in capabilities, fortune and status. Treating all men as if they had identical capabilities would result in injustice.<sup>21</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup>R.N. (12), 28.

<sup>21</sup>R.N. (14), 29.

Their third error was their belief in the inevitability of the class struggle. The Socialists' "assumption that rich and poor are intended by nature to live at war with one another" adversely affected the relations between employers and workers.<sup>22</sup> Divine law obliged the various parts of society to try to work together in harmony; capital and labour were mutually dependent and their duties to each other were founded on religious precepts. Thus wage earners were to be honest with their employers, carry out all 'agreements conscientiously and shun all violence against the employer's person and property. The employer must accept his employee as a fellow Christian, his labour as worthy of respect and entitling him to decent wages and working conditions. The terms of employment must leave him leisure to fulfill his religious and family obligations, must protect him from "corrupting and dangerous occasions", from "assignments beyond his strength or unsuited to his or her age or sex".<sup>23</sup> Employers were admonished that to take advantage of dire need in order to make a profit or to defraud workers of their wages "by force, fraud or usurious

---

<sup>22</sup>R.N. (15), 29.

<sup>23</sup>R.N. (16), 30.

dealings",<sup>24</sup> was condemned by divine law.

After reminding the prosperous of their Christian duty to be charitable to the poor, the Encyclical examined the role of the State in furthering social harmony and justice. Although wary of the dangers of the omniscient State, the Pope made it clear that he was more concerned about governments whose commitment to liberal political philosophy made them indifferent to current social problems. He noted that the State's first duty was "to make sure that the laws and institutions . . . be such as to produce of themselves public well-being and private prosperity . . . towards each and every class".<sup>25</sup> Since "it was only by the labour of the working class that States grow rich",<sup>26</sup> it was in the State's interest to design laws to protect their working populations. Moreover, as the working class comprised the majority of the people, justice demanded that they should not be exploited.<sup>27</sup> The poor, "who have no resources at all to fall back on have a claim to special

<sup>24</sup>R.N. (17, 30-31.

<sup>25</sup>R.N. (26), 38.

<sup>26</sup>R.N. (27), 40.

<sup>27</sup>In this section Pope Leo XIII is applying the concept, first enunciated by St. Thomas Aquinas, of distributive justice. This means that "offices, honours, rewards, be distributed among the community by its ruler proportionately



protection".<sup>28</sup>

The Encyclical then outlined four areas where the State was entitled to act to achieve this protection, provided that "the law must not undertake more, nor go further, than is required for the remedy of the evil or the removal of the danger".<sup>29</sup> First, it should act to safeguard private property and restrain violence; second, to forestall strikes by removing the causes of conflict between employer and employed; third, to protect workers' spiritual welfare and dignity; fourth, to ensure safe and healthy working conditions. The examples cited where protective laws were required were a potent exposé of contemporary working conditions: long hours of labour, compulsory work on Sundays and Holy Days, "men of greed who use human beings as mere instruments of money-making", grinding labour in the factories so excessive as "to stupify their minds and wear out their bodies", child labour which "blights the young promise of a child's powers and makes any real education

---

to the merits and capacity of the several members of the community". Philip Hughes, The Pope's New Order (London, 1943), 152, footnote 2.

<sup>28</sup>R.N. (29), 42.

<sup>29</sup>R.N. (29), 41.

impossible", women working in jobs and circumstances ill-suited to their strength and their vocations as mothers.<sup>30</sup>

The subject of wages was introduced with the enunciation of the principle that "the just living wage" was the only morally permissible minimum, i.e. "the remuneration must be enough to support the wage-earner in reasonable and frugal comfort".<sup>31</sup> Paying the worker less than this sum, even if he had agreed to accept less in his desperate need for employment, was sinfully exploitive. Since the worker must work to stay alive, his natural rights entitled him to legal guarantees by the State of a living wage. In effect, Leo XIII rejected the classical nineteenth-century liberal economic theory that prices and wages could be set only by "free" conditions of the market. A wage which was adequately set and frugally saved would allow the worker enough surplus to enable him to acquire some property of his own and thus give him a measure of independence. This would benefit society in several ways: the worker would respect private property because it was more equitably distributed; class warfare would be eliminated because the division

---

<sup>30</sup>R.N. (32, 33), 43-45.

<sup>31</sup>R.N. (34), 46.

between classes would be lessened; production in factories and on the land would increase as workers would have more incentive to work hard; and finally the desperate emigration of the poor to new lands would decrease. The Pope concluded his decree on wages with the caution that excessive taxation of private property was as unjust as the payment of excessively low wages.

The last nine sections of the Encyclical considered labour's right to form "Workmens' Associations". Citing Scripture, the moral and economic dicta of St. Thomas Aquinas and the historical precedent of the medieval guilds, such protective and mutual aid societies were declared to be a natural right of workers.<sup>32</sup> They should be prohibited only if their purpose was unjust or dangerous to the State. It was noted that workers' societies were proliferating and were often "managed on principles far from compatible with Christianity and the public well-being". Under these circumstances, Christian workmen should be certain that the purposes and the regulations of their associations were true to Christian precepts. A worker should endeavour "to shake off the yoke of an unjust and intolerable oppression"<sup>33</sup>

---

<sup>32</sup>R.N. (36-38), 48-49.

<sup>33</sup>R.N. (40), 51.

without endangering his soul. To secure workers against this danger, affiliation of such associations with the Church was recommended but not demanded.

The Encyclical concluded with an exhortation to every "minister of Religion" to become involved in the conflict for social justice. The hierarchy, to whom the Encyclical had been addressed, were told to support their clergy whenever "by every means in their power they strive for the good of the people".<sup>34</sup>

The social philosophy embodied in Rerum Novarum was an expression of the Thomistic Revival with which the rejuvenated Jesuit order had become particularly identified during the last half of the nineteenth century. The medieval concept that society is a living organism whose growth is sustained by adherence to divinely sanctioned moral laws was reinstated. Those who exercised political power in society, even when freely elected by the people, were part of the divine order with a duty to uphold and administer these laws. The corollary of this proposition was that the State's laws must not, by omission or commission contravene divine law. Man's natural rights to life, family and work must be sustained by the State; alleviation of injustice and

---

<sup>34</sup>R.N. (45), 56.

the solution of social problems was part of its legal and moral obligation. If, however, protective measures were passed, they must not alter the structure of society in such a way that natural rights were denied.<sup>35</sup>

This Encyclical was a significant break-through for the Catholic Church in that it shifted the obligation and attention of the hierarchy from a preoccupation with the Church's own prerogatives to an awareness of the most urgent problems spawned by the Industrial Revolution. It was not greeted with any enthusiasm by governments or industrialists but it gave the hierarchy and their clergy who were so concerned, the authority to become involved with issues which most contemporary economists considered beyond their competence. It was not an egalitarian document; it accepted class differences and agreed that authority could uphold the class structure. It did not plead for equality of opportunity, which was the main objective of many socialists at this time. Indeed, Rerum Novarum most emphatically seemed to reject any notion which would promote even moderate Socialism; the ideas of Revolutionary Socialism (as Communism was then labelled) were totally rejected. The economic

---

<sup>35</sup>The Thomistic social and political theory is more fully summarized in Moody, Church and Society, 66-7.

principles of the capitalist system were accepted and the few economic directives which were given were designed to show how the worker could become a modest participant in a capitalist society. It was the exclusion of the workers from all hope of achieving this which concerned the Pope.

Rerum Novarum was not really a treatise on economics; it was concerned with moral principles not economic concepts. Thus, although it introduced the concept of the "just wage", it did not enlarge on this to urge family wages based on the number of children supported as the basis of payment. The practical problem of formulating policies in conformity with the abstract moral principles enunciated in the Encyclical was left to the industrialists, unions and governments concerned. The document's strength, in contrast, was in its challenge to society to design legislation and make agreements with workers which would, within the existing capitalist system, combine freedom of opportunity as the pace of industrial development accelerated, with protection from exploitation.

Some of the difficulties which would confront Archbishop McNeil when he attempted to apply these principles to his own Canadian dioceses had their origin in the weakness of Rerum Novarum (and the other social Encyclicals which followed), as an instrument of edification and change for

the Church and society.<sup>36</sup> They were intended mainly for the guidance of Catholics, but because the problems affected whole societies and because the Church claimed universal authority on moral and ethical questions, the popes asserted that they embodied principles which were applicable to all men in their social and moral relationships. This claim was disputed, not only by the secular world and by non-Christian religions, but also by other Christian denominations with the result that the intention and the content of these documents was questioned. The clergy's principal difficulty, however, was the impossibility of implementing the precepts of the Encyclicals in a consistent and comprehensive way within the Catholic world.

The most obvious source of this limitation was the original language in which the documents were composed. Latin, although accepted as a precise, international vehicle for conveying theological concepts, did not prove an efficient language in which to express modern political, economic and social thought. One of the most authoritative Jesuit commentators on the Social Encyclicals has noted that they

---

<sup>36</sup>The Social Encyclicals is the name given to the collection of directives given by several popes to the hierarchy and the laity which pertained specifically to men in their relationships with each other as individuals and in human institutions such as governments, schools, families, as contrasted to those directives concerning their relationship to God or the institutional Church.

have not all been easily available. Some, of the very highest moment to us in our day have been familiar to very few except perhaps in name. Others have been englished in so poor a way as not to serve our pressing needs.<sup>37</sup>

Another Jesuit, one of the authors of the Latin text of the sequel to Rerum Novarum (Quadragesimo Anno, 1931) has noted ruefully that the Social Encyclicals dealt

with modern and practical questions and objects for which the language of the ancient Romans did not and could not possess proper technical terms, because these things and the questions connected with them are the result of the historical development of subsequent periods. For his workers' Encyclical, Leo XIII to a large extent had to create new expressions.<sup>38</sup>

He went on to note that subsequent Encyclicals posed even greater problems when they penetrated more deeply into current problems; they required a larger technical vocabulary and were even more difficult to interpret. Untranslated, the Encyclicals were restricted to the few clergy and even fewer laymen who worked with Latin constantly. The official translations of these documents into seven languages authorized by the Vatican made them more accessible but this

---

<sup>37</sup>Husslein, Social Wellsprings, 2, Foreword, vii.

<sup>38</sup>Oswald Von Nell-Breuning, S.J., The Social Encyclicals Explained: Reorganization of the Social Economy, English translation by Bernard W. Dempsey, S.J. (Milwaukee, 1936), 7.



work was time-consuming, delayed their dissemination and made an exact uniformity of meaning nearly impossible. Nell Breuning also noted that translation results in differences in emphasis, interpretation and application between countries. This could be particularly difficult in countries where there were several linguistic units within the Church; in Canada, where this situation existed, opposing regulations resulted. This difficulty had appeared in Canada between the French and English-speaking Catholics as early as 1887 and it continued into the 1930's. The resulting variations in policy produced some of the most severe criticism directed at the Catholic Church in Canada, for which there was some justification. A hierarchically organized system was expected to maintain the same consistency in its social policies as in its theology. When this sometimes failed, critics accused the hierarchy of acting more from expediency than principle. These critics failed to note that differences in language were often a focus for the historic and cultural differences within the Church.

Often too, the Encyclicals themselves did not indicate whether they were intended as general statements of principles which were to be followed by the hierarchy in their advice to the laity, or whether they were blueprints for action by laity directly involved in social and economic reform. Although instances of moral turpitude, misery and

injustice were condemned in them, the comprehensiveness of the condemnation could be used by bishops to censure particular policies advocated by unions, parties or governments which appeared to threaten the Church in areas where it claimed particular jurisdiction.

E. E. Y. Hales has noted that although some of the Social Encyclicals were written in response to particular political situations in one country they were not necessarily relevant or even intended as condemnations of movements with similar names in different national contexts. The Church's harsh denunciation of Liberalism and Socialism was a response to the anti-clerical position adopted by Europeans, particularly Italians, who adopted these ideologies. In England, in contrast, many of the early socialists were devout Christians.<sup>39</sup> Conversely, the Encyclicals could seem irrelevant if the conditions complained of did not exist or had been corrected years before by legislation. Henry Somerville noted that Rerum Novarum did not impress him in his youth because some of the changes advocated in it had already been secured by English legislation and the trade unions. "The Encyclical as a whole seemed to be nothing

---

<sup>39</sup>Hales, The Catholic Church, 194.

more than platitudes".<sup>40</sup>

Finally, the Encyclicals were not accorded as widespread acclaim as they merited because in an age of increasingly complex economic structures, they appeared to be simplistic and naive. This was particularly true of Rerum Novarum which concentrated much of its attack on the problems of distribution. The exploding populations of the twentieth century would require more large scale capital investment at a speedier tempo than had hitherto been realized. As Richard L. Camp has stated:

Rerum Novarum did not consider this side of the question . . . it tended to blame industry and industrialists for the suffering of the working class and concentrated exclusively on schemes for distributing the wealth more equitably rather than being concerned about how to produce more of it.<sup>41</sup>

In spite of these deficiencies, the influence of the Social Encyclicals and particularly Rerum Novarum on the social and economic history of the twentieth century must not be under-rated. They enunciated positive economic and social principles which challenged the purely materialistic

<sup>40</sup> Somerville, "The 'Rerum Novarum' After Forty Years", Studies (March 1931):1.

<sup>41</sup> R. L. Camp, The Papal Ideology of Social Reform (Leiden, 1969), 86.

approach of capitalist and socialist ideologies to the problems of the modern industrial state. Even more important, within the Church Rerum Novarum gave papal recognition to those few pioneers in the hierarchy and laity who had been urging the Church to be more positive in its involvement in social reform. In England, the United States and Canada, those few Catholics would assert more bluntly that the Church's neglect of social justice constituted a failure to live up to its divine commission to aid all men in every facet of their lives.

Archbishop McNeil was one of these Catholics, and the first Canadian member of the hierarchy in English-speaking Canada to take positive action to educate and involve his people in these projects. But how to begin? One of the indirect results of the new papal declaration had been the realization that in the training of the clergy "attention must be given not only to the principles of social morality, but also to the serious problems of the society in which they must be made to work".<sup>42</sup> It was in this direction that McNeil first directed his reforming eye after his installation in Toronto. In his inaugural

---

<sup>42</sup>Henry J. Browne, The Catholic Church and the Knights of Labor (Washington, 1949), 356.

address he had referred to his great expectations for the new St. Augustine's Seminary for the training of English-speaking priests in Canada. One of the tasks for which he was posted to Toronto was "to breathe a soul" into the fledgling institution which had just been opened. He was eager to introduce a broader curriculum so that the clergy would be better equipped to teach the positive virtues of the Christian life. Even when he was in Newfoundland he had deplored the fact that "the emphasis now thrown on the negative side . . . has made the Church less able to grapple with advancing Socialism".<sup>44</sup>

Hence, in December, 1913, his old friend Father James Tompkins of St. Francis Xavier University wrote to Monsignor Henry Parkinson, principal of Oscott College, Birmingham:

---

<sup>43</sup>Boyle, Pioneer, 145.

<sup>44</sup>Neil McNeil to Most Rev. Alexander MacDonald, Bishop of Victoria, October 12, 1919. Quoted in Boyle, Pioneer, 150.

I have been asked by a distinguished Archbishop of one of our leading Canadian cities to try to secure for him a Catholic layman for the Chair of Sociology in his Seminary. He wants a man of the highest ability, and at the same time, a sane, solid man who can be trusted to "pan out" as we say in this country. He would be expected to take his place in giving tone to the Catholic society of the city and to Catholic thought in general.<sup>45</sup>

In March, 1914 the address of Henry Somerville was forwarded to Archbishop McNeil. In November, 1915, a short slight man of twenty-six arrived in Toronto. He had agreed to come at the salary of \$1,500 per annum "to promote social studies in the interest of the working class".<sup>46</sup>

---

<sup>45</sup>Copy of letter of Father James Tompkins to Msgr. Henry Parkinson, December 4, 1913. McNeil Papers, Archives of the Archdiocese of Toronto, Toronto, uncatalogued "Social Box".

<sup>46</sup>Archbishop McNeil to Father James Tompkins. No date; probably written late summer, 1913. Boyle, Pioneer, 136.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE ENGLISH WORLD OF HENRY SOMERVILLE

The young man selected by Archbishop McNeil to introduce the social teaching of the Church into his diocese was a very untypical product of the Catholic community of late nineteenth century England. He was untypical in that, although he came from a poor working-class family and had little formal education and no social status or economic power, he became an important lay leader in the Church and was accepted as an intellectual equal by the Catholic intelligentsia. In addition, he developed extraordinary ability as a popular journalist of enterprise and energy. Such a combination was a paradox in the late Victorian Catholic Church.

The Catholic community in England was not a homogeneous social or intellectual group it was split into two sections: an upper class with wealth and some social status, and a lower, working-class composed mostly of Irish immigrants. The two had little contact with each other. The result was that, in spite of sharing a common faith and a common sense of social and intellectual isolation from the Protestant churches, they did not work together to nurture

men with Somerville's background and conjunction of talents. Most of the Catholic intelligentsia, and there were very few of these, were from two sources. First, there were a few wealthy secure men from old Catholic families, long connected with the landed gentry and aristocracy. Such a man was Lord Acton, who was educated on the Continent and who had inherited wealth and important social connections. The second and the most invigorating force in the Catholic community were the upper middle class Anglican converts such as Cardinal Newman, Henry Wilberforce, Wilfrid Meynell, William George Ward and Cardinal Manning.<sup>1</sup> All but Manning had been attracted to the Roman Catholic Church through their involvement in the Oxford Movement which had predisposed them to reconsider sympathetically the theology and social structure of the medieval Church. They were sincere and devout men, but even after their conversions, their professional interests remained mainly literary and educational, and they did not become involved in the social problems of the industrial age in their own country or in the study of the theoretical and practical solutions to them being initiated by Catholic intellectuals on the Continent. Cardinal Newman was typical in that he was primarily con-

---

<sup>1</sup>John Henry Newman was a Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford, and Church of England clergyman who converted to Catholicism in 1845 and became a Cardinal in 1878. Henry Wilberforce was the son of the famous anti-slavery leader,



cerned with rekindling the intellectual fires of English Catholicism to the brilliance which they had displayed in the Middle Ages. "Neither inclination nor the exigencies of his position compelled him to take part in the public life of his time".<sup>2</sup>

The majority of the Church's membership was drawn from those working-class Irish families who had been poor immigrants during the 1840's and whose children continued to supply the factories in the towns with unskilled labour. "Between them and the literary Catholics there was a distance that was pathetically wide".<sup>3</sup> In the 1890's most of the Irish Catholics were still poor, educationally deprived and socially despised. Throughout the nineteenth century, the Catholic poor were mainly distinguished from their Protestant counterparts by the higher percentage of their number who were loyal supporters of their Church.<sup>4</sup>

---

William Wilberforce. After his conversion he edited the Catholic paper The Weekly Register. Wilfrid Meynell founded the monthly Merrie England in which the poems of Francis Thompson were first published. William George Ward was an Anglican clergyman who converted, as was Cardinal Manning.

<sup>2</sup>G. P. McEntee, The Social Catholic Movement in Great Britain (New York, 1927), 15.

<sup>3</sup>Christopher Hollis, "The Second Spring in English Catholicism", in Moody, Church and Society, 831.

<sup>4</sup>An excellent description and analysis of the relationship of the English Catholic working-class to their Church is

Cardinal Manning, the senior Catholic prelate in England, was however, never complacent about this loyalty and frequently declared that the workers' faith would only remain secure if the clergy and laity did not shirk their duty to take constructive action to alleviate the growth of social injustice. He has been described as "the first English Catholic ecclesiastic of modern times to take up the cause of the victims of the intolerable abuses in the society around him".<sup>5</sup> His influence in the drafting of Rerum Novarum, his mediation in the great Dockers' Strike of 1889 and his support of the working-class union leaders, made a great impression on a new group of intellectuals and converts who became the initiators of the Catholic social movement in England.<sup>6</sup>

---

found in K. S. Inglis, Churches and the Working Class in Victorian England (London, 1963), Chapter 3, 119-122. See also Henry Pelling, Popular Politics and Society in Late Victorian Britain (London, 1968), 31-34, for comment on the relationship of the Protestant Churches and the working class.

<sup>5</sup>McEntee, Social Catholic Movement, 17, quotes J. E. C. Bodley, Cardinal Manning and Other Essays (London and New York, 1912), 16. All biographers of Cardinal Manning have noted his concern for and identification with the troubles of the working class. On Manning see E. S. Purcell, Life of Henry Edward Manning, Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, 2 vols. (London and New York, 1895).

<sup>6</sup>See Henry Somerville, "England and the 'Rerum Novarum'", America (June 6, 1931):207-08; D. J. McDougall, "Cardinal Manning and the Social Problem", Canadian Catholic Historical Association -- Study Sessions 24 (1957):53-52.

Henry Somerville absorbed ideas and attitudes from what could be called the Newman and the Manning streams within English Catholicism, but it was the latter group which discovered him and gave him the opportunity to develop his talents. A study of his background will reveal the turmoil and complexity of the society from which he and the first Catholic social movement in England, and later in English-speaking Canada, emerged.

Henry Somerville was born in Leeds in 1889, the eldest son and second child of twelve children born to Charles and Sarah Somerville. His father was from Lowland Scotland and had come to Leeds in his youth where he found work in a toy factory.<sup>7</sup> He was not a Catholic, but he married a devout girl of Irish descent who saw that the children were carefully nurtured in the faith. Henry attended a Catholic elementary school until he was thirteen when he had to go to work in the toy factory. The child labour inspector was evaded by having the little fellow hide on the factory storage shelves during inspections as the

---

<sup>7</sup>The Somerville family do not know the birthplace of their paternal grandfather. As Janet Somerville observed, "My grandfather was of very humble birth and these details were not considered very important among the working class in England, unless of course they were Irish". Interview, Toronto, January 29, 1975.

family urgently needed his "sweated wages".<sup>8</sup> He was, however, determined to continue his education and he read philosophy, religion, and economics as well as general literature. In an autobiographical sketch, Somerville later described his adolescence as a time when "I read omnivorously . . . though I lost love for the pious practices of my childhood [...] as I grew more controversial and militant in temper I grew in enthusiasm for the Church as an institution".<sup>9</sup>

This intellectual development took place in the context of the political and social ferment of Edwardian England. As has been noted by one observer, it was a period in which the Liberal domestic economic policies became tangled and indecisive and the party seemed incapable of positive, forthright action.<sup>10</sup> To fill this vacuum, many political theorists and reformers who had no immediate

---

<sup>8</sup>Interview with Mrs. Henry Somerville (Margaret Cooper Somerville), February 19, 1975.

<sup>9</sup>Henry Somerville, "The Confessions of a Catholic Socialist", Dublin Review 155 (1914):101-02.

<sup>10</sup>Samuel Hynes, The Edwardian Turn of Mind (Princeton, 1968), 87. To add to the confusion, there was disagreement among the trade unionists as to the desirability of more government regulation. This was because "the unions were becoming increasingly hopeful of winning the battle of labour versus capital for themselves". Donald Read, Edwardian England 1901-1915: Society and Politics (London, 1972), 207.

prospects of achieving political power advanced a plethora of economic and social reform policies. They frequently endeavoured to propagate their ideas through forming study groups for workingmen, holding debates at Settlement Houses and in that most famous of English institutions, the open-air political meeting. Particularly active were the Socialists. They embraced such a wide range of ideas and had successfully assimilated such a variety of social and intellectual groups into the movement that they possessed both flexibility and momentum in their appeal to the restless working class.<sup>11</sup> By 1910 there were fifty-three Labour members elected to Parliament, and the Fabian Society was proving to be a highly effective research and propaganda resource.

The Socialists flourished because they seemed to offer positive solutions to the obviously increasing social and economic divisions within the English body politic. These divisions were emphasized when it became fashionable

---

<sup>11</sup>The Socialist movement in England attracted both devout Christian Socialists such as Stewart Headlam and free-thinkers such as George Bernard Shaw and Sidney and Beatrice Webb. See Peter Jones, The Christian Socialist Revival, 1877-1914: Religion, Class and Social Conscience in Late Victorian England (Princeton, 1968).

for upper class society to display its opulence in flamboyant outbursts of spending and frivolity. At the same time, the workers' living standard was declining because their wages were not keeping pace with the price rises which occurred in the pre-war years. "Class divisions were never so acutely felt as by the Edwardians".<sup>12</sup>

One manifestation of this malaise was the re-examination not only of the economic premises on which English liberal society functioned, but also the religious doctrines which buttressed the whole system. Somerville recorded that when he was fourteen, a lively atheist propaganda campaign was conducted in Leeds and his first assays into public controversy took place at open-air "Atheist meetings".

I used earnestly to contend in argument with the Atheist lecturer or with some of his supporters in the audience. . . . I held my own pretty well. I never for an instant was troubled by any doubts against the faith.<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>12</sup>Arthur J. Taylor, "The Economy", in Simon Nowell-Smith, Edwardian England 1901-1914 (London, 1964), 133. See also Standish Meacham, "The Sense of an Impending Clash: English Working Class Unrest before the First World War", American Historical Review 77 (December 1972):1362-64.

<sup>13</sup>Somerville, "Confessions", 102.

In two or three years the Atheist advocates were superseded by the Socialists whom Somerville found far more interesting and challenging. He was familiar with the Church's condemnation of Socialism but he found that Catholic writings were inadequate in explaining its weaknesses. By age sixteen, his chief impression was "an admiring wonder at the Socialists who had been able to think out such an ingenious scheme".<sup>14</sup> Moreover, his study of such books as Robert Blatchford's Britain for the British, convinced him that Socialism would eventually triumph in England. He feared that in this process, the Catholic Church would lose the working class because of its unreasoning hostility to a movement whose principles were not always incompatible with Catholic doctrine. Socialism as advocated in England was not the same as that condemned by the Papacy on the continent.<sup>15</sup> Catholic working men who were apostates to the faith had been driven to leave the Church because of its unreasonable attacks on Socialism and not because Atheism was its inevitable concomitant. The young Somerville finally concluded that "the Church was in danger of committing an error like that in the case of Galileo

---

<sup>14</sup>Somerville, "Confessions", 102.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., 103.

which had been so often brought up against the Church in my disputations with the Atheists".<sup>16</sup>

It was to help forestall such a disaster<sup>o</sup> that this youth of eighteen joined the Independent Labour Party and in 1908 founded the Catholic Socialist Society. The first of its kind in England, it attracted fifteen members who were, as Somerville described them, working men, all of whom were uneducated and some of whom were illiterate. Their bumptious criticism of the anti-Socialist Catholic clergy and the very incongruity of Catholicism coupled with Socialism secured them lively coverage in the secular and Catholic press.<sup>17</sup> Their notoriety eventually drew the attention of their bishop and with no warning he condemned them from the pulpit and in a pastoral letter. Henry Somerville was baffled and hurt by this denunciation but he submitted to his bishop's discipline and resigned from both the political party and his own society. He declared

---

<sup>16</sup>Somerville, "Confessions", 105.

<sup>17</sup>In the Somerville Papers there is a newspaper clipping addressed to the editor, signed "H. Somerville, Hon. Sec. Leeds Catholic Socialist Society". This letter abounded in critical and unorthodox statements such as: "On the Continent, the hostility of the Socialists to the Church has largely been provoked by the policy pursued by the official leaders of the Church. Ecclesiastics generally have looked with suspicion on all progressive movements . . . they have supported vested interests and the established order of things, and they have resisted the extension of political power to the



that although his society's only motivation was zeal for the Church, the principle of lay obedience to the Catholic hierarchy was more important than his own personal views on the best social strategy which should be pursued by the Church. However, he still privately held to his belief that Socialism and Catholicism were not mutually incompatible. He resolved to study economics and theology in order to convince the clergy that his views were in accordance with the principles of Rerum Novarum.<sup>18</sup>

In 1908 he joined with a sympathetic Jesuit, Father Theodore Evans (a Nonconformist convert), to form the first Catholic working men's study club in England. The objectives of the group meeting at the Sacred Heart Church, Leeds, were

---

masses of the people".

The letter went on to note that in England too "Socialism is bitterly attacked in the Catholic Press and from Catholic pulpits". He declared that the new Catholic Socialist Society would change this hostile relationship. But in so doing they would not retreat from a socialist position: "Catholic Socialists are just as advanced and uncompromising as other Socialists. They demand the complete abolition of landlordism and capitalism". Finally he noted that Pope Leo had "completely misunderstood Socialism. . . . We want to explain to our fellow-Catholics what Socialism really is".

<sup>18</sup>This biographical information on Henry Somerville was obtained from his published writing and a memoir in the Catholic Register, February 28, 1953. Miss Janet Somerville stated in an interview on June 27, 1973, that although the memoir was attributed to his brother, Father Charles Somerville, S.J., it was in fact dictated to him by Henry Somerville in December, 1952 when he visited Somerville shortly before the latter's death from cancer on February 20, 1953.

to deepen their religious commitment, to study economic and political theory in order to understand the problems of the modern industrial state, and to examine the social teaching of the Church and determine how it could be applied to their own problems.

The aims of this society complemented those of a small group of concerned Catholic intellectuals, both laity and clergy, who were emerging in the hitherto divided English Catholic community. They were being recruited from the small Catholic upper middle class that was developing as a result of the hierarchy's granting permission in 1895 for Catholics to attend Oxford and Cambridge. The laity were doctors, lawyers, writers, economists; the clergy were workers in inner-city parishes, academics involved in theological education, and members of religious orders who were independent of hesitant local bishops. In the latter category, the Jesuits were becoming particularly effective as this order had long been involved in Catholic social reform on the continent. These people became a small "ginger group" who joined with the more numerous mildly concerned to become a reforming group in the Church. As Jones has pointed out, individuals of this type were a common component of several Christian denominations in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Britain.<sup>19</sup> They adopted similar methods of

---

<sup>19</sup>Jones, Christian Socialist Revival, 16.

propagandizing through study groups and Settlement Houses. Thus these Catholics must be viewed in the larger context of several Christian and humanist groups who drafted plans and initiated projects for the alleviation of society's ailments. The Papal Encyclicals and the social concern of Cardinal Manning were, for Catholics, the vital precipitants in that they provided these reformers with the hierarchy's authorization which was absolutely necessary if their efforts were to be generally accepted as legitimately Catholic. It was just such a ginger group who founded the Catholic Social Guild during the annual conference of the Catholic Truth Society in Manchester in September, 1909.<sup>20</sup> They were articulate, well-educated and enthusiastic and because they were persons who played such a formative role in the intellectual development of Henry Somerville the identities and ideas of a few of them should be described.

Their organization meeting was chaired by Monsignor

---

<sup>20</sup>The Catholic Truth Society was founded in England in 1884 by a layman, James Britten, for the purpose of publishing small, cheap devotional works aimed at educating poor Catholics about their faith, informing Protestants about Catholicism and defending the Church from misrepresentation. In 1888 it founded annual Catholic Conferences to discuss the work of the Catholic Church in England.

Henry Parkinson, the Rector of Oscott Seminary and the man whom Father Tompkins would consult when he searched for a suitable worker for Archbishop McNeil in 1913. As Rector, he had already pioneered the inclusion of social studies in theological training at his seminary and in lectures to the Catholic Truth Society had declared that the Catholic Church in England had two pressing needs.<sup>21</sup> The first was for both clergy and laity to be involved in social reform; the second was the writing and publication of cheap, 'popular manuals instructing all Catholics on economics, social problems and the Church's social doctrines.'<sup>22</sup>

The man responsible for organizing the meeting was Father Charles Plater, aged thirty-four, a brilliant Jesuit and a graduate of Oxford. Although he had had a traditional classical education, his real interests were not in the English Jesuit tradition of literary and academic scholarship, but in social reform. Like many English reformers, his family background was Protestant middle class. His grandfather was an Anglican clergyman; his father was a convert of Cardinal Newman. He also admired Cardinal

---

<sup>21</sup>J. M. Cleary, Catholic Social Action in Britain, 1909-1959 (Oxford, 1961), 28.

<sup>22</sup>McEntee, Social Catholic Movement, quotes Henry Parkinson in Catholic Mind, 6 (1908):186.

Manning's social activism, so that in Father Plater the two streams of the English Catholic revival were fused.<sup>23</sup> The international connections of the Jesuit order had enabled him to become acquainted with the German, Italian, French and Belgian Jesuits who had devised social policies and measures in their respective countries which had been approved by the Vatican.

About 1903 he began to examine their workers' retreat movement as a method of study with particular potential for English Catholics. To the concept of the religious retreat, which was a withdrawal from the world for a day or a weekend's religious reflection, was added instruction in the Church's social doctrines based on the social encyclicals. He saw these workers' retreats as a means of retrieving men whom modern industrial conditions had so isolated that they were now living apart from the Church and the rest of the community.

Although they had not yet met, Father Plater had reached similar conclusions to Henry Somerville<sup>24</sup> and expressed these frequently in lectures and articles. Two of his most forceful statements were published in 1908 when he issued "A Plea for Catholic Action", and outlined

---

<sup>23</sup>Cyril C. Martindale, S.J., Charles Dominic Plater, S.J. (London, 1922), chapter 1, 1-14.

his programme and method which he described as "A Great Social Experiment".<sup>24</sup> In these articles he urged Catholics to cease being so apathetic about social reform and declared that their study and personal service were needed even more than their money. They should emulate German and Belgian Catholics and "realize the possibilities of organized social action".<sup>25</sup> He further suggested that the particular mission of the new group of educated Catholics was to become the originators of programmes expressing Catholic views on such national problems as sweated wages and inadequate housing. He regretted that in England, "Catholic advice is seldom taken on such matters . . . because Catholic experts are not forthcoming".<sup>26</sup> The seminaries had a role to play by initiating students' study groups and formal courses so that their graduates would be equipped to instruct the laity on methods of civic action. This would be achieved best

---

<sup>24</sup>Charles Plater, S.J., "A Plea for Catholic Action", Month (February 1908):113-119; Charles Plater, S.J., "A Great Social Experiment", Hibbert Journal, 7 (1908):49-62. Month was an intellectual journal founded in 1864 and published in London by the Jesuit Order. Hibbert Journal, in contrast, was a non-denominational "Quarterly Review of Religion, Theology and Philosophy". Among the contributors to the latter were some of the leading intellectuals of the day. In this volume Plater's article was included among those by William James, Bertrand Russell, Ernst Troeltsch and Adolph von Harnack.

<sup>25</sup>Plater, "A Plea", Month (1908):119.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., 117.

through Catholic working mens' study clubs, instructed by the educated laity and clergy, which would "become the training ground for Catholic labour leaders and speakers".<sup>27</sup>

In the year following the publication of these articles, Father Plater was contacted by several interested laity and clergy. Among the women who responded were three enthusiastic converts: Mrs. Margaret Fletcher, a painter and writer, founder of The Crucible, a journal promoting higher education for Catholic women, and also the founder of the Catholic Women's League; Mrs. Agnes (later Lady) Gibbs, the wife of the novelist Philip Gibbs, and herself a literary translator of some note; and Mrs. Virginia Crawford. The latter was a lady with means, social connections, literary and political ability, and a lurid past. In 1886, her accusations had instigated a famous divorce trial which had shocked the English as the seamy court testimony exposed both the moral misdemeanours and the social irresponsibility of the British upper class.<sup>28</sup> After

---

<sup>27</sup>Plater, "A Plea", Month (1908):118.

<sup>28</sup>In 1886 "she was the most notorious woman in England" according to Roy Jenkins, Sir Charles Dilke (London, 1968). A large section of this book consists of transcripts of the divorce trial testimony in which not only Dilke but other privileged members of English society, particularly Mrs. Crawford, her sister and her mother were shown to have enjoyed activities of questionable propriety.

she was divorced by her husband, Virginia Crawford was received into the Catholic Church by Cardinal Manning in 1889, and devoted her considerable talents to literary study, politics and the Catholic Social Guild.

By 1908 Virginia Crawford had published nine books, in one of which she deplored the clergy's "charity sermons" which misled Catholics to think that by giving money "we can contract out of our social and human obligations".<sup>29</sup> She also introduced some Fabian influence into the Catholic Social Guild as she had known Beatrice Webb for many years. Father Plater and Monsignor Parkinson, who also later met Sydney and Beatrice Webb, admired their integrity and their methods but did not accept their materialist philosophic premises.<sup>30</sup>

One of the lay founders of the Guild was Leslie Toke, a graduate of Balliol, a former Fabian and an enthusiastic supporter of workers' educational schemes like the W.E.A. In his book on adult education, he too had decried the isolation of Catholics from British public life and declared that the most urgent priority was to facilitate

---

<sup>29</sup>Virginia M. Crawford, Ideals of Charity (London, 1908), 10. Quoted by McEntee, 166.

<sup>30</sup>Cleary, Catholic Social Action, 31.



their entry into civic and intellectual life by sponsoring their education in the social sciences.<sup>31</sup>

The bishops present at the Catholic Truth Society Conference approved this group's proposal, put forward by Father Plater, to form the Catholic Social Guild whose object was "to facilitate intercourse between Catholic social students and workers".<sup>32</sup> Illustrative of this group's enterprise was the fact that although they had no funds or business office, the enthusiastic executive had, within less than a year, drawn up a constitution, organized many men's study clubs and given lectures wherever they could find audiences. As well as directing these activities, Father Plater had issued a bibliography of books for the new study groups and had written a 144 page Catholic Social Year Book for 1910, the first of their annual handbooks on Catholic social action groups in England. The literary and publishing expertise of the Guild members ensured that these and their numerous subsequent publications were of professional quality in writing and format.

The Guild's official debut took place in July, 1911 at the first National Catholic Congress which was held at

---

<sup>31</sup>Leslie Toke, Some Ways and Means of Social Study (London, 1907).

<sup>32</sup>Cleary, Catholic Social Action, 31.

Leeds.<sup>33</sup> At this gathering Henry Somerville was introduced by Father Evans (the Jesuit who had helped him found his working men's study club), to Father Charles Plater. It was the turning point in his career, for Plater realized that this devout young man of intelligence and determination had both a talent for writing and first-hand knowledge of the working man's world. He was exactly what the Guild required as a propagandist and organizer. Plater encouraged him to leave the toy factory job and found him a place as sub-editor of a Catholic weekly newspaper in Manchester. Somerville never returned to factory work; for the next forty years he earned his living as a journalist. Both men realized that he needed more formal education and Father Plater found an anonymous donor who sent the twenty-one year old ex-factory worker to Ruskin College, Oxford.<sup>34</sup> On completion of the College's eighteen-month residential programme in social science in May, 1913, he received his diploma "with distinction". During his course, in which he specialized in the study of Socialism, Somerville was convinced at last that the arguments in Rerum Novarum were a valid refutation of this political and economic theory but

---

<sup>33</sup>They were sponsored by several sympathetic bishops and at this meeting Somerville first heard several lectures given by lay and clerical members of the Guild. McEntee, 203 and Cleary, 39.

<sup>34</sup>Ruskin College is a residential College affiliated

that they were not being properly explained to the English working man. Moreover, the Church's apologists were doing more harm than good in England because the reasons for which Socialism was condemned were both incorrect and unconvincing.

I have confirmed my early impressions that the "Socialism-means Atheism and-Free-Love" type of argument is most mischievous. Catholic and other working men are now educated enough to know that Socialism means the State ownership of the means of production; and working men are clear headed enough to know that though . . . it may mean many unpleasant things, it does not mean necessarily promiscuous sexual relations or the abolition of religious worship.<sup>35</sup>

Father Plater had anticipated that Somerville would now be hired as a full-time organizer for the Catholic Social Guild, but no funds were available. He managed to earn a modest living through his editorial work for the Manchester Weekly and occasional writing for other Catholic publications. In return for his expenses he lectured and organized study groups for the Catholic Social Guild, modelling them at Father Plater's suggestion on his original

---

with Oxford, founded in 1899 especially for adult education. It offered diploma courses in social sciences and labour studies.

<sup>35</sup> Somerville, "Confessions", 114.

working man's study club.

The Great War curtailed his assignments for the C.S.G., and so Somerville was happy to accept the position offered by Archbishop McNeil in Toronto, although it did mean giving up a recently acquired position as a sub-editor of the Manchester Guardian. One of the qualities which had earned him the commendation for the Toronto post had been the adept and pithy way in which he explained the concepts of the Social Encyclicals and applied them to the purposes and aspirations of the Catholic Social Guild. His effectiveness as a popular lecturer and writer were evident in the first talks which he had delivered to working men in 1913. The eight manuscripts of these which are still extant illustrate how he translated the formal, academic phraseology of official Church documents into brief, clear outlines of doctrine. The same ideas were presented to the Catholic intelligentsia in his journal articles and their polished continuity presented a marked contrast to the pedantic obscurantism which characterized much Catholic writing in this period. Because these speeches and articles contain the premises and principles from which he developed his later ideas on social reform, they will be examined in some detail.

Henry Somerville usually prefaced his lectures to working men with a brief, simple declaration of the Christian theological premises which were the substructure of the

Catholic position. He would explain that

our conception of what society ought to be,  
depends upon our conception of what society  
is for, or to speak more precisely . . .  
of what the State is for.<sup>36</sup>

But, he noted, one must go one step further to answer this question because one's view of the function of the State depended upon one's view of the nature and end of the individual.

The Cath[olic] Church holds that each individual has a unique value and dignity of its own, and th [sic] that therefore no human being exists for t [sic] State or for any other human beings . . . and that every human soul has an end to attain, namely the knowledge, love and service of God.<sup>37</sup>

From this theological base the Church then proclaimed four fundamental doctrines upon which any social system should be founded:

The Doctrine of Natural Rights, the doctrine of the responsibility of the community for the welfare of each of its members, the doctrine of the Living Wage and the doctrine of the right to private property.<sup>38</sup>

These principles, which he noted were those enunciated in Rerum Novarum, he then proceeded to illustrate.

<sup>36</sup>Henry Somerville, Speech 1913, "Catholic Social Principles of Social Reform", 2. Unpublished manuscript in the Somerville Papers in possession of Mrs. Henry Somerville, Toronto.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., 3.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., 5.

Natural Rights were those which a man claimed because of his human nature: rights to life, marriage and worship. They did not originate with the State and they could not be alienated by it, even by a democratic majority within the State for the sake of social expediency. Somerville noted wryly that if the Socialists were guilty of offending against the doctrine of Natural Rights, the "Individualists" were equally culpable in ignoring the Church's second principle, that of mutual responsibility. The theological basis of mutual responsibility was the premise that God the Creator supplied all in Nature for men's natural needs; men were only stewards of these gifts and were responsible for their proper use and just distribution. Somerville explained that

if the individual is capable it, [is] of course, his duty to labour to supply his own wants, but if he is not capable of self support his need imposes an obligation upon his neighbors, upon society [sic] in which he lives, to supply him with the necessities of a decent life, not any sort of life mind you, but a life . . . befitting a human being.<sup>39</sup>

"Decency of life" governed the definition and application of the third principle, the Living Wage. The Encyclical Rerum Novarum had defined this as enough to allow the lowliest worker to provide his family with decent housing, adequate food and clothing and some healthy pleasure. Here

---

<sup>39</sup>Somerville, Speech 1913, 9.

Somerville explained the difference between the Socialist, the Liberal individualist and the Catholic schools of thought on the concept of a just wage. Socialists said "the relation between capitalist and labourer is essentially unjust . . . even if the worker gets sufficient wages to live quite comfortably";<sup>40</sup> the Liberal individualist said that the capitalist-worker relationship "was just so long as it was based on free contract . . . any terms arrived at by free contract were just".<sup>41</sup> The Catholic rejected both of these. The capitalist system was not necessarily unjust, but neither was any contract about wages just, if the wage agreed upon was less than what would "enable him to live the life and perform the duties of a man. . . . The workman is not justified in accepting less, to say nothing of the employer not being justified in paying less".<sup>42</sup>

He explained that the fourth Catholic principle, the right to private property, included the right to own productive as well as consumer goods. The Church believed that the property system was most just when it was distributed

---

<sup>40</sup>Somerville, Speech 1913, 12.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., 13.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., 13.

as widely as possible among individual small owners and not under the control of State corporations.

In one of his earliest articles, Somerville developed the thesis that these Catholic principles "suggest to us the broad lines of a constructive social policy".<sup>43</sup> He admitted that such a prospect was contrary to the views of two types of Catholics. First, there were those who held that the Church, whose first concern was the salvation of the individual, should not be concerned with projects aimed at changing social and economic structures. For this group,

social reform is merely a matter of the re-adjustment of the social and economic machine . . . economic evils require economic remedies. . . . Catholics need not try to think out a social policy based upon their own religious principles.<sup>44</sup>

According to these Catholics, the Church's social contribution was to warn against what was immoral, particularly in areas of marriage and education.

The second type of Catholic, he described as those who were anxious for social reform, but who were discouraged because they could not agree on policy. It was not

---

<sup>43</sup>Henry Somerville, "Catholic Principles and Social Policy", Month 112 (December 1913):572-82.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., 574.



necessarily a bad thing for Catholics to support a variety of political parties. It was possible for Catholics to agree on ends even if they disagreed on the means to achieve them. The Church could not limit itself to the support of only one method of social reform. These difficulties should not, however, prevent Catholics within parties from drafting definite programmes which were really concerned with "how" to achieve the ends which the Church had indicated were the necessary "what and why".<sup>45</sup>

In this explanation, Somerville revealed one of his most consistently articulated beliefs, that it was the "active minorities who count in the making of history".<sup>46</sup> He declared that there were many other minorities besides the Catholics in England; the Socialists were one of the more respectable of the extreme groups advocating change. These active minorities understood their own principles, had definite goals and were working strenuously to obtain them. Somerville called on the Catholic minority to make its voice heard because "there are Catholic social principles and a Catholic social policy which are not merely

---

<sup>45</sup>Somerville, "Catholic Principles and Social Policy", 577.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., 577.

distinctive but unique, and their uniqueness is in their positive character, not merely in their vetoes".<sup>47</sup> He observed tartly that the lack of unity on social solutions among the English Catholics was mainly caused by ignorance.

We scarcely know our own principles, we are hardly capable of expressing them in terms of modern life; we are certainly incapable of working out their application to the complex conditions of the present industrial system; and we shall never be capable of this task unless we are equipped with a full knowledge, not only of moral philosophy, but also of economic science.<sup>48</sup>

Somerville optimistically concluded that if Catholics would study and organize

they could move mountains. . . . It may not be possible to banish all sin and suffering from the world, but . . . it would be practicable to get rid of social, as distinct from individual injustice.<sup>49</sup>

His optimism impelled him to work hard for the Catholic Social Guild's objectives "to assist in working out the application of Catholic principles to actual social conditions; . . . to create a wider interest among Catholics in social questions".<sup>50</sup> He believed that the combined clerical

<sup>47</sup>Somerville, "Catholic Principles and Social Policy", 579.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 580.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., 580.

<sup>50</sup>Statutes of the Catholic Social Guild, revised 1912. Catholic Social Year Book for 1914 (London, 1914), 2.

and lay leadership of the Guild would assure Catholic members that their solutions to social evils were doctrinally acceptable and practically feasible and therefore likely, in the long run, to succeed. All classes of Catholics united in the Guild must work first to abolish indecent housing, wages and working conditions for all workers. But they must not shrink from studying "far reaching schemes for the prevention of these evils as distinct from the cure of them".<sup>51</sup> Some of the cures being advocated by non-Catholics were inimical to Christian morality; their adoption would be both morally and socially disastrous. "The object of the Guild is to . . . bring all sovial [sic] and economic institutions and relationships into harmony with the will of God,"<sup>52</sup> because these are necessary conditions for the "proper service of God".<sup>53</sup> But, he warned, the abolition of social evils was not an easy task; society's mechanisms were complicated and required serious study. It would also require co-operation with many people who were not Catholic but who had similar goals. "Let us not then

---

<sup>51</sup>Speech 1913, "The C.S.G., Its Methods and Aims", 8, Somerville Papers.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., 12.

<sup>53</sup>Henry Somerville, "How to Work Social Study Clubs", Month 120 (August 1912):142.

be afraid to co-operate with the heathen whenever possible".<sup>54</sup>

The Guild's immediate goal, however, was not to devise specific schemes of social reform because Catholics were not yet ready for that. Its first task was education. Father Plater and Somerville hoped that through the circulation of their inexpensive pamphlets, their public lectures, and the new study groups, Catholic men and women would become familiar with Catholic social principles. Thus much of Somerville's time and energy was devoted to exhorting, planning and organizing. The other Guild members too sought leaders for study groups, wrote study guides, compiled bibliographies and despatched boxes of study books to the one hundred new study groups whose membership totalled fifteen hundred by 1914.<sup>55</sup>

---

<sup>54</sup>Somerville, "How to Work Social Study Clubs", 142.

<sup>55</sup>Catholic Social Year Book for 1914, 142. The reading lists of the C.S.G. which were sent out to their study clubs were lengthy and comprehensive. Those on Catholic Social Principles included The Living Wage (1903) by the American Catholic reformer, Dr. John Ryan; Political Economy by Charles Devas, the first English Catholic economist who achieved scholarly recognition. Suggested readings in history included H. O. Meridith, Economic History of England and J. R. Green, Short History of the English People. In 1913 Msgr. Henry Parkinson wrote A Primer of Social Science, for the Guild study groups. As its name implied, it was a simple introduction to economic theory and was favourably reviewed by the secular press as very suitable for this purpose. A note accompanying the bibliography in

These groups embarked on rigorous courses of study in social and political history, economic theory and contemporary social and economic problems. Somerville's speeches and articles outlined in detail how to 'start study clubs, select courses and texts and conduct meetings.<sup>56</sup> The reading lists were replete with history texts as he was convinced that familiarity with the past was essential to the intelligent study of the present.

When study group activity slackened as the War gathered momentum, Somerville intensified his own study of Socialism and labour relations. In addition to his task of organizing groups and courses for the C.S.G. he had begun, in 1913, to write articles and books instructing Catholics, both clergy and laity, through the scholarly Catholic press about the most pressing contemporary social and economic problems. Although he put these in a historical perspective, his explanations always concurred with accepted Catholic religious and philosophic doctrines. This orthodoxy made his articles more acceptable to readers within the Church, but he also endeavoured to include the latest in-

---

the Year Book for 1914 cautioned that few of the authors listed were Catholic as there were few books yet available by Catholic authors on these subjects.

<sup>56</sup>Somerville, "How to Work Social Study Clubs", Month 120 (August 1912):141-52; Speech, 1913, "The Social Mission of the Catholic Workgman Man" [sic]. Unpublished manuscript, Somerville Papers.

sights of the comparatively new disciplines of sociology and political economy, because he did not intend that their impact should be confined only to his co-religionists.

He, along with other members of the Guild, was convinced that the common Christian insights contained in the Church's social doctrines were applicable to the totality of English society. The Guild did not hesitate to make them known to gatherings of non-Catholics whenever the opportunity arose.

This policy was not without risk because many English Catholics were chary of any overtures which implied co-operation with, or even recognition of religious and political groups which at any time had been declared suspect by the Papacy. The Guild did not receive the unqualified support of all of the English clergy or laity.<sup>57</sup> However, it had considerable influence because of the sponsorship and continued support of some high-ranking officials, particularly Cardinal Bourne. In his address to the National Catholic Congress in August, 1910, he had declared that Catholics acted in accordance with the traditions of Cardinal Manning when they were active in public affairs and co-operated with non-Catholic bodies whose aims for the public

---

<sup>57</sup>Cleary, Catholic Social Action, 70-71.

good were common to their own. In such acceptable projects the recently formed Catholic Social Guild will be able to render much assistance by giving to all Catholic Social Workers a clear knowledge of the principles that should guide them.<sup>58</sup>

It is noteworthy that immediately following this meeting Archbishop Bourne (as he then was) attended the Eucharistic Congress held in Montreal in September, 1910; there he met Archbishop McNeil. They became friends, finding that they shared points of view on the Church's social mission and co-operation with the non-Catholic community. Archbishop Bourne visited Vancouver after the Congress and at McNeil's request, officiated at the Cathedral and addressed public meetings.<sup>59</sup> It can be assumed that he reported the ventures of the C.S.G. to the Canadian archbishop as many of McNeil's policies and public speeches in Vancouver during the next two years were similar to those of the Guild in England.

The continued misgivings of some Catholics about

---

<sup>58</sup>Cleary, Catholic Social Action, 75.

<sup>59</sup>Boyle, Pioneer, 115-16.

their emergence from socially segregated communities in order to participate in non-Catholic study and organizations caused Cardinal Bourne to declare in 1913 that

whatever might be the case in countries where the bulk of the population was Catholic, in England the only way that Catholics could gain influence in any great movement was to participate directly in it.<sup>60</sup>

The criticism and suspicion directed at the C.S.G. was one factor which intensified Henry Somerville's interest in Socialism. He had concluded that not only were the social and economic problems which it was attempting to solve becoming worse, but also that the Socialists' solution could so entrench the divisions within English society that they would seriously trouble the country in the future. He determined that Catholics must be told these facts. To better acquaint them with the historical background of Socialism he wrote two simple, scholarly, and dispassionate articles on "The Varieties of Socialism" in which he outlined the development of the stages of Socialist theory.<sup>61</sup> While he

---

<sup>60</sup>McEntee, Catholic Social Movement, 205, quotes The Times, July 7, 1913, address of Cardinal Bourne to Catholic Trade Unionists at the National Catholic Congress, Plymouth, July, 1913.

<sup>61</sup>Somerville, "The Varieties of Socialism", Studies 2 (December 1913):369-83; "The Disintegration of Socialism", Month (November 1913):173-181.



pointed out the chief weaknesses in the logic of each of the three types of Socialist thought, he omitted the pietistic and inaccurate criticism which often accompanied such studies in Catholic publications. The articles noted the three chief stages by which Socialist theory had evolved to date, i.e. the Utopian, the scientific or Marxian and the Revisionist. He explained the chief characteristics of each and pointed out that "each successive phase of Socialism represents not so much a development of, as a reaction against its predecessor".<sup>62</sup> He emphasized that Socialism was still evolving and that currently there was a movement away from Marxist revolutionary determinism toward a theory of gradual change. He noted perceptively that the Socialism defined by Edward Bernstein,<sup>63</sup> which was to be obtained piecemeal, by a series of miscellaneous reforms, "has produced a fundamental change in the character of the Socialist movement".<sup>64</sup> This change was the impetus to the

---

<sup>62</sup>Somerville, "Variations of Socialism", 370.

<sup>63</sup>Edward Bernstein was a German critic of Marx, a member of the Social Democratic party. He lived in England for several years and was influenced by the Fabians. In this article Somerville referred to Bernstein's book Evolutionary Socialism.

<sup>64</sup>Somerville, "Variations of Socialism", 382.

policy of coalescing with non-Socialist parties to secure particular reforms which had occurred in several European states. The consequence was that both Socialist theory and policy were now difficult to define precisely.

Somerville concluded that in 1913 the Socialist programme was so unclear that it could be defined only as "an attitude of critical hostility to certain features of the capitalist régime, and a bias towards increasing political control in economic life".<sup>65</sup>

The divisions within English society which had so concerned Somerville reached their pre-war crescendo between 1911 and 1913. He was an acute observer of their most violent manifestation, the wave of strikes which occurred in a wide range of trades -- taxi-drivers, cloth dyers, bakers, miners, dockers, building trades. He wrote in the Catholic Social Year Book for 1914 that although Socialism was not making progress among the workers, they were increasingly discontented with their lot under Capitalism because

when the wealth and prosperity of the country have been increasing at a record rate, the working classes have had no proportionate share in this increased prosperity, their position has been slightly worsened.<sup>66</sup>

---

<sup>65</sup>Somerville, "Variations of Socialism", 383.

<sup>66</sup>Somerville, "Labour Disputes in 1913", Catholic Social Year Book for 1914, 89.

One consequence of their disillusionment was an increasing resort "to the weapon of the strike as a means of reform and less to politics and legislation".<sup>67</sup> He was not optimistic about any immediate prospects for industrial peace:

The present situation is indeed an evil one. To a Catholic the worst aspect of the problem is, not the physical suffering caused by the strikes and lockouts, but the class bitterness and ill-will engendered. Yet the present temper of the working classes, with all its evils, is to be preferred to a hopeless acquiescence in the prevailing conditions of social injustice.<sup>68</sup>

By the summer of 1914 Somerville had concluded that the workers' and the middle class' enthusiasm for doctrinaire Socialism was on the wane in Europe, but he believed that this should not be interpreted as resignation about the capitalist system as it was then functioning. "Discontent is growing wider and deeper. I do not think that there has been any time since 1848 when revolutionary thought and revolutionary feeling were so strong as they are today".<sup>69</sup>

---

<sup>67</sup>Somerville, "Syndicalism in 1913", Catholic Social Year Book for 1914, 89. See also Pelling, Popular Politics, 147-164. Pelling reached the same conclusions after noting unemployment rates and strike statistics.

<sup>68</sup>Somerville, "Labour Disputes", 97.

<sup>69</sup>Somerville, "Successors to Socialism", Month (May 1974):174.

Workers were considering other schemes to replace the established order -- Syndicalism, Guild Socialism, Economic Federalism and Distributism. In an article written just before the War, he outlined the chief characteristics of these new doctrines and found the strengthening of trade unionism and the wider distribution of property as advocated by Hilaire Belloc's Distributists the most promising of the new panaceas.<sup>70</sup>

The outbreak of war, which was accompanied by 'outbursts of national sentiment, was proof, for Somerville, of the flimsy foundations upon which international Socialism depended. Workers in all the belligerent countries where there were Socialist movements rallied patriotically to increase production. But he was convinced that this hiatus in worker discontent would end when the war was over: "We shall feel the pinch when the loans have to be repaid . . . and when the multitudes of men now with the colours come back and glut the labour market".<sup>71</sup> The doctrinaire Socialist parties would probably not increase their strength but he was certain that the Labour Party would.

---

<sup>70</sup>Somerville, "Successors to Socialism", 173-174.

<sup>71</sup>Somerville, "Socialism and the War", Studies 3, no. 12 (December 1914):432..

The question about which we may be anxious is as to whether the Labour Party will be socialistic in spirit. By "socialistic" I mean the spirit of class war, . . . that the interests of the working-class and the interest of other classes in society are essentially antagonistic, and who are therefore disposed to think the confiscatory legislation against the propertied classes is synonomous with social reform.<sup>72</sup>

The young man who was recommended for the position as adviser on current affairs and lecturer on social science in the Archdiocese of Toronto was convinced that Catholics in Canada should be made aware of these developments.' His studies of history had convinced him that ideas, taught by a few articulate and concerned people, motivated the masses to social action. Both Catholicism and Socialism were international in organization; the problems of modern industrialism were evident in every country affected by the Industrial Revolution and therefore every country was potentially a victim of political and social revolution. Catholics must become involved in shaping the changes which were bound to occur in the not-too-distant future.

It was these convictions which made Henry Somerville decide to come to Toronto, despite the splendid opportunity which the editorial position on the Manchester Guardian offered. In addition he was adventurous, single and free of responsibility, and anxious to learn more. The opportun-

---

<sup>72</sup>Somerville, "Socialism and the War", 432.

ity to travel and to meet Catholics working in the Catholic Social movement in the United States would be invaluable dividends. In England, Father Plater was busy organizing social work among the Belgian refugees and the troops as well as doing other duties assigned to him by his religious order. Work with the working men's groups was restricted under war-time conditions. It was a good time to inform the English-speaking Catholics in Canada about the new mission of the Church. In response to a cable "Commencing salary \$1500. Come", Henry Somerville knocked upon the door of the episcopal residence, his bags in his hand, and announced, "Your Grace, I have come from England".<sup>73</sup>

---

<sup>73</sup>Boyle, Pioneer, 136.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE YOUNG REFORMER IN CANADA 1915-1918

The ecclesiastical jurisdiction in which Somerville had elected to work in 1915 was very different geographically from the urban English dioceses in which he had hitherto been most active. The Archdiocese of Toronto included not only the city, whose Catholic population exceeded 47,000 (about 12% of the total citizenry) but extended into far-flung rural areas of varying development and prosperity. Twenty-three thousand Catholics were scattered in the metropolitan hinterland which extended as far east as Oshawa, west to Welland and St. Catharines and north to the poorer frontier communities on Georgian Bay.<sup>1</sup> The parishes were still predominantly of Irish descent, but in Toronto, ethnic parishes had been founded recently for Syrian, Polish, Italian, Greek and Ruthenian (Ukrainian) immigrants. Although war production had provided a much needed infusion of economic activity in the area and had halted the recession, social problems were multiplying

---

<sup>1</sup>The statistics are compiled from information in Le Canada Ecclésiastique, 1915 and the Dominion of Canada Census, 1911.

rapidly.

Somerville was not long in Toronto before he concluded that, as in England, the main impediments to Canadian English Catholic advancement were first, the ignorance among clergy and laity of Catholic social thought and its relevance to contemporary problems, and second, the indifference of the Catholic population to higher secular education which limited individual economic and social progress. He set himself the task of broadening the knowledge and interests of Catholics and awakening them to the potential opportunities available to an organized, hardy, and dedicated group.

Somerville's methods of accomplishing these ends were those with which the Catholic Social Guild was achieving some success in England. He tried to organize social study groups for working men in the parishes; he gave public lectures and debates on contemporary Catholic social theory; and he wrote articles on these subjects in the Canadian Catholic press. During the next three years, his weekly column "Life and Labour" was a feature of the diocesan newspaper, The Catholic Register. Because it mirrored not only the progress of his work, but also the development of some of the new ideas which he supported persistently throughout his career, this lecturing and writing, and the Catholic reaction to it will be examined in some detail.



In his first column, published shortly after his arrival, Somerville announced the wide scope of his concerns; he intended to consider primarily "the needs and interests and points of view of the Catholic working man" and to open discussion on the large variety of social questions which would "affect and interest many who belong to other classes of society . . . the living wage, the rights and duties of property, trade unionism, co-operation, the slum problem, Socialism".<sup>2</sup> Politics could not be excluded from his column because all these problems implicitly required political solutions. It was, he argued, essential that Catholics be cognizant of the philosophical and religious implications of every reform scheme which politicians of all parties were proposing for society. In the past, the Church had been such an integral part of the social structure that Europe's political and economic systems had conformed to the basic ethical and moral principles enunciated by the Church, and they had worked well. Somerville said that these concepts could again play a constructive role if Catholics understood their application to contemporary problems and achieved positions of power and

---

<sup>2</sup>Somerville, "Forward", The Catholic Register, Dec. 23, 1915. Cited hereafter as The Register.

influence in public life where they could assist in their implementation.

Somerville next discussed the Church's social obligations within the context of its spiritual mission. He observed that the religious and political issues which had principally occupied men's minds in the previous four centuries had been replaced, since the Industrial Revolution, with questions about society's economic and social organization. Individuals and institutions were now being judged by their attitude to social reform; and although he did not mention the Social Gospel movement by name, it was obvious that he was referring to its proponents when he remarked:

Even religious bodies are tested by their social value. . . . The most "progressive" and influential non-Catholic preachers urge that the only way to "capture the masses" is for clergy to interest themselves primarily in improving material conditions and their spiritual betterment will follow.<sup>3</sup>

While the Catholic Church had rightly repudiated any such subordination of its spiritual to its social mission, it had "recognized the special importance of social questions

---

<sup>3</sup>Somerville, "Social Study", The Register, Dec. 30, 1915.

in our day".<sup>4</sup> In Europe, a clergy-led Catholic social movement had organized workers' study groups dedicated to the re-discovery and application of Catholic social principles to modern economic conditions.

This insistence upon the necessity of social study is the foundation of the success of the Catholic movements in Europe. Modern social problems are too complex to be solved by reformers who have no better equipment than good intentions.<sup>5</sup>

Somerville reiterated that social involvement must not be confined to the clergy or to a few Catholic lay leaders in government: "We must have an enlightened rank and file". He concluded optimistically that, "if the experience of other countries is any guide, this call in Canada to study will receive its best response among our Catholic working-men".<sup>6</sup>

In subsequent columns, Somerville launched an ardent and persuasive campaign for Catholic working men to organize study clubs as the first step in the plan for Catholic social involvement. He explained their organization, their

---

<sup>4</sup>Somerville, "Social Study", The Register, Dec. 30, 1915.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

programme and their potential as training schools for lay leadership in the Church and society.<sup>7</sup> The experience gained as church lay leaders would equip workers to seek greater union and managerial responsibilities in industry, and at the same time the study clubs would bridge occupational and class barriers within the Church as well as in secular society. These goals neither conflicted with nor would replace the work of the established Catholic charitable organizations such as the St. Vincent de Paul Society or devotional groups such as the Holy Name societies. Study clubs were to be educational, to develop leadership talent, and to be a means of communication between those clergy and laity throughout the Canadian Church who were particularly concerned with social reform.

Somerville was aware that, as in England, the clergy's fear of Revolutionary Socialism could be a factor inhibiting their support of social study clubs. To allay this concern he pointed out that in England, these groups

---

<sup>7</sup> Somerville wrote several columns in The Register specifically on Study Clubs. See for example "Social Study", Dec. 30, 1915; "Social Study Circles", Jan. 6, 1916; "How Social Study Clubs are Conducted", Jan. 27, 1916. He also made frequent references to them as a method of Catholic education in columns on other topics. The views in this chapter are a summary of his work on this topic.

"have completely checked Socialism, which in 1909 threatened to make serious inroads amongst Catholic working men".<sup>8</sup>

Although "the social situation of Canada is different from that of England, [and] the problems which face the Catholic social workers here are not the same as those in England",<sup>9</sup> study clubs were necessary tools to aid Catholic progress anywhere because

study is the essential preliminary to successful action in every country, and it is earnestly hoped that Canada will soon have an organization for Catholic social education which will do as great service for the Church as such organizations have already done in Great Britain and Europe.<sup>10</sup>

The Canadian response to this plea was mainly indifference, in spite of the moral and practical support given study clubs by Archbishop McNeil.<sup>11</sup> An appeal to

<sup>8</sup>Somerville, "The Catholic Social Guild of England", The Register, May 11, 1916.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>In The Register reports on the Study Clubs to 1918, only three appeared to have been successfully organized in Toronto parishes with a programme of sustained study. The Register also reported on Henry Somerville's lectures on social topics throughout the Diocese to other Church organizations. Somerville received some critical response to his columns and answered questions which were occasionally written to the editor. His ideas do not appear to have produced rousing public statements by the clergy on social reform although there were other issues, such as Irish nationalism which did elicit protests on behalf of Irish Catholics.

Catholic solidarity based on working-class consciousness was not realistic in a society which perceived itself as classless, or at least believed that unlimited economic and social opportunities were available to all ambitious and industrious citizens. Those Catholics who were most aware of the discrimination which blocked their economic advancement were often those who were also fearful of losing their faith through exposure to ideas outside the familiar Catholic milieu. Somerville soon realized that English-speaking Catholics in Canada were more isolated intellectually than Catholics in England and that their fears of apostasy must be identified and conquered.

The War was also an important factor in Catholic indifference to study groups. It depleted the male work force and absorbed the physical and emotional energies of those who found employment in the munitions and supply industries. Somerville in contrast, saw the War as a great catalyst of social change, particularly with many more women taking employment in factories. He warned that changes would come with post-war reconstruction which would affect all workers' welfare and that plans should be made now for working-class involvement in drafting some solutions to the problems which were inevitable. His disappointment with Catholic indifference to his fears was evident in some

of his columns.

Whilst urging the laity to begin self-education, Somerville devoted much time to acquainting the clergy, particularly the Seminarians, as the future priests of the Church, with their responsibilities as the advisers and leaders of the laity. To fulfill this role adequately they must become more familiar with the Church's work for social welfare, not only in the distant past, but in more recent years. He lectured on the contribution of the Medieval Church which had provided precedents for the active participation of the European clergy and laity in the nineteenth century in social reform movements. The great directive for twentieth-century Catholics was Rerum Novarum. They must become familiar with its principles and aware of the possibilities for its application in contemporary society. Along with Archbishop McNeil, Somerville believed that clerical education should not be limited to philosophical and theological studies, but should be broadened to include economics and the basic principles of political science. In his lectures and articles he recommended that clergy and laity use the bibliographies and other works published by the Catholic Social Guild of England, particularly A Primer of Social Science, written by Monsignor Parkinson, Rector of Oscott Seminary,

Birmingham.<sup>12</sup>

It is as difficult to assess the immediate impact of his first series of lectures on these topics at St. Augustine's Seminary as it is to estimate the influence of his more simplified talks to the laity in the Diocese during this three-year period. Attendance at the lecture course appears to have been voluntary, or at least it does not appear to have been part of the compulsory curriculum.<sup>13</sup> However, these activities soon convinced Somerville that study groups would not reach a sufficient number of Catholics to bring about the changes in attitude which he now believed were essential for the welfare of the Church and Canadian society. He concluded that the Catholic press would be the best vehicle through which he could establish contact with the majority of the clergy and the laity. Thus in accordance with his previously announced intention, Somerville began to introduce his Canadian readers to some basic economic theory and to discuss the particular problems of workers in a capitalist society.

---

<sup>12</sup>Somerville frequently cited books which he believed helpful for his readers. He wrote some columns specifically on books for study groups. See for example, "Readings for Catholic Social Students", The Register, Aug. 19, 1916, and "Catholic Books on Economics", Feb. 16, 1917.

<sup>13</sup>There is no record at St. Augustine's Seminary that these lectures were part of the compulsory curriculum.



He began with an article on the function of private investment in the industrial system. In it he pointed out that capitalists (whom Socialists criticized as parasites on society), should be defined as those who invested, i.e. loaned, their excess wealth in capital goods rather than spending it on immediately consumable items. Such investment enabled the creation of industrial enterprises which were then operated by labour. For this service, the capitalist along with the labourer was entitled to a monetary return. The difficulty was that in our society it could be argued that

though the capitalist does perform a true economic service . . . he gets too large a payment in comparison with the remuneration of labour. . . . Though the capitalist is necessary under present conditions yet he may be superseded under another system . . . I do not think that the present distribution of wealth between capital and labour is satisfactory and I do not believe that the capitalist system is going to last forever. But merely to denounce capitalists as thieves and parasites is to blind oneself to the facts of economic life.<sup>14</sup>

Somerville examined the doctrinaire Socialist alternative to this faulty system because, he declared, the functions of the capitalist investor could only be re-

---

<sup>14</sup>Somerville, "In Reply to a Socialist", The Register, Feb. 3, 1916.

placed by state control of all investment capital. Obtaining such control by confiscation was unthinkable, and "no modern Socialist of any importance recommends this course".<sup>15</sup> The other option for Socialists was to buy out the capitalist by issuing interest-bearing bonds which in the long run "merely transforms the dividend-receiving shareholder into an interest-receiving bond-holder",<sup>16</sup> who must now find other productive investments for his capital. Somerville emphasized that the

Church is no apologist for Capitalism; the Church knows that the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few great capitalists is just as bad and dangerous as a State monopoly of the means of production. . . . The Church's policy of social reform has always been to diffuse wealth as widely as possible, to have a nation of small owners, to have as many men as possible small holders of capital. In this way we should avoid the evils of both Socialism and Capitalism.<sup>17</sup>

Similarly, Somerville used the controversy over wartime increases in the cost of living to expose what he believed were the fallacies of the doctrinaire capitalists who were resisting proposals for government regulation as unwise and unwarranted interference with the law of supply

---

<sup>15</sup>Somerville, "More About Socialism", The Register, Feb. 10, 1915.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

and demand which should operate in the free economy of Canada. First, he said, "There is no such law. . . . There is, [in a completely unrestricted economy] a law of price or value . . . which is . . . that the price . . . depends upon the relation of that commodity to the demand for it".<sup>18</sup> But he noted that those with economic power could regulate prices by their control of the commodity supply. When they manipulated the amounts allowed to reach the market, the resulting limited quantities kept prices high even when the product was abundant. They sent excess production away to distant markets or, if necessary, destroyed it (as in the case of fruit), rather than allowing the freely available product to depress the price. The result of these practices was that the free competition of the classical economist no longer existed. He pointed out that

under present economic conditions it is the exception not the rule, for prices to be set by free competition. In practically all industries there is a greater or lesser element of monopoly which causes goods to sell, not at their cost of production as is the case under free competition, but at the highest prices consumers can be made to pay without lessening demand to such an extent that would make the higher prices less profitable than the lower ones.<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup>Somerville, "The Law of Supply and Demand", The Register, Oct. 19, 1916.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

These monopolistic practices were not confined only to industrial enterprises. Somerville noted that

the condition of monopoly, which is the essence of a Trust, is reaching the most striking developments in retail trade. . . . Distribution is being monopolized by the "multiple-shop companies" particularly in the drug trade . . . and the department stores.<sup>20</sup>

Despite the convenience and bargain prices offered by the large retail stores,

the important fact remains that they establish monopoly in retail distribution; they mean heaping up the power and wealth in the hands of one or two large firms instead of its diffusion among a large number of small firms. . . . When the stores grow big enough they will have no competition to consider, they will have the purchasing public at their mercy, and they can charge what prices and give what services they like.<sup>21</sup>

Under these marketing conditions, the classical economists' solutions no longer applied. High prices did not necessarily attract fresh labour and capital into the market because, as Somerville pointed out,

it is difficult for new competitors to start business. The men already in the business can lower their prices temporarily, cut profits, and thus spoil the market for the new man in the first stages. In practically all modern industries there is a large element of monopoly and a close limitation on competition.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>20</sup>Somerville, "Co-operation Against Trusts in Retail Trade", The Register, Aug. 17, 1916.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Somerville, "The Law of Supply and Demand",

Governments aided these monopolies by protective tariffs which further restricted competition. In the United States, which had both tariffs and large-scale production, "the power of monopolists to restrict supply and raise prices is immensely increased".<sup>23</sup> Hence, Somerville concluded, "there is no semi-sacred law of supply and demand which a Government would violate by regulating prices. . . . There is nothing in economic theory to make such regulation unsound".<sup>24</sup>

The young English journalist used another locally contentious issue to illustrate the necessity for Catholic electors to be better informed on public policy. In 1916, citizens of Toronto were disputing the merits of public ownership of a proposed "hydro-radial" transportation system. Somerville felt that local workingmen who supported public ownership because they believed it to be a means of guaranteeing fair treatment of labour and a preventative of capitalist profiteering were inadequately informed. He pointed out that public ownership did not always achieve this end.<sup>25</sup> According to the Electrical Workers' Union, the

---

The Register, Oct. 19, 1916.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Somerville, "Public Ownership", The Register,

Toronto Hydro-Electric Commission paid lower wages than a private company, refused to accept an arbitration court award, and refused to re-instate strikers. As for profiteering, the first claim on the earnings of a publicly owned company (such as the proposed hydro-radial) was the interest on the bonds held by the private capitalists which, it was proposed, would finance the scheme. If the earnings were not equal to the bondholders' claims, the payments would be got from the general civic funds.

Somerville allowed that public ownership, although not a magic remedy, was often preferable to private ownership in certain enterprises, and he noted that this was the informed and realistic platform of the Canadian Trade Union and Labour Congress. They supported "public ownership of all franchises", that is, enterprises which are by nature a monopoly because they cannot be competitive, such as telephone or local transportation companies. Somerville concluded that in this, as in other issues, the most important lesson for Catholics, who comprised such a large percentage of the working force, was as electors to understand the ideas behind the words in these matters.

---

Jan. 13, 1916.

If these public issues were probed, it would become apparent that many "social" or "economic" questions were primarily moral problems, in that the improvement of conditions depended upon the willingness of individuals to act justly. Using the Canadian Industrial Disputes Investigation Act to illustrate this point, Somerville noted that although it was admired abroad as an excellent device for solving labour disputes, its efficacy really depended "upon individual . . . free human wills . . . , upon the honesty and ability of the individuals comprising the arbitration board [and] . . . on the goodwill of the individual disputants".<sup>26</sup> The award of the tribunal could be disregarded and then "the dispute is left to be settled by War, by the strike or lock-out, by brute economic

---

<sup>26</sup>Somerville, "Retreats and Catholic Social Work", The Register, June 15, 1916. The Industrial Disputes Investigation Act had been passed by the Federal Parliament in 1907. It was planned and drafted by W. L. Mackenzie King (then with the Department of Labour), but it was known as the Lemieux Act after the minister who piloted it through the House of Commons. Its principal feature was the prohibition of strikes and lock-outs in public utilities and mines until the dispute was investigated by a three-man board. Neither disputant was bound by the Board's finding and nothing prevented the employer from discharging employees and hiring strike-breakers. The philosophy behind the Act, as later explained by Mr. King, was that investigation of the facts was acknowledgement of "consciousness of right" and that public opinion, in a free economy would eventually force a just settlement. See W. L. Mackenzie King, Industry

strength".<sup>27</sup> He noted the case of a Hamilton munitions manufacturer who had stopped production by lock-out "rather than give the terms awarded by the Government-appointed Commission of Investigation".<sup>28</sup>

It was this and other examples of what he called the "Dehumanization of Industry", which for Somerville, made the strengthening of the trade union movement in Canada a matter of high priority. He declared that, in spite of full employment during wartime, wages for the older factory worker, although steadily employed, were lower than was generally assumed. Casual labour was scarce and was receiving high wages. The older worker with family responsibilities dared not leave his job and was a victim of the high cost of living. In Toronto at this time, he noted, hundreds of senior workers were receiving only twenty-five cents an hour whilst casual labour received forty cents. These employees needed protection: "Trade Unionism means that the employers have not a free hand in

---

and Humanity (Toronto, 1918), 210-11.

<sup>27</sup>Somerville, "Retreats and Catholic Social Work", The Register, June 15, 1916.

<sup>28</sup>Somerville, "The Mobilization of Labour for War", The Register, Aug. 3, 1916.

<sup>29</sup>Somerville, "The Dehumanization of Industry", The Register, Sept. 14, 1916.



the control of their businesses; they must share that control with Labour".<sup>30</sup> Somerville reported that the intent of the British trade unions to attain these goals had been strongly criticized by the Anglican Archbishop of Ontario. This prelate had declared at a synod meeting in Kingston that the intransigent attitude of these unions was impeding the war effort. Somerville, however, vigorously defended the trade union movement in his column declaring that, "Trade Unions mean Industrial Democracy; the absence of Trade Unions means Industrial Despotism".<sup>31</sup> While admitting that "there is nothing inherently sacrosanct about Democracy or essentially evil in Despotism", Somerville argued that the power of trade unions in Britain meant that their consent had to be obtained not only about wages and hours of production but also about the processes of production. The fact that organized labour in Britain had consented to the severe restrictions in the Munitions Act in 1915 showed that they did exercise their

---

<sup>30</sup>Somerville, "The Mobilization of Labour for War", The Register, Aug. 3, 1916.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

power responsibly.

Somerville warned the workers that there were schemes for the settling of labour disputes which appeared to offer protection and redress, but which on examination had significant defects. He devoted two columns to an analysis of the recently devised Rockefeller scheme which had received wide publicity.<sup>32</sup> Somerville disputed Rockefeller's declaration that because the interests of labour and capital were identical all industrial disputes were due to misunderstanding. This was a half-truth based on an appeal to selfish class-interest and as the foundation for social peace it was, he said, misleading. Social justice, not self-interest, should be the chief basis for labour settlements: "Get each party to recognize that it has duties and that the other has rights",<sup>33</sup> was, Somerville

---

<sup>32</sup>The Rockefeller Plan had been described by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., "Labour and Capital Partners", in The Atlantic Monthly 117 (January 1916). (This was reprinted in the New York Times.) In the article he credited W. L. Mackenzie King as the investigator who discovered a mutual relationship between capital and labour. See also H. S. Ferns and B. Ostry, The Age of Mackenzie King (London, 1955), 198-205. They are not so complimentary but they credit Mr. King as being a principal person in the drafting of the scheme.

<sup>33</sup>Somerville, "Mr. Rockefeller and Industrial Relationships", The Register, Feb. 17, 1916.

declared, a more realistic premise. He derided the scheme's devices whereby employees could appeal their grievances through a succession of company executives as

nothing but the privilege of regularly talking matters over with the Company, together with a cumbrous and doubtful method of redress in cases of individual grievance. . . . Rockefeller employees . . . are at a disadvantage compared with the majority of their fellows in the skilled trades. For the Rockefeller plan does not recognize trade unions.<sup>34</sup>

Somerville dismissed Rockefeller's declaration that labour and capital are partners in business as a meaningless platitude because partnership means having a share in the management and the profits. At the present time "labour is carefully excluded from control, from sharing in the profits . . . Mr. Rockefeller's plan is no solution of the labour problem".<sup>35</sup> Somerville concluded that, as trade unions are such a vital part of modern industry, "until Mr. Rockefeller consents to give full recognition to trade unions he cannot consider himself as a progressive

---

<sup>34</sup>Somerville, "A Rockefeller 'Industrial Constitution'", The Register, Feb. 24, 1916. See also David Bercuson, "Introduction" to the 1973 reprint of Industry and Humanity, xxii, where he notes Mr. King's fear of trade unions as socially divisive.

<sup>35</sup>Somerville, "A Rockefeller 'Industrial Constitution'".

employer".<sup>36</sup>

Since more, similarly inadequate, labour legislation was likely to be devised, Somerville was concerned that Catholics, who were guided by the social philosophy of the Encyclicals, should attain positions of influence. By holding power in trade unions and in government, they could help draft labour laws and become the bargaining agents for workers in industrial plants. To encourage them he publicized the achievements of Catholics who had become influential lay leaders. One such occasion was the Convention of the International Unions of Bricklayers, Masons and Plasterers in Toronto in January, 1916. Somerville interviewed the President, William J. Bowen, and several other Catholic delegates who declared that because many Catholics were active in the American labour movement "they have won a corresponding share in the control of the unions".<sup>37</sup> With this power they were able to thwart the radical unionists. The tactics of the latter were to use the workers' justified discontent with their deplorable

---

<sup>36</sup>Somerville, "A Rockefeller 'Industrial Constitution'", The Register, Feb. 24, 1916.

<sup>37</sup>Somerville, "A Catholic Labour Leader's Survey", The Register, Jan. 20, 1916.

working conditions to foment an attack on the whole constitution of society. But these Catholic leaders had so far successfully argued that

though there is much evil in present society that is to be remedied, much injustice that is to be fought against, yet there is much of value in our society that we ought to be careful to preserve and therefore we must reject a policy of revolution that would reduce the present social order to ruins in order to build a new society out of the debris.<sup>38</sup>

Somerville warned his readers that these mature, moderate men would not be in power indefinitely, and their places must be taken by a new generation of young Catholics who were equipped to uphold Catholic values. Although he frequently lauded the efforts of the European Catholic clergy and laymen working for industrial unionization, he did not advocate their chief instrument, the confessional Catholic or non-denominational Christian labour union. In fact he concluded that confessional unionism would be a retrograde policy for both the Church and the labour movement in North America and would not benefit either institution. He pointed out that, at the recent strike at Thetford Mines, a contributing factor to the "raw deal" which labour received from the administration of the Industrial Disputes

---

<sup>38</sup>Somerville, "A Catholic Labour Leader's Survey", The Register, Jan. 20, 1916.

Investigation Act, was the fact that the workers were divided between two unions, one secular and affiliated to the American Federation of Labour, and the other a Catholic union. A more effective policy for safeguarding Catholic principles was that practised in the United States where the clergy and laity supported strong secular groups such as the American Federation of Labour. He believed that

the division of workers into unions on denominational lines weakens the power of the unions. Nor are the disadvantages purely economic. The formation of confessional unions as rivals to the unions already in the field cannot fail to arouse bitterness and hostility to the confessional unions among the general unions. The Labour movement in Canada as a whole is not anti-Catholic, but it is in danger of becoming such if Catholics unnecessarily attempt a separatist policy in trade unions.<sup>39</sup>

Somerville was troubled as well at this time by his discovery that Catholic institutions were conducting their traditional charitable activities in an inadequate and obsolete fashion. He attributed this to the fact that most Catholics defined "social work" as the offering of money and care to the poor, the mentally and physically

---

<sup>39</sup>Somerville, "Labour and the Lemieux Act", The Register, Oct. 5, 1916, Editorial. This was an unsigned editorial but we can reasonably assume that it was written by Henry Somerville. The editor did not at this time comment on labour and economic matters since Somerville was the acknowledged expert on the staff in these topics. In addition, the style and tone of the editorial is that of Somerville. See also Somerville, "The Work of an Elite", The Register, June 13, 1918.

afflicted and the orphaned, by dedicated Religious who were supported financially by public donations. His contacts with American social reformers and his own studies had acquainted him with the complexity of social problems and with the new professional methods and personnel being used to meet them. He noted that a few far-sighted Catholic leaders such as Dr. William J. Kerby<sup>40</sup> of the Catholic University of Washington were trying to update the Church's methods but "speaking generally, . . . Catholics of this continent show no appreciation of the magnitude and urgency of the problems relating to the practice of charity".<sup>41</sup> Most significant was the advent of a new professional class of social workers who were trained in "scientific philanthropy". Most of these were non-Catholic and were organizing not only the social work of the Protestant Churches but were monopolizing the new positions

---

<sup>40</sup>Somerville, "Training in Social Work", The Register, March 30, 1916. Somerville's reference to Dr. Kerby's work is an indication of his own expertise and serious study of this problem. Kerby had received his doctorate from Louvain in 1897 in social and political science and won renown as the pioneer Catholic advocate of scientific social service. See Aaron Abell's short essay on Wm. J. Kerby in American Catholic Thought on Social Questions (New York and Indianapolis, 1968), 65-66.

<sup>41</sup>Somerville, "Training in Social Work".

opening in the public social service agencies. In response, only a few Catholic universities in North America had established courses to train professional social workers. Somerville warned that in spite of their great accomplishments in dispensing charity in the past, "Catholics cannot live on their past laurels. We have to be efficient today".<sup>42</sup>

A few months after making these observations in The Register, Somerville attended the National Conference of Catholic Charities in Washington and used their proceedings to illustrate the necessity for Catholic social agencies to up-date themselves. He reported that the main criticisms directed at the prestigious St. Vincent de Paul Societies by the professional social workers were that they did not co-operate with other agencies (Catholic or otherwise), did not keep records of their case work, did not investigate families thoroughly, and did not employ trained workers. While he neither criticized nor defended these societies, Somerville did point out that they, along with other publicly supported Catholic agencies, should accept impartial investigation. Moreover, they should "be aware

---

<sup>42</sup>Somerville, "Training in Social Work", The Register, March 30, 1916.



of the questions at issue, and they should study the new methods in the light of their experience and they might even test them by experiment".<sup>43</sup>

Somerville expanded these ideas in a forthright article in Catholic World.<sup>44</sup> He advocated a pragmatic approach in which study, experiment, assessment, and adaptation of the new discoveries in the social sciences could be applied to the traditional personal art of charity. He challenged those who would maintain the status quo:

Catholic charity can no more remain independent of the developments of modern philanthropic method than Catholic schools can be indifferent to the systems and standards of the secular institutions of the country. . . . Charitable work of its own nature always presents problems that can only be solved by hard study and after repeated experiment and error. . . . How to regulate our charitable activities so as to make

---

<sup>43</sup>Somerville, "Aid to Poor Families", The Register, Oct. 12, 1916.

<sup>44</sup>Catholic World was a monthly founded in 1865 (and is still published) by a new religious order, The Missionary Priests of St. Paul (Paulists). From its inception the magazine stressed social welfare and the importance of attending to the physical and social needs of the poor as well as their educational and spiritual requirements, particularly in urban Catholic Settlement work. An important article outlining their new philosophy in social work was Anon, "The Catholic Charities of New York", Catholic World 8 (November 1868):279-285. Somerville adopted many of the Paulist ideas. The article has been reprinted in Aaron Abell, American Catholic Thought on Social Questions, (New York and Indianapolis, 1968), 100-113.

them properly effective is one of the greatest problems that Catholics can concern themselves with in America today.<sup>45</sup>

Aaron Abell, the historian of Catholic social thought in the United States, has observed that "the approach which Somerville suggested came to prevail widely in the post-World War I period".<sup>46</sup>

The Conference of the Social Service Congress of Ontario, one session of which was chaired by Archbishop McNeil, gave Somerville another opportunity to point out that "Catholics in Canada are not doing all they might do to shape the thought of this country".<sup>47</sup> He noted the dearth of Catholic delegates in contrast to the high percentage of Protestants, two-thirds of whom were clergy. He commented tartly:

Perhaps we do not realize that the preaching of Catholic ideals of social life is a part of the teaching of Catholic Truth; and that we should be anxious to advocate and defend the Catholic doctrines of . . . the Living Wage, or the rights and duties of Property, the dignity of Poverty and the sacredness of the individual,

---

<sup>45</sup>Somerville, Catholic World 105 (August 1917):588. Reprinted in Abell, American Catholic Thought, 287-300.

<sup>46</sup>Abell, American Catholic Thought, 287.

<sup>47</sup>Somerville, "A Social Mission to Protestants", The Register, Feb. 8, 1917.

even the unfit, as we advocate and defend the doctrines of the Real Presence, the intercessory power of Our Blessed Lady and the Saints, and the divinely instituted authority of the Pope.<sup>48</sup>

Protestants, he declared, should be lauded for their philanthropic work, but because "they have to a considerable extent lost intellectual grip of principles fundamental to the Christian view of life",<sup>49</sup> they sometimes adopt programmes antithetical to their Christian intentions. If Catholics were participating more actively in such groups as the Congress, Catholic principles might be injected into a social movement "prompted and guided chiefly by mere philanthropic sentiment".<sup>50</sup>

Somerville outlined the positive results achieved through inter-denominational collaboration in England where "it was found possible for Catholics and Protestants not only to co-operate in action, but to agree on certain fundamental Christian social principles".<sup>51</sup> He noted that

---

<sup>48</sup>Somerville, "A Social Mission to Protestants", The Register, Feb. 8, 1917.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid.

<sup>51</sup>Somerville, "Hob-Nobbing with Heretics", The Register, Feb. 14, 1918.

in England, and in Ontario, there were many Catholics who disliked such "'hob-nobbing' with heretics", but led by the Catholic Social Guild, Catholic leaders had contributed "not only the ideas, but the very language" of the statement, Christian Social Reconstruction, issued by the Inter-denominational Conference of Social Service Unions. This statement of principles and proposals for social legislation for post-War reconstruction was a positive contribution to social action of the type which "secures respect for ' Catholicism as a constructive intellectual and practical force. It dissipates prejudice".<sup>52</sup>

Hostility against Catholics was becoming increasingly evident in Toronto where war-time tension sparked the smouldering tinder of religious animosity. It frequently resulted in journalistic skirmishes which seemed as bitter as those at the Front. This distressed Somerville whose reasoned and moderate presentation of contentious issues was in remarkable contrast to the general tone of The Register, which supported the Irish Nationalists, and was often vindictively scornful of Protestants. That these

---

<sup>52</sup>Somerville, "Hob-Nobbing with Heretics", The Register, Feb. 14, 1918.

abusive comments were stimulated by equally abusive anti-Catholic taunts in the Orange-tinted newspapers, made the situation no less disturbing.

Somerville maintained that the best rebuttal to Orange accusations of Catholic apathy toward the war effort was great Catholic participation in patriotic, civil and military projects.<sup>53</sup> He did not hesitate to identify and rebuke Catholic attitudes which he felt were inappropriate, harmful or outmoded. Thus he described Catholics who were only concerned about obviously Catholic interests, to the exclusion of general public affairs as "very narrow . . . and what is more, fundamentally of an un-Catholic mind".<sup>54</sup> Catholics must also cease being so parochial or racial in their loyalties and begin to act and think on national issues.<sup>55</sup> Moreover, they should not resist adopting new ideas (such as the Big Brother concept) because of an ignorant prejudice against a "Protestant fad". The habitual cautious conservatism of many "is not rational at all, it is mere laziness and apathy and pre-

---

<sup>53</sup>Somerville, "Catholics in the Commonwealth", The Register, June 21, 1917.

<sup>54</sup>Somerville, "Hob-Nobbing with Heretics", The Register, Feb. 14, 1918.

<sup>55</sup>Somerville, "Catholic Disassociation in Canada", The Register, March 1, 1917.

judice that rejects all change because it won't trouble to get out of a comfortable rut".<sup>56</sup>

Somerville pointed out that Catholics themselves contributed to anti-Catholic suspicion by their reluctance to participate in public affairs unless some special religious interest required support.<sup>57</sup> His words were harsh on this subject, probably because he had found it difficult recruiting men not only for social study clubs, but for several social service projects which he believed would involve more Catholics as contributors to the general community life.<sup>58</sup>

There are Catholics who make this Protestant blindness and consequent bigotry an excuse for every kind of damnable selfishness and narrowness on the part of Catholics themselves, for neglect to share in the nation's work, for refusal to co-operate in patriotic civic and social undertakings as if they were none of our business. The nation's business is our business. If we serve the nation efficiently we serve the Church.<sup>59</sup>

After two and a half year's work in Toronto,

---

<sup>56</sup>Somerville, "New Names and Old Ideas", The Register, April 26, 1917.

<sup>57</sup>Somerville, "Catholics in the Commonwealth", The Register, June 21, 1917.

<sup>58</sup>See the report of the first annual meeting of the Catholic Social Guild, Toronto, in The Register, April 18, 1918; also "Dismal and Abysmal Apathy", The Register, Feb. 7, 1918.

<sup>59</sup>Somerville, "The Chief After-War Problem",

Somerville concluded that the source of these retrogressive Catholic attitudes was lack of education. It had resulted in a desperate dearth of Catholics intellectually and professionally qualified to be business, union, and professional leaders. In several outspoken articles, Somerville admonished those Catholics who blamed deprivation and anti-Catholic discrimination for their inferior social and economic status. The plain truth was less consoling:

Through their own indifference, Catholics in Canada are letting themselves be out-classed by their Protestant fellow-citizens. They are . . . falling behind whether in the civil service, or professional careers, or in literature, science or industry. We cannot continue in our attitude . . . unless we are content to be an inferior people in this Dominion.<sup>60</sup>

He identified their attitude as one of "dismal and abysmal apathy" to all but religious education. But, he pointed out, no aspect of education could be safely neglected; social and economic conditions were changing so rapidly that "a high school education is necessary to all boys and girls who are to have a chance in any state of life above

---

The Register, Jan. 31, 1918.

<sup>60</sup> Somerville, "Progress or Stagnation", The Register, April 25, 1918.

that of the labouring class".<sup>61</sup> He stressed this theme in many different ways but the statistics with which he fortified his arguments were the undoubted proof to him and to Archbishop McNeil of the seriousness of the problem. He noted that in 1917, 348 Separate Schools in Ontario had no candidates sitting the High School Entrance Examination; that fewer than 200 schools had candidates and only 704 boys and 789 girls had passed from the Separate Schools to High Schools.<sup>62</sup> With the Catholic population of Ontario at this time over 500,000, the cause of these shocking figures could not be entirely attributed to lack of opportunities for higher education but to "lack of desire . . . lack of appreciation of its value and power".<sup>63</sup> Education, Somerville repeatedly emphasized, would develop the leaders for the Canadian, not just the Catholic

---

<sup>61</sup>Somerville, "It is Mind that Rules", The Register, Jan. 3, 1918.

<sup>62</sup>Somerville, "A High School Education is Needed for Every Normal Child", The Register, May 16, 1918.

<sup>63</sup>Somerville, "The Means to Power", The Register, March 28, 1918.



community. "We need laymen . . . with genius for leadership and large organization, that we may be ridden of that narrowness of outlook that is holding back Catholic progress in Canada".<sup>64</sup>

Somerville concluded as well, that by their indifferent support of their press, Catholics were neglecting one of their most potent educational tools. Clergy and laity were both guilty of this. He asked caustically:

Whoever heard of any parish in the British Empire that put forward the same effort for a Catholic paper that it would put forward for purchasing a new set of Stations of the Cross pictures or for getting a memorial stained glass window?<sup>65</sup>

But he also maintained that the Catholic press must merit more support through higher standards of journalism. Their columns should include discussions of current social and political problems as well as news of the local parishes' devotional and social activities. He did not intend, however, that the press should become a vehicle for supporting a particular political party. Such a strategy, he declared,

<sup>64</sup>Somerville, "The Higher Command", The Register, April 4, 1918.

<sup>65</sup>Somerville, "What Next", The Register, Dec. 27, 1917.

"was the surest way of isolating ourselves from the rest of the nation".<sup>66</sup> "We should do better by working to educate the Catholic mind than by trying to organize the Catholic vote".<sup>67</sup>

Although Henry Somerville was forthright in criticizing the educational, political and social apathy of Canadian Catholics, he was not a theological or social radical in the contemporary sense. He did not seek to change, but to bring to fruition the principles which he found outlined by the magisterium of the Church. These were based on The Bible, the Church's traditions, the writings of the Doctors of the Church, particularly St. Thomas Aquinas, and most recently and urgently the Papal Encyclicals. He believed in and practised obedience to the hierarchy in matters of faith and morals and he eschewed theological controversy. Thus, although he was aware of the Modernist Movement, he never commented on this controversy in any of his articles or editorials.<sup>68</sup> He supported

---

<sup>66</sup>Somerville, "Catholics and Political Action", The Register, Jan. 10, 1918.

<sup>67</sup>Somerville, "Drawbacks to Political Action", The Register, Jan. 17, 1918.

<sup>68</sup>The Modernist Controversy, according to Vidler, could be compared to that on theological liberalism in Protestantism. Although Modernists claimed that as loyal Catholics, they only wanted to bring traditional dogma into

the Church's opposition to such practices as birth-control, sterilization of the "feeble-minded", state education for Catholics, and revolutionary socialism. He was conscientious in his observance of the Church's regulations in his personal religious practice. But he believed that Catholics should be better informed about their faith, its history and practice. He believed that their education should proceed from this to include the study of secular political and social issues because the accelerated pace of change was introducing new problems and new opportunities for Catholic citizens to contribute to their solution. He advised Catholics against confining their study or concern to issues which only affected them as members of the working class and neglecting those which should concern them as Canadian citizens.<sup>69</sup> Conversely, he cautioned the more prosperous Catholics that they should not think that "the Church has no social message for the poor except the

---

harmony with modern knowledge, their ideas were condemned by Pope Pius X as being incipiently humanist and not Christian. The movement was well known in England during Somerville's youth because it was led there by the famous George Tyrrell (1861-1909). See A. R. Vidler, The Modernist Movement in the Roman Church (Cambridge, 1934).

<sup>69</sup> Somerville, "Democracy", The Register, July 26, 1917.

preaching of contentment".<sup>70</sup>

The three years he travelled and worked in Canada and the United States were major contributors to the intellectual and social maturing of Henry Somerville. He later described it as "the best educational experience of my life", and Archbishop McNeil as "the greatest teacher I ever had".<sup>71</sup> He moved freely in a wide Catholic circle in Canada and the United States, with the result, he said, that, "Toronto gave me confidence in myself. In its democratic atmosphere I learned to deal with people of different social positions on equal terms".<sup>72</sup> In return, this "poor boy who had spent most of his life at a factory bench and lived in a pretty rough part of an industrial town",<sup>73</sup> contributed new insights to Canadian society.

He pointed out that the rifts that were developing between Canada's cultural, economic and religious groups would, if unchecked, imperil national unity and progress.

---

<sup>70</sup>Somerville, "Democracy", The Register, July 26, 1917.

<sup>71</sup>Somerville, "Address to the Holy Name Society, Toronto", The Register, Dec. 20, 1947.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid.

These were particularly evident during the election of 1917 and he reminded Catholics that "as patriots they have to work for national unity . . . they have to beware of letting religious issues be confused with political or racial issues".<sup>74</sup> With Archbishop McNeil, Somerville sought to eliminate parochialism and foster more concern for unity in the Church and the nation. Because his judgments were informed, acute and often prophetic, he became the Archbishop's chief adviser on social and economic matters.

His sojourn in Canada was climaxed in late 1918 by the award of an honorary M.A. from St. Francis Xavier University. He was always proud of this, his only university degree, for it proved that unlimited opportunities were available for all Catholics if they were diligent. In his address to the graduating students (and their parents) he reiterated many of the pleas which he had made in the columns of The Register, for Catholic support for post-secondary education.<sup>75</sup>

---

<sup>74</sup>Somerville, "What Next", The Register, Dec. 27, 1917.

<sup>75</sup>These were later published as a pamphlet entitled Higher Education and Catholic Leadership: The Problem in Canada (Toronto, n.d.).

In December, 1918, Somerville went to England on holiday, intending to return to lecture at St. Francis Xavier. However, the Catholic Social Guild in England pleaded that as labour unrest and unemployment were threatening social stability, he was needed as organizing secretary. He regretfully notified Archbishop McNeil of his decision to accept their offer, although he confessed that after three years' absence

the English climate is maddening and the general arrangement of things so out of date, so lacking in order and swiftness and the people so slow yet so struggling, that I wish myself back in Toronto with its newness, its quickness and conveniences. However I feel that I have some obligation to work in England for I think that the social problem is such that I am more needed here.<sup>77</sup>

Family problems too had intruded to alter Henry Somerville's plans and he confided to the Archbishop:

---

<sup>76</sup>Somerville to Archbishop McNeil, February 3, 1919. This letter is postmarked, Belfast, where Somerville was on assignment for The Toronto Daily Star. McNeil Papers, Archives of the Archdiocese of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid.

My mother took ill with pneumonia and died whilst I was at home. I am the eldest of ten children, seven of whom are at school or at college. My father, being a labouring man, with no experience of education or of placing young people in good positions of employment himself, wishes to have me nearby in order to discuss these questions about the raising of the family.<sup>78</sup>

Somerville was also concerned about the state of the Church in England. He reported that

the Church is far weaker here than in Canada, so far as I know Canada. We get talented converts from the Church of England who make a good literary show for us, but among the poor the leakage is unspeakably appalling. Our English Catholics do not support the church with one-half the financial generosity shown in Canada and consequently the Churches are under-staffed and poorly equipped in all sorts of ways. . . . I don't think a priest in Manchester has a telephone. After Canada, these things get on my nerves.<sup>79</sup>

To supplement his income, Somerville obtained a post as correspondent for The Toronto Star, and embarked on a new career. He concluded therefore, "I am not likely to return to work in Canada".<sup>80</sup>

<sup>78</sup>Somerville to Archbishop McNeil, February 3, 1919.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid.

## CHAPTER 6

### THE MATURING OF SOMERVILLE:

ENGLAND 1919-1933

Somerville's apprehension about English Catholic apathy toward the social mission of the Church was justified. During his absence the Catholic Social Guild had struggled with Catholic indifference and complacency about social problems which were multiplying rapidly. The war had drawn the public's attention to venereal disease and prostitution, long a matter of Catholic concern, but it had also pushed other matters of equal importance into the background. Somerville believed that issues such as unjust wages, inadequate housing, lack of protective labour legislation, exploitation of unskilled and female workers, would soon emerge again and become catalysts of social and political radicalism. On his return he resumed his assault on the lethargy of the English Catholics on these issues in a variety of ways.

The Guild, led by Father Plater, still believed that education was the key, and workers' study groups the means, which would ensure Catholic contributions to the solutions of these problems. Lack of money still hindered



them for, as Father Plater ruefully observed, Catholics would aid almost any cause except that of Catholic social education, even to "the maintenance of superannuated cats and asthmatic poodles".<sup>1</sup>

In spite of their poverty, the Guild decided that some money must be spent on a vigorous and efficiently administered campaign for new members and more effective educational programmes. This was an urgent priority if they were to retain the support of Catholic intellectuals who had recently been attracted to the Catholic Social Guild.<sup>2</sup> To these ends, the Guild's London office was closed; in the summer of 1919 a new office was opened in Oxford and the former volunteer secretary, Mrs. Virginia Crawford, was replaced by Henry Somerville as a paid full-time secretary-organizer.<sup>3</sup> A meagre salary of three

---

<sup>1</sup>The Tablet, October 16, 1915. Quoted by Georgiana McEntee, The Catholic Social Movement in Great Britain (New York, 1927), 217.

<sup>2</sup>In a pamphlet, Some Recent Messages to the Catholic Social Guild (Oxford, 1919), such notables as Cardinals Gibbons and Mercier, Dr. John A. Ryan and Hilaire Belloc had lauded the objectives and work of the C.S.G.

<sup>3</sup>The closing of the office and Somerville's appointment offended Mrs. Virginia Crawford as she had been the Guild's unpaid Secretary since 1912. She thereupon curtailed her work for the Guild. She was eventually persuaded by Father O'Hea, S.J., who followed Somerville in this position as Secretary, to return to Guild work. On her death in 1948 she left £500 to the Guild.

pounds a week,<sup>4</sup> the indifference of most of the hierarchy, and the suspicions of local priests about the Guild's aims did not diminish Somerville's determination to re-organize and re-vivify the Catholic study clubs, many of which he had helped found before his trip to Canada.<sup>5</sup>

In the summer of 1920, Father Plater initiated the Guild's most ambitious project to date, an annual Summer School at Oxford. This ten-day forum for workers and study club members was attended by men and women, most of whom were from the northern industrial towns of England.<sup>6</sup> Somerville was appointed staff lecturer on contemporary

<sup>4</sup>Canon Alfred Winsborough, letter to Jeanne Beck, November 26, 1974. Many of the Guild's records have been destroyed. Personal reminiscences are the source of some of these details.

<sup>5</sup>Canon Alfred Winsborough, letter to Jeanne Beck, March 13, 1975. Canon Winsborough also noted this lack of enthusiasm for the C.S.G. among the clergy and bishops in his autobiography, Lessons from Life (Bridgend, 1974), 55.

<sup>6</sup>From the beginning, women had been welcomed as active workers in the C.S.G. Father Plater and Somerville had noted that the War had accelerated the rate of increase of women entering the labour force. Some Catholic women were becoming involved in the Suffragette Movement. The Guild believed that as women's demand for equal political and economic rights increased, the education of Catholic women in the principles of their Church was a matter of urgency. One Catholic lady of some fame who campaigned for equal pay for equal work, votes for women and the propriety of careers for married women was Mrs. Alice Meynell, the journalist and poet.

social issues. It was a gratifying recognition of his talents, as the other lecturers were either Jesuits or laymen such as F. F. Urquhart, a Balliol graduate, all of whom were considered experts in their respective disciplines. It was the enthusiasm and optimism generated by the Summer School that encouraged the Guild to launch their monthly journal The Christian Democrat, in January 1921, with Henry Somerville as the first editor.

The Guild's jubilation over these accomplishments was quelled that same month by the sudden death of Father Plater. He was forty-six; overwork had exacerbated a long-standing heart ailment. Plater was irreplaceable; he had achieved a sensitive, unassuming accord with workers whilst cultivating an awareness of modern social and economic trends. Because of his ability to discover and train men of humble origins such as Henry Somerville and at the same time to attract privileged intellectuals such as Mrs. Crawford, the Guild contained a breadth of social and intellectual experience under his leadership which it was never to equal again. After his death, differences surfaced among the executive of the Guild. In spite of their dedication to his goal of involving Catholics in social action, they could not reconcile their divergent opinions on the most responsible means to achieve it. This is best illustrated by the issue which precipitated Somerville's resignation

as Secretary of the Guild.

The Guild executive decided to found at Oxford a college to educate Catholic working men in Catholic social principles and the social sciences. In his history of the Catholic Social Guild, Cleary declared that Somerville's greatest achievement for the Guild was to carry through the negotiations which established the Catholic Workers' College, dedicated in the autumn of 1921 as a memorial to Father Plater.<sup>7</sup> Through Somerville, the co-operation of Ruskin College was obtained, enabling students to attend Ruskin lectures in the social sciences, while he, along with other C.S.G. Summer School lecturers, became the unpaid tutors for the Workers' College. They started on a modest scale with three men enrolled in the first course.

In spite of this auspicious beginning, dissension soon arose when the Guild executive decided to purchase a large house in Oxford to replace the makeshift facilities with which the college was operating, and thereby acquired a heavy debt. Somerville, overcautious, and fearful that the serious post-war economic depression would make repayment a burden deflecting the C.S.G. from its original

---

<sup>7</sup>J. M. Cleary, Catholic Social Action in Britain (Oxford, 1961), 81.

purpose, resigned late in 1922, both from the executive and his position as Secretary. A Jesuit, Father O'Hea, replaced him, with the result that the laymen and secular clergy in the parishes did not, from then on, play the major role in the policy decisions of the Guild as Somerville and Father Plater had envisioned that they should.<sup>8</sup>

Somerville, however, did continue to work for the C.S.G., writing extensively in The Christian Democrat, lecturing, and collecting funds whenever he could find time for this work. He was increasingly busy following his resignation; he returned to London and became the London Correspondent for The Toronto Star. During the next eleven years he covered the major political and economic events which were deemed of interest to Canadian readers, including the Imperial Conference of 1923. This new job gave Somerville more money and professional prestige, but he did not resent the time he had spent, or the personal financial sacrifices he had made while working full-time for the Guild. He believed that, although "I

---

<sup>8</sup>Canon Alfred Winsborough, letter to Jeanne Beck, March 13, 1975; "Harry Somerville saw in the Guild something more than an academic institution, he saw also that it was a movement of the laity as a leaven in the social fabric as well. It was a fatal step when the Bishops gave over the Guild to the Jesuits. Sure they did great work, but the seed of their taking over bore initself [sic] its final failure. Harry thought with me that the secular clergy should have played the principal part in the growing organsation [sic], with the growth taking place on the parochial level".

have sacrificed material things for God's sake . . . contemptible as I am, I have been the means of doing important work for God's Church".<sup>9</sup>

Somerville's return to the financial security of full-time journalism enabled him to contemplate marriage to someone he had long admired, Margaret Cooper of Leeds. When confiding his long-term plans to her he admitted that his recent financial gains might not be permanent.

I am doing fairly well in the way of earning money. Perhaps I would become comparatively well-off if I threw myself into the effort at newspaper success. I don't think I ever will become so absorbed in newspaper work. I don't want to do so. I want to be always doing a fair amount for the Church and it may be that I may be needed some time again for full-time Catholic work.<sup>10</sup>

He concluded his letter of proposal with the hopeful warning:

"If you were sharing my life I am sure you would want me to consider the quality of the work I was doing and not simply the salary".<sup>11</sup>

He supplemented his income for the next eleven years with frequent contributions to literary journals,

---

<sup>9</sup>Somerville to Margaret Cooper, January 19, 1923, Somerville Papers.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

mainly English and American Catholic publications.<sup>12</sup> In addition he continued to supply articles gratis for The Christian Democrat. In all of these, the topical emphasis on political and economic affairs indicated that Somerville's determination to educate the laity had not abated. His comments on British affairs were incisive and based on a broad knowledge of recent writings by experts in politics and economics. The articles supply ample evidence of an increasing maturity and authority in his writing. An important contributing factor to this maturing was Somerville's trip to North America in the winter of 1922, at the invitation of the "People's School" of St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish.

The People's School was a remarkable experiment in worker education which offered an eight-day study session to any agricultural or industrial worker. The courses ranged from elementary arithmetic, literature, and grammar, to Somerville's lectures on "Social Science". On this tour Somerville accepted invitations to lecture at Saint John and in Cape Breton but he considered that he achieved his major triumph in Montreal, where he gave a week-long series

---

<sup>12</sup>These journals included, The Month, The Dublin Review, Studies, The Catholic Herald, Catholic World, Commonweal.

of lectures for the Loyola School of Sociology.

The question period produced a challenge from members of the Montreal Labour College which Somerville and the Montreal papers described as a "Bolshevist Club" in the working-class district of Montreal. They invited him there to debate his thesis that religious principles and the social thought of the Catholic Church could aid the working class to achieve social justice. He was gratified, Somerville reported, that a large crowd heard him speak on "Religion and Labour", and that a lively debate followed, but best of all, "it was reported with great elaboration in the daily press, and all my meetings there during the week, except private lectures in religious houses were henceforth given generous publicity".<sup>13</sup>

Somerville included Washington in his itinerary in order to meet Dr. John A. Ryan, the distinguished leader of the Catholic social movement in the United States. He was immensely pleased to accede to Ryan's request that he give a lecture to his students at the Catholic University

---

<sup>13</sup>Somerville, "In Canada and the United States", The Christian Democrat (May 1922):7. The Montreal papers did give the Somerville lectures extensive publicity. See The Gazette, March 14, 15, 16, 17, 1922; The Montreal Star, March 14, 15, 16, 1922.



of America. In Washington and New York Somerville made valuable contacts with the officials of the National Catholic Welfare Council.<sup>14</sup> Through them he met laymen and priests who were becoming influential in the American labour movement, and ~~were~~ making policy recommendations to government and unions.

During this period between 1919 and 1933, when he left The Star,<sup>15</sup> Somerville's attention was, in the main, focused on four problems. First, how could the Church's social doctrine be most effectively presented to Catholics; second, what political party was the most effective repre-

---

<sup>14</sup>The National Catholic Welfare Council (later Conference) was proposed in 1919 as a Catholic agency to centralize the work of the American Catholic hierarchy in education and social reform. The birth of this organization was difficult, indeed it was nearly still-born, because some bishops feared it would undermine their authority in their respective dioceses. Final papal authorization was not received until July 1922. Once approved, the Conference was supported by the leading Catholic educational and social reformers in the United States. Members soon became active in labour unions, social service agencies and political parties.

<sup>15</sup>Somerville's replacement as The Toronto Star's London correspondent was Matthew Halton, who later became one of Canada's most famous war correspondents.

sentative of the British working-class; third, could working class Catholics licitly support a political group whose leaders believed in, or appeared to advocate "Socialism"; fourth, what positive policies could Catholics support when political parties sought to alleviate economic and social problems through legislation? Somerville was particularly concerned about these issues because it was evident that, although most Catholic members of the working class were still politically apathetic, their union leaders were frequently anti-religious and a few were declared Communists. Somerville believed that if the working class, as well as government and union officials could be made aware of the Church's contributions to social justice in the past, they would then appreciate the Church's present worth and press for social reforms which incorporated its social philosophy. To this end he published several series of essays on economic and social history, and a book on the Catholic Social Movement in Europe, as well as many individual articles which drew comparisons and made analyses of contemporary problems in the light of the Church's past experiences.<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup>Somerville, Letters on Social History: The Catholic Social Guild Yearbook, 1924; "Studies in Social History", a series in The Christian Democrat, March 1928 to January 1929; "Labour in Modern England", The Christian Democrat, June 1929 to March 1930; Studies in the Catholic Social Movement (London, 1933).

In these studies, one of Somerville's main themes was that church-affiliated institutions such as the medieval guilds had supplied a kind of economic and social security to workers now missing in contemporary society. The guilds succeeded because they had flourished in a society which acknowledged the spiritual authority of the Church and accepted its moral guidance on economic and social questions. He admitted that the system had flaws and that within the Church there were serious lapses from its standards:

There were Catholic princes and statesmen and merchants, to say nothing of ecclesiastics, in whom the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choked up the Catholic doctrine.<sup>17</sup>

Nevertheless, workers had been secure because medieval society accepted the premise that the community was a collectivity, responsible to God for the welfare of persons within it. St. Thomas Aquinas, in addition to strictures on usury, had expounded economic principles which stressed the necessity for a just wage and a just price.

---

<sup>17</sup> Somerville, "How the Reformation Dechristianized Economics", Month 147 (August 1926):127.

In his historical essays, Somerville frequently quoted R. H. Tawney, who had emphasized that one of the most pernicious results of the Reformation was the growth in England of ruthless and anti-social individualism.<sup>18</sup> Somerville labelled the early years of the Industrial Revolution which followed, "the darkest age in English History", because the new factories were operated by an exploited and helpless proletariat. They were helpless because the Church's moral authority had been discarded and the individual conscience which replaced it, proved to be an inadequate restraining force.<sup>19</sup> Somerville pointed out that it was the Protestant Tawney who had declared that "the moral self-sufficiency of the Puritan nerved his will but it corroded his sense of social solidarity".<sup>20</sup>

Somerville's admiration for Tawney and other socially active intellectuals was somewhat suspect among

---

<sup>18</sup>Somerville, "The Protestant Parentage of Capitalism", The Christian Democrat (February 1930):22.

<sup>19</sup>Somerville, "The Darkest Age in English History", The Christian Democrat (January 1930):4-8.

<sup>20</sup>Somerville quotes R. H. Tawney, Religion and the Rise of Capitalism, 230, in "The Protestant Parentage of Capitalism", The Christian Democrat (January 1930):22.

the conservatives in the Catholic Church because the former supported the British Labour Party and advocated legislation which critics labelled "socialist". He therefore devoted a large portion of his writing to a study of the policies and progress of that party to ascertain if it should be included in the "Index" of prohibited groups for Catholics. In addition he investigated several other groups who were wooing working class support. His studies illustrate the wide spectrum of political and economic choice which was available in Great Britain between the Wars. He strove, in these, to be informative and unbiased, to distinguish the clamorous "faddists" from those who were potentially influential. Since all these groups frequently quoted professional economists, academics and political theorists, he was equally diligent in analysing the theories of men such as G. B. Shaw, John Maynard Keynes, Hilaire Belloc, G. K. Chesterton, G. D. H. Cole and Philip Snowden, to name only a few.<sup>21</sup> He examined the programmes of the

---

<sup>21</sup> Somerville reviewed their books for Catholic scholarly journals and frequently referred to current economic theories in his articles. See for example, "George Bernard Shaw Socialist", review of The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism, in Studies (September 1928):455-64; review of F. J. C. Hearnshaw, A Survey of Socialism, Studies (December 1928):715-16; review of G. D. H. Cole, Social Theory, Month (September 1921):497-98.

In Somerville's footnotes there were also frequent references to recent books by these and other observers and theorists. He might refute their ideas vigorously but he

Communists, the Guild Socialists, the Distributists and to a lesser extent, of Social Credit. The British Labour Party received his most thorough scrutiny because he believed that clarification of its status for Catholics was one of the most urgent and immediate problems facing the Catholic Church in Britain.

The Labour Party, which claimed to represent the working class, advocated policies which some of its leaders described as "socialist". If the Church found these to be truly Socialist, Catholics, in accordance with Rerum Novarum, would be censured for supporting it and forbidden to be on the party executive. Somerville's approach was to examine the party's declarations and actions to ascertain whether the rash statements of the radical wing of the party necessarily committed the majority to revolution and the elimination of private property. By proceeding in this manner, Somerville was subtly but persistently querying the Vatican's blanket condemnation of "socialism" which disregarded the national or linguistic milieu in which the term was used. He did not question the Papacy's wisdom in condemning Socialism as defined in the Encyclicals, but

---

presented their arguments cogently.

he hesitated so to label all of the political and economic remedies which even labour party members who called themselves socialists, would apply to Britain's problems. In adopting this position, he was undoubtedly influenced by the fact that at that time the working class believed the traditional parties ignored most of their grievances unless they were forced to pay them some attention in a national crisis.

After a thorough examination of the British Labour Party, Somerville concluded that it "is formally, though not really a Socialist Party, having inserted a Socialist clause in its constitution. It rejects revolutionary methods of attaining Socialism".<sup>22</sup> In his survey of its evolution, he noted that before the Great War, British Socialists were split into two camps, the revolutionary and the evolutionary. The former, by their own admission were Marxian, and believed that the transition from capitalism to socialism would only be achieved through a class revolution. These were, however, a minority group, opposed by the Labour Party's most influential theorists,

---

<sup>22</sup>Somerville, "The Political Impotence of British Labour", Studies (March 1921):13.

Sidney Webb and George Bernard Shaw. Indeed it was Shaw who expressed reservations about the Marxian reliance on force as the instrument of social change, with the reminder that "force is equally the midwife of chaos and chaos is the midwife of martial law".<sup>23</sup> The "socialism" that British reformers advocated, Somerville declared, would be achieved through the workers' voting power. Workers' control of the means of production would be achieved gradually through the expropriation of the necessary industries with compensation to their owners. Somerville did not state that he considered these policies as necessarily beneficial for the workers, but he did point out that Fabian "waffling" on this important issue indicated the lack of a consistent political philosophy within the party and uncertainty about the methods most effective to reach their goals.

Somerville continued to question the extent of the Labour Party's commitment to "socialism" when it became apparent during the 1920's that they were unable to agree on the forms of public ownership. Were the expropriated

---

<sup>23</sup>Somerville paraphrases Shaw, "Recent Developments of Socialism", Studies (March 1921):13.



factories to be directly controlled by the state? Some party members argued that this was merely a form of state capitalism. Alternatively, was control to be exercised directly by the workers through their own elected committees? That method, Somerville noted, had been tried recently in Russia but had been abandoned as it had led to chaos. The party's confusion on this issue was evident in the vacillating and uncertain statements of their leader Ramsay Macdonald whose intellectual meanderings, he declared, were typical of the leaders of the party. They had begun as intemperate radicals but political and economic realities had forced them to temper and adjust their position so that

it is impossible to say what the majority of the leaders believe in. They disbelieve in revolution; they profess fundamental opposition to the present system, and therefore they cannot frankly support measures designed to improve and not to destroy the system; yet they have no coherent proposals for establishing any other system.<sup>24</sup>

Somerville summed up their dilemma in an article explaining Macdonald's position to American Catholics:

---

<sup>24</sup>Somerville, "The Political Impotence of British Labour", Studies (March 1921):12.

it would continue to be in a constant turmoil, always seeking a millennium impossible to attain. Somerville believed that the Labour Party's greatest weakness was its lack of clearly defined principles against which all its policies could be measured.

Somerville also found the party ineffective as an agent of change because of the calibre of its parliamentary representatives. Too frequently, he declared, they were elderly trade union officials, who were completely "out of their element" at Westminster. A candidate was chosen not because of his political fitness, but as a reward for long service to the union. He might be a sensible man, but he was "without much idealism or intellect . . . too old to learn the Parliamentary game".<sup>26</sup>

With such ambiguities of policy and weakness in its personnel, Somerville believed that the label "Socialist" fastened by some members of the Catholic Church on the British Labour Party was a misnomer. Catholics should not be criticized for supporting the socialist Labour Party of Britain, for what the hotheads said and what the party did, or was prepared to do were two different things:

---

<sup>26</sup>Somerville, "The Political Impotence of British Labour", Studies (March 1921):16, 17.

He had to adapt his Socialism to the conservative trade-union mentality of the time, which was fairly faithfully represented by the late Samuel Gompers . . . Macdonald has been consistently employed in emptying Socialist doctrines of their content. . . . He is of the Socialist sect called revisionist. . . . He retains old formulae, but gives a new interpretation -- and the new interpretation is not a development, but a negation of the old doctrine. . . .

When he was Prime Minister his government was more conservative than any that has ruled Britain since the time of Lord Salisbury.<sup>25</sup>

Somerville admitted that the Independent Labour Party was still dominated and led by impatient young Socialists, who were, as Macdonald had once been, so conscious of their working-class origins that they still regarded the propertied classes as their enemies. But as maturity and the responsibilities of high political office had tempered Macdonald, so, he concluded, would time and success temper these "young Turks". It was the nature of this party, that all of their leaders, "Socialists" in their youth, would be under pressure in their maturity, from the new generation of impatient radicals who were determined to speed up the demise of the capitalist system. This cyclical process had already weakened the party, and

---

<sup>25</sup>Somerville, "James Ramsay Macdonald", Commonweal (May 4, 1927):711.

Socialists . . . have got Socialistic resolutions passed by Labour assemblies. But all their triumphs are purely verbal. They do not achieve Socialism; they often do not try to achieve Socialism; they take refuge in a purely empirical policy little different from that of Conservatives or Liberals. Socialism is losing its terrors because it is losing all meaning.<sup>27</sup>

He concluded that the party was so ineffective in its present state it was not likely to solve many of the working man's problems. Hence he saw opportunities for young Catholics who were Labour Party supporters to introduce the principles of the Encyclicals into the party. He declared:

I believe that there is need to find some valid way of regularizing the position of those Catholics who are calling themselves Socialists. . . . Socialists have always deserted Socialism when they have obtained positions of responsibility.<sup>28</sup>

With the Church's present inflexible policy, Catholics in the Party were at a great disadvantage as "it is sometimes difficult to get much consideration in the Labour Party if one does not give lip service to Socialism".<sup>29</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Somerville, "Recent Development of Socialism", Studies (December 1923):583.

<sup>28</sup> Somerville, "The Catholic Worker and Political Parities", The Christian Democrat (April 1926):63.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 64.

He advised young Catholics to resist this temptation, and to seek the removal of the Socialist label from Labour Party policies. But his conclusion was that the party's political and economic statements and actions should not preclude Catholic support. "Catholics may belong with a perfectly easy conscience to the Labour, Liberal, or Conservative parties".<sup>30</sup> In effect Somerville's defence of Catholic involvement in organizations suspect to the Church required some manoeuvring through a maze of clerical pronouncements, but he held to the principle that "the question of whether a Catholic can be a Socialist . . . must depend mainly on what is meant by Socialism".<sup>31</sup>

If Somerville was tolerant of Catholic membership in the British Labour Party, he was not neutral about the support being given a maverick group called the Distributists. Distributism was one of the economic cults which attracted some disciples among upper middle class intellectuals after the First World War. Numerically the group was insignificant, but because many of its supporters were

---

<sup>30</sup> Somerville, "The Catholic Worker and Political Parties", The Christian Democrat (April 1926):63.

<sup>31</sup> Somerville, "Catholics and Socialism", The Christian Democrat (November 1928):166.

adept at coining attractive slogans, it attracted attention for a brief time. Broadly defined, Distributists believed that the social and economic system should be reformed to create the greatest possible number of small but self-sufficient landowners. In addition, small commercial and industrial firms should take the place of large enterprises. This reduced scale of production would reduce British involvement in international trade; but self-sufficiency would isolate the country from world-wide economic depression. All this could only be achieved, the Distributist pointed out, if people adopted simpler life styles and rejected the self-indulgent "consumerism" that was weakening British moral fibre.

Somerville would probably have ignored the movement as obscurantist and eccentric except that Catholics were being attracted to it through the religious and intellectual reputations of two of its most able spokesmen, G. K. Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc. Somerville feared that such support would cause the Church to lose its intellectual credibility because Distributist ideas were so far removed from the mainstream of contemporary economic studies. Moreover, their policies "would mean that Great Britain must cease to be a great industrial and commercial

nation".<sup>32</sup> Personal and community self-sufficiency he dismissed as "reactionary utopianism".<sup>33</sup>

Somerville had the intelligence and the courage to take Chesterton and Belloc on in public debates, both on the platform and in the press.<sup>34</sup> He bluntly declared that he must

expose the Distributists' absurdities because they had led so many earnest-minded Catholics up a blind alley away from the broad Catholic road, that non-Catholics were taking Distributism to be a Catholic product and were scandalized thereby.<sup>35</sup>

That Chesterton could defend some of their preposterous ideas Somerville attributed to his "besetting fault of . . . exaggeration induced by stupendous verbal dexterity . . . and an . . . eye only for the facts that appeal to his mood and failing to see the facts in their setting".<sup>36</sup>

<sup>32</sup>Somerville, "An Alternative to Capitalism", Studies (December 1925):253.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

<sup>34</sup>Mrs. Somerville vividly recalled one such meeting in which the diminutive Somerville (he was very short and slender), was flanked on the platform by the massive bodies of the two famous writers. Chesterton noted the amusing spectacle which they must have presented to the audience with a laughing tribute to "my doughty opponent". Interview with Jeanne Beck, Toronto, February 15, 1974.

<sup>35</sup>Somerville, "More Comment on Some Distributists", The Christian Democrat (September 1927):129.

<sup>36</sup>Somerville, "Distribution and Some Distributists",

He doubted if G. K. C.'s support of this doctrine would do much for the cause of the Catholic faith.

Dashing dialectical displays which delight the dilettanti and confirm the faithful do not convert the unbelievers. It is improbable that Mr. Chesterton will make converts as Newman. . . . He can prove so much that a reader feels he can prove anything.<sup>37</sup>

Distributism was "a creation of silly sentimentality, but it is worse . . . a reversion to savagery, and still worse, it is anti-social and inhuman".<sup>38</sup> Somerville concluded that Distributists, and he included Chesterton and Belloc, were

a literary set, they play with words, phrase-making is the only form of constructive effort for which they show any aptitude. . . . Of positive scientific methods, of the patient investigation of social facts . . . in studying what can and what cannot be done they show not a trace.<sup>39</sup>

Somerville found self-sufficiency a threat to peace and therefore irresponsible, and he advised that "sane Catholic

---

The Christian Democrat (May 1927):65.

<sup>37</sup>Somerville, "The Mind of G.K.C.", T.P. & Cassels Weekly (November 1925):167.

<sup>38</sup>Somerville, "Distribution and Some Distributists", The Christian Democrat (May 1927):68.

<sup>39</sup>Somerville, "More Comment on Some Distributists", The Christian Democrat (September 1927):133.



social reformers must clearly and strongly dissociate themselves" from the Distributist programme.<sup>40</sup> In his opinion, to work for the restoration of trade and for economic reform was to perform works of religion and charity.

If we neglect economic necessities we shall be discredited as unpractical. If we want to do real good we shall not retire to an intellectual desert and proclaim shibboleths.<sup>41</sup>

Such remarks were part of a campaign which Somerville began in the mid-1920's urging Catholics to do more than simply make general assertions that the remedy for social evils lay in the application of Catholic principles. They should, he declared, be developing practical schemes.<sup>42</sup> In taking this position, he was influenced by Dr. John Ryan, who had long held that it was not enough for the Church merely to oppose Socialism. Indeed, Somerville pointed out: "Mere opposition may do us as much harm as good. . . . A definite social plan is needed".<sup>43</sup> In researching the

<sup>40</sup>Somerville, "Distribution and Some Distributists", The Christian Democrat (May 1927):70.

<sup>41</sup>Somerville, "Economic Internationalism", The Christian Democrat (April 1927):50.

<sup>42</sup>Somerville, "An Alternative to Capitalism", Studies (December 1925):521-530. See also "Catholics and Economics", Commonweal (October 1925):583-84.

<sup>43</sup>Somerville, "Do We Want a Programme", The Christian Democrat (April 1925):59.

various panaceas being offered to the public Somerville was attracted to Guild Socialism, which as explained by men such as G. D. H. Cole, whose ideas he admired, embodied several policies worth Catholic consideration.<sup>44</sup>

Somerville agreed with the Guild Socialists that to lessen the hostility between industrial management and labour and to improve the low standard of living endured by the majority of the working class, were most urgent economic and social priorities. In common with Rerum Novarum, they accused most capitalists of treating the worker as a commodity, forgetting his humanity, and ignoring the fact that the wage system determined not only the living standard of the worker but also all of the social relationships within society. They believed that contemporary capitalism had destroyed the organic unity of society with the result that labour-management relations were those of confrontation not co-operation. Under these conditions, political democracy became a fraud. Somerville also agreed with Cole's criticism that the socialist leaders ignored the spiritual poverty of the working class by pro-

---

<sup>44</sup>These ideas were in such works by Cole as The World of Labour (1913), Labour in the Commonwealth (1918), and Social Theory (1920). The latter book was favourably reviewed by Somerville in Studies (September 1921):491-98.

Posing remedies only for their economic betterment. Their status as wage slaves was not going to be improved by merely transferring the decision-making authority in industry from the capitalist to the state bureaucrat. Cole believed that working conditions in industry would improve only when all who worked by hand or brain shared in the organization of production and in the profits. Guild Socialists would achieve this by separating the rights of industrial ownership from those of control of industrial production. They differed from doctrinaire socialists in that they would vest only the ownership of the means of production in the state; management of industry, control of production and distribution of the profits would be handed over to workers' guilds. The resulting co-operative spirit in industry would improve industrial relationships and thus make the omniscient state unnecessary.

Somerville was impressed by the Guild Socialists' questioning of the effectiveness of the all-powerful state, and by their vision of the organic unity of society. He suggested that Catholics should consider adapting and modifying some of their ideas as an alternative to capitalism. For example, private ownership of the means of production could be retained while workers managed and ran the industrial system. The owners would still be entitled to

fixed dividends or interest on their invested capital, but any surpluses could be distributed among the workers and managers. Somerville maintained that

those who control a business should always have the claim to any surplus that the business produces. . . . Managers and workers, not passive owners of dead capital, have the power by enterprise and economy to produce a surplus.<sup>45</sup>

He admitted that to bring these changes about, the investors would have to be compensated and that under existing economic conditions fixed long-term interest payments worked to the owners' advantage. For example, he noted that if, in 1922, those who had favoured the nationalization of the coal mines had had their way, compensation to the owners would have been fixed in relation to the mines' profit-making capacities at that time. "All the mine owners would now be thanking their lucky stars for nationalization, for they would now be receiving guaranteed interest on Government bonds";<sup>46</sup> instead the owners were

<sup>45</sup>Somerville, "An Alternative to Capitalism", Studies (December 1925):527. See also "A Scheme of Economic Reconstruction", The Christian Democrat (January 1927):110-15, and "Workers Control of Industry", The Christian Democrat (February 1927):25-28, in which Somerville explained this scheme to members of the C.S.G. In "A Guild Plan for Industry", Commonweal (October 21, 1925):583-84, the Guild Socialist solution was presented to American Catholics.

<sup>46</sup>Somerville, "An Alternative to Capitalism", Studies (December 1925):527.

losing money.

His modification of the Guild Socialist programme did not, in Somerville's estimation, undermine either legitimate capitalist investment or the Catholic principle of the inviolability of private property. He noted that the Guild Socialist concept need not be applied to all industries at once and that it could co-exist with both State and private enterprise. It would provide an alternative to capitalism which might improve productive efficiency because the workers' financial rewards would be dependent on the quality of their management and production. It would have social and economic influence because the workers' claims as organizers and producers would be recognized and rewarded.

Somerville admitted that both owners and labour were suspicious of the system. Capitalists were unwilling to give joint control a trial and the unions were suspicious that the unification of management and worker would fragment their hard-won union solidarity. As well, their experience to date with forms of profit-sharing had not been satisfactory. Yet he urged that the Guild Socialist principles be given serious consideration by all sides because industrial warfare was bringing the whole economy to the point of disaster. The strike and the lock-out were weapons of war which injured innocent non-participants and rapidly

intensified class conflict.

Although he decried the futility of the General Strike, Somerville did not proscribe the strike because at that time it was labour's only weapon. When the system under which labour and management negotiated made them adversaries, with violent confrontation the accepted modus vivendi, there was no justice in making labour defenceless by banning strikes. Nevertheless, the unions should realize that strikes "do not change the economics of the situation, making the possible terms better than they were before. . . . Strikes and lock-outs have no power to secure industrial justice".<sup>47</sup>

Somerville's articles promoting Guild Socialism provoked negative responses from several Catholic academics and clerics, all of whom, with the exception of the American, Dr. John Ryan, found his ideas either questionable in the light of orthodox Catholic social policy, or else impracticable. The Catholic Social Guild was not organized to initiate any programmes for labour and social reform or influential enough to infiltrate government, union or in-

---

<sup>47</sup>Somerville, "Arbitration Versus War", The Christian Democrat (July 1926):109. These ideas were also advanced in several other articles including, "Capitalism the Incurable", The Christian Democrat (October 1926):153-58, "English Law and Labour Unions", Commonweal (June 22, 1927):176-77.

dustrial organizations. From the beginning of the Depression, Somerville's ideas were increasingly influenced by the activist philosophy of the American Catholic Welfare Conference, a group more determined and successful in such projects than the Guild. Somerville conscientiously persevered in alerting English Catholics to alternatives which might bring about improvements in society. He believed that conditions were becoming more conducive to Catholic activism. By the late 1920's he concluded that State Socialism was losing ground and that Guild Socialism had never caught on. The divisions among the Socialists were widening. In reality, he asserted, "Social reform in present-day Britain tends to become a distribution of doles fatal to the industrial life of the country".<sup>48</sup> Under these circumstances, Somerville believed that it was a propitious time to press for "a modern equivalent to the medieval principle of the Just Price, applying it to wages, rent, interest and profits".<sup>49</sup>

---

<sup>48</sup>Somerville, "How Socialism Puts Itself in the Wrong", Month 155 (1930):224.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid.

As strikes proliferated, Somerville repeatedly urged English Catholics, both labour leaders and employers, to press for arbitration of labour disputes as one practical measure which could be part of a Catholic programme of social and economic reform. He admitted that it would not be a particularly popular measure either with employers or the trade unions. He surmised that the employers, the usual winners in strikes and lock-outs, would offer the most resistance. Labour opposition was based on the fear that arbitrated settlements would preclude the need for unions and the appointed arbitrators would have a class bias based on their superior education and social position. Their natural propensity might be to seek peace before justice by awarding only as much as they thought would avoid a work stoppage. They would, labour declared, always incline in favour of the stronger party to a dispute, which to date, had been the employers.

Somerville argued that these would not be insuperable problems if the bargaining rights of the unions were more effectively recognized in labour law. The principal obstacle was the lack of a commonly accepted standard of justice for the setting of wages and profits. Unrestricted capitalism fostered inequities which worked to the disadvantage of workers employed in hazardous or socially necessary tasks and of capitalists who had invested in



useful but high risk or high investment enterprises. He pointed out that some form of legislative protection was needed for those employers and labour leaders who would pioneer in negotiating settlements based on mutually accepted principles governing wages and profits. Their negotiations could then act as guidelines for arbitrators in industrial disputes.<sup>50</sup>

But 1929 was not a propitious time to propose such schemes to lessen labour-management rivalry in any country. Adversity bred bitter confrontation not co-operation. Frustrated by the Church's inaction, many European Catholic workers joined Socialist and Communist parties. Dismayed by these trends, Pope Pius XI chose the fortieth anniversary of the promulgation of Rerum Novarum as the occasion to issue an encyclical expressing the Church's concern about the injustices apparent in post-war industrial society. It was so explicit in its purpose and in the exposition of contemporary problems that the principles of the Encyclical were adopted immediately as the cornerstones of the Church's social theory during

---

<sup>50</sup> Somerville wrote on this ~~theme~~ frequently in the late 1920's. See for example "Arbitration Versus War", The Christian Democrat (July 1926):107-111, and "Arbitration Versus Industrial War", The Christian Democrat (October 1927):145-48, "What's Wrong with Arbitration?", The Messenger of the Sacred Heart (September 1926):284-86.

the 1930's. They were of particular significance to social reformers such as Henry Somerville and John Ryan as they could be interpreted as authorization for increased Catholic social action.

Issued on May 15, 1931, the Encyclical Quadragesimo Anno re-affirmed the Church's claim that it had a temporal as well as a spiritual responsibility in the task of eliminating injustice. Its immediate purpose was to re-assert the position taken in Rerum Novarum and to assess the effect of the drastic changes which had occurred during the forty years since Leo's initial protest about the condition of labour in industrial society. Pope Pius XI declared that his aim was threefold; to re-emphasize the principles enunciated by Pope Leo XIII, to expand and apply them forcefully to contemporary problems, and to examine the principles and development of Socialism. Two distinctive features set this Encyclical apart from other papal pronouncements of the same period. First, it was directed not only to the hierarchy, but also to "all the faithful Christians of the Catholic World".<sup>51</sup> This was

---

<sup>51</sup>The translation used in the following analysis of this encyclical is that used by Terence E. McLaughlin, C.S.B., in The Church and the Reconstruction of the Modern World, The Social Encyclicals of Pius XI (Garden City, 1957). The translation originated with the National Catholic Welfare Conference (Washington) and was one of several approved translations. It will be referred to as Q.A. in subsequent references with the numbered paragraph and page number as the identifying reference.

intended to draw the laity's attention to their accountability in social and economic as well as spiritual matters. Second, the Encyclical appealed to Natural not revealed law. This implied that the non-believer too could and should be concerned with social justice, for understanding or fulfilment of the Natural Law, does not, according to Catholic theology, require the gift of faith. All humanity is therefore morally obliged to take part in reconstructing the social order. Whenever the Encyclical did cite Scripture, it was in effect a reminder to Christian readers of their belief that God offered supernatural aid to sustain them in their obligation to act justly to all men, and that the Pope's conclusions were in conformity with the teachings of the Gospel.<sup>52</sup>

The Encyclical first reviewed the historical context of Rerum Novarum, noting that it had been precipitated by the devastating effects of industrialization on the oppressed. The rich and powerful had accepted the inequities in society as the result of economic laws, and this callous

---

<sup>52</sup>Oswald Nell Breuning, S.J., The Reorganization of the Social Economy, trans. B. W. Dempsey, S.J. (Milwaukee, 1936), 16. Much of the original text of Quadragesimo Anno has been attributed to Nell Breuning.

attitude had driven the poor to adopt revolutionary measures in recent times. Pius noted that Leo's protest against the unbridled greed and inhumanity of employers had offended many, including Catholics. Even those who agreed with the Encyclical's precepts had regarded them as "a kind of imaginary ideal of perfection more desirable than attainable".<sup>53</sup>

In spite of this lack of response, one of the principal benefits of Rerum Novarum had been the emergence of a "true Catholic social science", which was now being taught by the Church's educational leaders in all countries. As a result, Catholic principles of social justice had been seeping into non-Catholic and secular institutions and legislation. The introduction to Quadragesimo Anno concluded with the observation that Pope Leo's attack on the philosophy of economic liberalism had resulted in many states recognizing their obligation to adopt a more positive role in the protection of workers through labour legislation. In addition, Leo's defence of workers who organized labour unions had cut the ground from those who had hidden their anti-trade union prejudice behind the mask of Catholic

---

<sup>53</sup>Q.A. (14), McLaughlin, 223.

orthodoxy. Church-affiliated unions had been declared preferable, but where this was not possible or practical, the Encyclical had encouraged Catholics to join and become leaders of secular unions. These features had made Rerum Novarum the Magna Carta upon which all Christian activity in the social field ought to be based.<sup>54</sup> Amplification of its principles, however, was now necessary because even among Catholics

certain doubts have arisen concerning either the correct meaning of some parts of Leo's encyclical or conclusions to be deduced therefrom . . . and furthermore new needs . . . have made necessary a more precise application . . . or even additions thereto.<sup>55</sup>

The new Encyclical addressed itself to four contentious issues in contemporary society: ownership and the right to private property, the relations of capital and labour, the dilemma of the propertyless wage-earner and the definition of the just wage.

On property, the Church re-affirmed that ownership was a natural right which neither misuse nor non-use made forfeit. But it was noted that the state had the right

---

<sup>54</sup>Q.A. (39), McLaughlin, 231.

<sup>55</sup>Q.A. (40), ibid., 232.

and responsibility to define and control the use of property in order to ensure that it was "in harmony with the needs of the common good".<sup>56</sup> The relationship between the owners of capital and those whose labour made it productive, was one of interdependence. The well-being of the whole community depended on the maintenance of harmony and justice between these two groups. In recent times this had been destroyed because the owners of capital had set wages according to the teachings of the "so-called Manchesterian Liberals"; as a result the workers had been kept in perpetual want because they had been the recipients of the scantiest wage possible. In desperation the workers had listened to "intellectuals" who had made the erroneous assumption that workers were entitled to all the profits except those required to replace and repair capital equipment. The Pope declared that both the capitalists and the workers were in error and that the two groups should collaborate to apportion the fruits of production equitably. "Equitable" was defined as sufficient to enable the worker to save some surplus for the future as well as supply current needs. The Pope warned that a social revolution was

---

<sup>56</sup>Q.A. (49), McLaughlin, 236.

inevitable, unless such a solution could be amicably worked out.<sup>57</sup>

The complex issue of the "just wage" first articulated in Rerum Novarum, was enlarged and developed in Quadragesimo Anno. The wage system itself was not declared unjust, but

we consider it more advisable that in the present condition of human society . . . so far as is possible, the work-contract be somewhat modified by a partnership contract. . . . Workers and other employees thus become sharers in ownership or management or participate in some fashion in the profits received.<sup>58</sup>

The Encyclical noted that determining the wage was not a simple matter for it was influenced by several factors. First, and presumably the most important, it had to be adequate to support the working man and his family (my emphasis). Wages so meagre that a wife's work was required to supplement the family income were emphatically denounced as unjust. "Social justice demands that changes be introduced as soon as possible whereby such a wage will be assured to every adult working-man".<sup>59</sup> In addition it should

<sup>57</sup>Q.A. (54-62), McLaughlin, 238-42.

<sup>58</sup>Q.A. (65), ibid., 242.

<sup>59</sup>Q.A. (71), ibid., 244. .

be sufficient to allow him to acquire a little property for a home or garden if he wanted it.

The second factor in setting the wage was the state of the business. It was equally unjust for workers to demand wages so high that an employer could not pay them without ruin. But, the Encyclical noted, too often it was unfair competition through low wages which put just employers out of business. The solution was for employers and employees to plan co-operatively, aided by state legislation which would enable wage scales to be set with the goal of the common good as an incentive, neither too high for financial realities nor too low for family welfare.

A third factor in setting just wages and profits was the realization that the relationship between different producing groups in society had to be kept in balance. Specifically, the profits and wages of the industrial and agrarian groups must be in harmony to maintain the organic unity of society.

The Encyclical asserted that neither the just wage nor social justice could be attained under the present system. Inequities so permeated the relationships within society that there must be an extensive reconstruction of the social order which would aim to correct the defects in the state, institutions independent of the state, and the accepted code of public morality.



The cult of individualism, which reached its zenith in the nineteenth century, had all but destroyed the institutions which had formerly sheltered the worker. ~~The~~ State now exercised functions which had been the responsibility of lesser but independent organizations, with a resulting over-centralization which did not protect, but infringed on individual initiative. It was suggested that the State could now aid in reversing this trend by encouraging the re-establishment of vocational groups (or guilds) in which employers and employees in the same corporate enterprise could collaborate. The Pope referred to the Fascist corporatist experiments in Italy with only qualified approval, noting that some critics believed that in this particular instance, the State's bureaucracy had supplanted private initiative.

Reviewing the economic developments of the twentieth century, the Pope severely reprimanded capitalists for their immoral economic conduct. He noted with dismay that increased industrialization had produced such a concentration of wealth that

an immense power and despotic economic dictatorship is consolidated in the hands of a few who are not owners but only the trustees and managing directors of invested funds which they administer according to their own arbitrary will and pleasure.<sup>60</sup>

---

<sup>60</sup>Q.A. (105), McLaughlin, 255.

Some corporations had acquired power that eclipsed that of the State. Two different evils had resulted from the one fountainhead of corporate giants:

On the one hand, economic nationalism or even economic imperialism; on the other, a no less deadly and accursed internationalism or international imperialism whose country is where the profit is.<sup>61</sup>

These large international corporations had such control over credit that they regulated its flow throughout the entire economic system. Struggles between the giants of industry were so violent that only the strongest and those who gave the "least heed to their conscience" survived.<sup>62</sup> When they had succeeded in vanquishing their rivals, these corporations aimed for superiority over the State in order to use its resources and authority for their own ends.

In the twentieth century national states had employed the same methods in their disputes with each other; they used their power and designed their policies to promote the economic advantage of their citizens regardless of the hardship this imposed on others. Economic policy had now become a potent political weapon.

---

<sup>61</sup>Q.A. (109), McLaughlin, 256.

<sup>62</sup>Q.A. (107), ibid., 256.

Following this appraisal of modern capitalism, the Encyclical reviewed the changes which had occurred in Socialist doctrines and practice since their condemnation by Pope Leo XIII. The most profound of these was that the socialist movement was now bitterly divided, although neither side had abandoned the views on man's nature, God's authority or private property which had originally placed it fundamentally in opposition to Christianity. The more sinister of the two types of Socialism was Communism because in seeking its objectives it promoted class warfare and the elimination of private ownership:

There is nothing which it does not dare,  
nothing for which it has respect or reverence;  
and when it has come to power, it is incredible . . . in its cruelty and inhumanity.<sup>63</sup>

Equally culpable, however, were those who caused or did not try to improve the conditions which so inflamed workers that they mistakenly sought relief in the destruction of the whole social system through revolutionary Communism.

The moderates, who had retained the name Socialists, placed Catholics in a dilemma because the most responsible of this group had developed a programme which, in aim and

---

<sup>63</sup>Q.A. (112), McLaughlin, 257.

method was very similar to that of many Christian reformers. Yet modification to the doctrines of class warfare and state ownership did not exonerate the Socialists from the charge that at heart, their conception of society and authority was "utterly foreign to Christian truth".<sup>64</sup> They erred, because they denied that God was the source of man's social nature and of all his creative faculties, and the ultimate authority to whom everyone was subject and responsible. Socialism erred because its goals were materialistic, whilst for the Christian, the spiritual must always be accorded priority over the temporal. In spite of the instances where Christians and Socialists shared common concerns and compassion for those in need, the Pope found the term "Christian Socialism" to be a contradiction; "no one can be at the same time a good Catholic and a true Socialist".<sup>65</sup>

Many Catholics in recent years had ignored the Church's repeated warnings against the dangers of Socialist associations and joined the movement because they were convinced that the Church favoured the rich and neglected the workers. Pope Pius regretted that there were Catholics who

---

<sup>64</sup>Q.A. (117), McLaughlin, 260.

<sup>65</sup>Q.A. (120), ibid., 261.

"out of greed for gain do not fear to oppress the workers".<sup>66</sup> For this, he believed the Church, as an institution, was not guilty. It was not right to use religion as an excuse to deny the just demands of their employees. The workers' exodus into error had been a consequence too of the failure of governments to forestall the evils of economic liberalism. They had permitted the wealthy to look after their own selfish interest, to display callously their lack of concern with extravagant lifestyles and worst of all, to destroy conscientious competitors who tried to be just.

The Encyclical concluded with an appeal to the clergy and laity to become involved in the task of winning the workers back to the Church. Churchmen must be dedicated to the renovation of society and especially the recovery of justice and charity for the victims of contemporary paganism. The clergy had the responsibility of searching for lay apostles among both workers and employers, instructing them intensively in modern social issues, and encouraging them to become leaders in social and economic reform. Finally, all those who were concerned with the reconstruction of society must co-operate "under the leadership and teaching guidance of the Church . . . not trying to

---

<sup>66</sup>Q.A. (125), McLaughlin, 262.

press at all costs their own counsels, but ready to sacrifice them . . . if the greater common good should seem to require it".<sup>67</sup>

The immediate interpretation given this document by loyal Catholics was to accept, as did Somerville, its criticisms as valid proof of the Pope's claim that "for the building of a better social order the Church is not less necessary than the State".<sup>68</sup> Reflective examination of the Encyclical, however, revealed broad areas where it could be implicitly if not explicitly acknowledged that there were many instances where the Church's goals would have to be promoted by laity and clergy acting independently of the institutional Church's tutelage. Even in 1931 this was particularly evident in North America where priests such as Peter Dietz had been acting as expert labour advisers to the A. F. of L., a labour organization which, like all American unions, eschewed any religious affiliation. As the economic crisis worsened, Somerville kept an increasingly

---

<sup>67</sup>Q.A. (147), McLaughlin, 273.

<sup>68</sup>"The Pope and a New Social Order", unpublished manuscript, Somerville Papers.

watchful eye on the United States where, after the Encyclical was issued, supporters of John Ryan's activist leadership of the National Catholic Welfare Conference contended that it vindicated extensive Catholic involvement in secular union and government reform schemes.<sup>69</sup> Some clergy became open supporters of union activity. One bishop urged:

The obligation and the opportunity is therefore to work with labor, organized labor. To those who do not belong to a union our first message is -- organize! . . .

The Holy Father does not say that we must work with the American Federation of Labor. . . . But the Holy Father does build a new social order, new and very old, on organized labor. We cannot now create Catholic unions, so we had better use what we have -- Labor unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. There is nothing else.<sup>70</sup>

This policy was one which Somerville had been promoting for many years, but to date, progress in England had been painfully slow. His immediate goals in 1931 became the education of the clergy and laity in the implications of Quadragesimo Anno, to have Catholic theories and

---

<sup>69</sup>F. L. Broderick, Right Reverend New Dealer (New York, 1963), 196.

<sup>70</sup>Most Rev. Robert E. Lucey, D.D., "The Economic Disorders and Quadragesimo Anno", Homiletic and Pastoral Review (May 1935):863.

proposals for social and economic reform considered as viable solutions by those who possessed political or economic influence, and to keep these solutions before the general public by seizing every opportunity for their promulgation through the press or the platform.

From 1929 to 1933 his literary output was particularly extensive. He published a book (Britain's Economic Illness, 1931) and continued to submit pieces to Catholic and secular journals and newspapers. These followed the same general themes as before but his complaints about the economic system and the ineptitude of the political parties were particularly pertinent as governments, industry, and individuals seemed to be trapped together in the molasses of inertia. He maintained that they were trapped even more fixedly than was warranted by the excessive, long-term interest rates to which they had become committed during brief periods of prosperity.

It cannot be pleaded that interest is only one cost among many and has no more responsibility for present economic difficulties than any other charge on production. Interest is peculiar . . . its fixity prevents the restoration of equilibrium between costs and prices which is essential to the proper functioning of the economic system. It is the necessity to meet their obligations that causes debtors to force goods on an already glutted market, driving prices lower and lower.<sup>71</sup>

---

<sup>71</sup>Somerville, "Usury as a New Issue", Commonweal (September 16, 1931):458.



In his historical articles, Somerville had always asserted that the Church's controls over the social and economic order in the Middle Ages had prevented this abuse and contributed to the protection of the worker and thus to the stability of society. As the Depression worsened, he frequently reminded his readers that the old medieval strictures against the injustice of usury on non-risk money lending were particularly applicable in the aftermath of the 1920's boom. The old laws might, he declared, even be considered by economists searching for remedial measures to relieve that economic paralysis which was preventing national recovery.

In 1931, he was delighted to discover that John Maynard Keynes was questioning the wisdom of high fixed interest rates. Somerville believed this was a vindication of the Canonist attitude to interest and usury. He wrote two brief pieces in The Economic Journal (of which Keynes was the editor), agreeing with Keynes' theory that interest on bank deposits in times of depression had an adverse effect on economic recovery because "it only encouraged saving and discouraged socially desirable investment". Somerville explained that the medieval Canonists had forbidden those who loaned their surplus cash to charge interest for a fixed period and rate, if the borrower needed

the money to buy "fungibles", i.e. goods such as food which were consumed when being used. There should be no interest on such loans because they were a non-productive form of investment. Interest was a burden in these cases and it performed no social good. Moreover Keynes' argument that "interest upon money is an added cost upon capital goods . . . deduction from profit and a burden upon enterprise", was similar to the Church's old distinction between the lending of money for interest (which it deplored) and the investment of capital, which it regarded as a social good.<sup>72</sup>

Somerville declared that in modern terms, it was the difference between the ordinary shareholder, who received a dividend only when profits were earned, and the debenture holder who loaned money without the risk of owning, and who claimed interest irrespective of whether the enterprise produced profits or losses. Since economists of Keynes' stature agreed in principle with the Canonists that "saving should be rewarded only when it was also investment in capital goods", Somerville hoped that the

---

<sup>72</sup>Somerville, "Interest and Usury in a New Light", The Economic Journal (December 1931):64.

old economic doctrines of the Church might be considered relevant to contemporary problems.

Somerville's modest articles began a controversy in the pages of The Economic Journal which lasted several issues and attracted responses from several economists, one of whom declared: "The discussion of interest, usury and the canonist doctrine . . . impresses me as being the most important clash of ideas which has taken place for a long time in the economic field".<sup>73</sup>

A Canadian correspondent, B. K. Sandwell, replied that he found "confusion" in Somerville's ideas; he obviously did not realize that under the present system "interest is inevitable, it is part of the nature of things".<sup>74</sup> Sandwell's final thrust was:

The real, though perhaps often unconscious motive behind the contemporary attack upon interest, of which Mr. Somerville affords an example, is hostility to personal ownership and exchangeability of capital goods. . . . The Canonist doctrine seems to afford a splendid springboard for the transition to a full Soviet economy.<sup>75</sup>

---

<sup>73</sup>Lawrence Dennis, "Usury", The Economic Journal (June 1932):312.

<sup>74</sup>B. K. Sandwell, "Mr. Keynes and the Canonists", The Economic Journal (March 1932):133. Sandwell was a distinguished Canadian journalist and expert on economic and literary affairs who was editor of Saturday Night from 1932 to 1951.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., 134.

Somerville was delighted that his ideas had become the centre of controversy in academia, particularly when Keynes himself defended his proposition and agreed with his interpretation of medieval moral law as applied to economics. Moreover, Keynes indicated that he was in sympathy with his views. He included in his defence the statement that

when an act of saving merely results, however unintentionally, in a loss to someone else, it is of an anti-social tendency and the subsequent payment of interest to the saver . . . is a burden which, if it accumulates with time, may become insupportable. . . . May not Mr. Somerville be right that the social evil of usury, as conceived by the Canonists, was essentially due to the fact that in the circumstances of their time, saving generally went with the creation not of assets but of debts? . . .

Personally I have come to believe that interest -- or rather too high a rate of interest -- is the "villain of the piece".<sup>76</sup>

This episode increased Somerville's confidence in his ability as a writer and analyst and he referred to it frequently as a reminder to Catholics that if they took advantage of their opportunities and presented their case cogently, they could influence all sections of society. He became more outspoken in promoting economic reforms

---

<sup>76</sup>J. M. Keynes, "Saving and Usury", The Economic Journal (March 1932):136-37.

which he believed conformed to Catholic principles whilst condemning those he believed deviated from doctrinal orthodoxy or economic common sense.

A case in point was Somerville's attitude to Social Credit. From the period when it first caught public attention in the early 1920's, Somerville had written occasional articles questioning the theories of Major Douglas and his supporters. After the Depression began, interest in Social Credit increased but Somerville continued to dismiss the movement as one promoting economic fallacies and misunderstanding about the nature and function of money, credit, and capital investment. At the same time, he pressed more aggressively for a re-examination and restructuring of contemporary capitalism, particularly in view of the direct challenges being offered the system by the now solidly entrenched Communist government of Soviet Russia.

In 1929 he had been sent to Russia by The Toronto Star to investigate the Five Year Plans. As a fervent Catholic he was critical of the state restrictions on religion and many of his despatches to the newspaper had (in the opinion of the editors) over-emphasized this facet of Soviet policy. In articles written for Catholic journals, his analyses were, on the whole, more balanced. He noted that the "people are sufficiently fed and not over-

worked. . . . There is no rack-renting. . . . The toiling masses feel they are getting their share of the national cake".<sup>77</sup> He noted that the industrialization programme was extraordinarily successful and that "social not less than economic progress is being made".<sup>78</sup> The main thrust of his warnings about Communist infiltration in the West was that "the strength of Communism lies in the evils of Capitalism"; the "boom and bust" growth pattern of the Twenties had culminated in the inevitable withering of the Great Depression.

By 1932, in spite of these successes, Somerville was somewhat dissatisfied with his newspaper assignments. He was disappointed that The Star had rejected some of his Russian dispatches, for Harry Hindmarsh, the editor, was not receptive either to his condemnation of Russia's religious policy, or his preference for assignments on grave economic and social issues. The Star would have preferred that he investigate lighter topics and file more titillating articles on the social conquests of the Prince of Wales and his circle. Similarly the Catholic Social

---

<sup>77</sup>Somerville, "The Challenge to Christian Society", Catholic World 130 (February 1930):606.

<sup>78</sup>Somerville, "Reflexions after Visiting Russia", Studies (December 1929):561.

Guild was not making much progress as a catalyst for social reform. Funds were short and interest in its courses was at an all-time low.<sup>79</sup> It appeared that the Guild would be unable to offer Somerville full-time employment in the near future. With a young family to support, some position with long-range prospects was a necessity if he was to serve the Church.

During his fifteen-year sojourn in England, Somerville had, nevertheless, achieved considerable personal and material success. His assignments as The Star correspondent had given him opportunities to travel and to meet people with whom he would not have had contact if he had remained a humble factory worker. He had attended international conferences, he had enjoyed the acclaim accorded him as a guest lecturer in Canada and the United States, he had visited Italy to observe Mussolini's new Fascist regime and had been one of the few newspapermen allowed into Russia.

A steady production of articles for the popular and literary press, and the publication of three books<sup>80</sup>

---

<sup>79</sup>Cleary, Catholic Social Action, 143.

<sup>80</sup>Somerville, Who is My Neighbour?: A School Manual of Civics (London, 1929); Britain's Economic Illness (London, 1931); The Catholic Social Movement (London, 1933).

had secured him some recognition as an informed commentator as well as some extra income. The articles and books had reflected his increasing concern that in a time of rapid change for the worse, Catholics in England must be better informed about current trends in economics and politics.

Between 1919 and 1933 Somerville's writing had been mainly concerned with current labour and economic problems and the various solutions to these being offered by the old political parties and new political movements. The Labour Party's attempts to focus on the problems of the working man and to resolve the inconsistencies in its policies and practice had fascinated him particularly. After much study of the Labour Party he was satisfied that although it was promoting a restructuring of the social and economic system, it did not threaten Catholic concepts of morality or social justice and that Catholics could support the "socialists" in good conscience. Indeed, it seemed to Somerville to be an opportune time for interested Catholics to become involved in politics. The economic crisis provided opportunities to expound the Church's principles and to urge their incorporation into various party programmes. It was a matter therefore of particular worry to him that the popular Catholic press, especially the struggling Christian Democrat, was not proving more influential or effective in disseminating Catholic social ideas.



He assured Archbishop McNeil that

as far as breaking up our home here is concerned, my wife and I are quite ready to do that if we felt assured that I could do good work for the Catholic Church in another place. . . . My wife and I want to do what God wishes, not what is most comfortable and profitable in a material sense.<sup>81</sup>

Thus he readily accepted Archbishop McNeil's offer of the editorship of The Catholic Register. It would mean a cut in income, but Somerville's fond memories of Toronto and the warm relationship which he had maintained with the Archbishop were important compensations. Somerville believed as well, that the Canadian economy was in a more desperate state than that of Britain, and that the opportunity to teach Catholic social philosophy and the danger of social and economic upheaval were both present to a greater degree than in England.

Somerville's return to Canada was signalled by the re-appearance of his old "Life and Labor" column in The Register on October 5th, 1933. For the next twenty years the content and direction of the paper were controlled by Henry Somerville.

---

<sup>81</sup>Henry Somerville to Archbishop Neil McNeil, July 28, 1932. McNeil Papers, Archives of the Archdiocese of Toronto, Toronto.

## CHAPTER 7

### CATHOLIC TORONTO IN BOOM AND DEPRESSION: THE WORK OF ARCHBISHOP McNEIL

Henry Somerville returned to a Diocese and a Province which he knew had been altered irreversibly by the Great War and post-war developments. He had been kept informed of the general economic, political and, social changes in North America through his contacts with American Catholic reformers and journals; his extensive reading and writing for a Canadian newspaper, The Toronto Star had kept him up to date on trends in Canada. A regular correspondence was maintained with Archbishop McNeil to whom he frequently sent copies of his own articles and books. The cordiality of this relationship was demonstrated by the Archbishop's invitation to stay at the episcopal residence on Somerville's visit to North America in 1922.<sup>1</sup>

The patterns of growth which were shaping Canadian society in this period were such that governments (federal,

---

<sup>1</sup>Several letters in the McNeil Papers refer to these exchanges of news and views.

provincial and municipal), private industry, and the churches had amassed debt obligations at an even more frantic pace and at more inflated rates than in England.<sup>2</sup>

Somerville described this activity as

an orgy of borrowing and spending during the boom years. The prairie provinces were not more extravagant than the manufacturing, mining and commercial regions of Canada. The rapid growth of Eastern Canada created a spirit of speculative optimism which is incredible in the Old World. . . . In the boom years before the collapse of 1929 it was taken for granted by practically everybody, high and low, clerical and lay, that wealth and population would continue to grow at the dizzy pace then experienced.<sup>3</sup>

In these circumstances, the Catholic Church in Toronto was caught up also in the spending "orgy". The projects which Archbishop McNeil had deferred because of the Great War were undertaken during the 1920's at inflated land, construction and mortgage rates. The main stimulus to Diocesan expansion however, was a sudden and large increase in the non-British Catholic population. Immigrants from several widely varying European Catholic countries and cultures presented such a multiplicity of needs and

---

<sup>2</sup>A. E. Safarian, The Canadian Economy in the Great Depression (Toronto, 1959), Chapters 1-3, contain one of the best summaries of Canadian economic development in this period.

<sup>3</sup>Henry Somerville, "Alberta Under Aberhart", Studies 27 (September 1938):419.

problems that they strained the Church's physical and financial resources to their limit. During this period, from 1921 to his death in 1934, Archbishop McNeil was hard-pressed to find solutions to a great variety of social and economic, as well as spiritual problems in his Diocese. The following review of trends and growth in the Archdiocese of Toronto between 1921 and 1933 will indicate the scope and complexity of his task.

Between 1921 and 1931, Ontario's Catholic population increased from 577,118 to over 747,000. With Catholics comprising 21% of the province's 3,400,000 citizens, Ontario had the largest concentration of Catholics outside of Quebec's 2,463,160 Catholics. The remaining Canadian Catholic population was scattered throughout the other seven provinces.<sup>4</sup> Among the thirty-six Canadian dioceses, the Archdiocese of Toronto contained the largest English-speaking population. The number in the Toronto jurisdiction, which included the counties of Dufferin, Lincoln, Ontario, Simcoe, Welland and York, had increased from 85,000 to

---

<sup>4</sup>Dominion Census, 1931. By 1931, Canada's Catholic population totalled 3,431,683. Antigonish, Nova Scotia, with 85,000 Catholics was the second largest English-speaking Diocese in Canada.

128,000 in ten years. In 1921, they had been served by 159 priests in 112 parishes and missions. By 1931 there were 249 priests working in 121 parishes and missions, and religious orders supplied the majority of the staff in 59 elementary schools.<sup>5</sup>

The city of Toronto had absorbed the greatest number of these Catholic immigrants. They were not so numerous that they had altered the predominantly British and Protestant character of the city's population and institutions, but they did increase substantially the number of non-British immigrants living in Toronto. Their arrival was a portent of the future development in the city.<sup>6</sup> Most of the Church's physical expansion thus took place in the city of Toronto where land and building prices were higher than in the hinterland. The Church's previous experience with immigrants led its leaders to the conclusion that they would continue to prefer the religious, educational and

---

<sup>5</sup>Statistics compiled from Le Canada Ecclésiastique, 1922 and 1932, and The Official Catholic Directory, 1933.

<sup>6</sup>The Dominion Census, 1931 stated that out of 631,207 Toronto citizens, 558,560 were British by racial origin. Non-British born immigrants increased from 47,941 in 1921 to 72,647 in 1931.

social services of the Catholic Church if they were made available in their own language and milieu.

By 1933 the major Catholic immigrant groups in Toronto, the Maltese, Italian, Polish, Hungarian, Lithuanian, and French-Canadian, all had at least one of their "own" churches. "Own" meant that the language used and the staff of the parish church were that of the dominant ethnic group. Many of these were not self-supporting and had to be subsidized by diocesan funds. Their weaknesses were not however, exclusively financial, although attempts to alleviate these usually involved some outlay of money.

The most worrisome problem posed by the ethnic churches was that they increased the isolation of the immigrant from the established Catholic community as well as from the non-Catholic majority. The newcomers did not have much in common with the predominantly Irish group who still dominated the English-speaking Catholic group in Toronto. Ethnic parishes tended to create an additional "Catholic Ghetto". As were the original Irish immigrants, these groups were poor, but their absorption into Canadian life was made more difficult by the burden of having to learn a new language and adjust to new social customs. With no government programmes to educate the new citizens in these areas, they were unable to share in much of the prosperity enjoyed by English Canadians in the

boom years and they would be very vulnerable when the economy slackened.<sup>7</sup>

In these difficult conditions, the harmony of the Catholic community could be and was fractured by quarrels which erupted among and between congregations on ethnic issues. Central European Catholics were particularly prone to bring old nationalist rivalries and resentments with them to Canada. Their disputes required Archbishop McNeil's time, tact and patience. He had on occasion to advise on extraneous but contentious issues such as the language of instruction for children's catechism lessons; should it be English or the parent's native tongue?<sup>8</sup>

Another source of tension was differences in ethnic backgrounds between priests and congregations. Although Archbishop McNeil tried diligently to locate clergy compatible with the majority in each congregation, suitable

---

<sup>7</sup>John Porter, The Vertical Mosaic (Toronto, 1965), 99-100. Porter points out that many of the non-British immigrants entering Canada between 1921 and 1931 were Catholic. He suggests that because of the higher illiteracy rate among this group, they were, from the moment they arrived, the main source of low-paid, unskilled labour. Because they could not speak English, he noted, they failed to acquire the skills which would have given them some upward mobility in the labour force.

<sup>8</sup>Father Mayer, C.S.S.R., wrote to Archbishop McNeil, December 9, 1930 noting that members of St. Mary's church (predominantly Polish) were divided on this issue. McNeil Papers.

candidates were not always available. "Don't send us that Pole", was the response of one group in a predominantly Slovakian congregation to a proposed appointment.<sup>9</sup>

In spite of these difficulties, McNeil believed that ethnic churches were the most humane and effective way to meet the needs of the immigrants. With capable leadership, their members would become devout supporters of the Church in Canada and law-abiding, responsible citizens.<sup>10</sup> When jobs became scarce, however, members of these churches were not immune to letting jealousy and national rivalries overcome Christian charity. Thus, when the organist (with an Irish name) of an ethnic church refused to resign when requested, she received a note threatening that, "we will make things uncomfortable for you and will force your removal", signed "The Polish Committee of the Polish Church".<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> Anonymous to Archbishop McNeil dated 1931. McNeil Papers.

<sup>10</sup> The Maltese congregation of St. Paul's, Toronto, were fervently grateful when their request for their own priest was granted. See Carmelo Baladacchino to Archbishop McNeil, March 14, and March 30, 1929. McNeil Papers.

<sup>11</sup> Father Mayer, C.S.S.R. to Archbishop McNeil, December 9, 1930, enclosure in letter. McNeil Papers.



The English-speaking Catholic congregations had little or no social and religious contact with the ethnic minorities in the diocese. Neither the Latin liturgy, common allegiance to the bishop, nor their minority status as Catholics in a largely Protestant community were sufficient to overcome the differences between them of language, social class and custom.<sup>12</sup> Although the multiplicity of Catholic traditions made unity more difficult, McNeil remained sympathetic with the immigrants' determination to preserve their national traditions. His broad experience and European education enabled him to appreciate the richness of these cultures. He believed in their potential as contributors to Canadian society and that their strengths would be a

---

<sup>12</sup>No references to any congregational projects between the English and ethnic churches, for example, have been found in The Catholic Register in this period. An interview with former members of St. Anthony's (predominantly Irish) parish revealed that the Italian congregation nearby "kept to themselves and seemed to feel more comfortable that way". There was no ill-feeling, indeed, the Irish-Canadians found the Italian Catholic customs "quaint and attractive", but so unfamiliar that there was little contact with them. Interview with Joseph and Eileen Kelly, Hamilton, June 1, 1976.

The Italian community was even more diffident about initiating contacts with the English-speaking Catholics. The youth did not socialize and financial status separated them in school at the Secondary level. Most of the students in the private Catholic High Schools were Irish Catholic; the Italian and other ethnic groups sent their children to the public Technical and Commercial High Schools of the local district which did not require transportation or tuition costs. Interview with Dominic and Nata Barresi, Dundas, formerly of St. Agnes Parish, Toronto, Sept. 2, 1976.

supporting truss in the bridge to national unity. In addition, most Catholics believed that this was still the most effective way to retain the loyalty of the immigrant to the Catholic Church during a period when some Protestant denominations were openly and aggressively proselytizing in the immigrant districts.<sup>13</sup>

If one were to choose a motif for McNeil's work in Toronto during this period it would be that of promoting the virtue of charity among Catholics and between the Catholic and Protestant communities in the hope that a greater measure of unity would be fostered within the Church and the nation. This goal could be accomplished only if Catholics took their obligation of service to the Church and the nation more seriously. McNeil was chagrined when it became evident that Catholics still lagged behind other denominations in financial and personal contributions to those groups concerned with the general welfare. He could not express in public his dissatisfaction with Catholic attitudes with the candor shown in the following private letter:

---

<sup>13</sup>2nd Diocesan Bulletin, Immigrants and the Church, May 1913. "Catholics from different nations of Europe differ so much in minor matters that special features of each have to be studied if we are to prevent serious leakage from the Church." Archbishop McNeil urged his priests to make frequent visits to prevent the newcomers from losing interest in and awareness of the Church. This was important for the English Catholics as well because they were visited

There are plain indications that charity as a Christian virtue is now in a state of decadence.

1. Racial and national antagonism, the chief causes of wars, are not noticeably more restrained in Catholic countries than in non-Catholic countries.
2. In civil society the inequalities in the distribution of wealth are a source of discord and unrest. In the Church the inequalities are scarcely less glaring. Dioceses in one part of a country are wealthy; in another part, poverty-stricken. The same is true of parishes and institutions.
3. The amounts given in the name of philanthropy and public welfare by non-Catholics far exceed the amount given by Catholics in the name of charity.
4. Protestant societies like the Y.M.C.A. establish themselves in Catholic cities and flourish, and the local Church organizations have not the social knowledge or the spirit of co-operation needed to counter-act such activities.
5. In the foreign mission field Catholic hospitals are rare. Catholic doctors are not expected to contribute a few years of their lives to staff such hospitals.
6. The word charity has become so restricted in the minds of the faithful that it means to them scarcely more than alms-giving and contributions to orphanages, hospitals, etc.
7. The sense of responsibility for the welfare of the Church in a country or throughout the world on the part of the Catholic laity has

---

frequently by Protestant deaconesses. "Protestant associations on the one hand and the lack of Catholic sympathy on the other, are the occasion of leakage. Families have in fact fallen away from the Church in Toronto in the last few years in this way." McNeil Papers.

largely disappeared. In the minds of the faithful charity is a private affair. They think of it as something apart from patriotism in the state or participation in the Church. They understand clearly that heresy is a sin against faith, but not at all so clearly that schism is equally a sin against charity.<sup>14</sup>

Archbishop McNeil gave a similar frank appraisal of modern Catholic practice to the Vatican, in reply to its request for advice on a proposal to re-open the Vatican Council. He noted that the definitions of doctrine having been completed in 1869 and 1870, it was now equally urgent that there be an examination of the practice of the Christian life in the modern world:

La charité des fidèles est abaissée jusqu'au point d'être sérieusement en peril. Elle devrait adoucir le nationalisme et la haine des races, et elle ne le fait pas. Elle devrait fleurir en oeuvres éclatantes d'éducation, de propagation de la foi, de coopération civique et sociale; et les oeuvres existent sans doute; mais elles sont trop souvent inférieures à celles des Protestants. . . . Dans la société civile il y a une maladie qui provient de la grand inégalité dans la distribution des biens. Dans l'Eglise catholique l'inégalité n'est pas moins gênante.<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup>Archbishop McNeil to Paul McNeil, undated but probably 1925. Letter copied by the author with the consent of Father Nearing. McNeil Papers, in possession of Father Peter Nearing, Combermere, Ontario.

<sup>15</sup>Archbishop McNeil to the Cardinal Secretary of State, February 1, 1924. McNeil Papers.

In this letter he emphasized again that Catholic failure to comprehend the meaning of "charity" was evident in the dearth of lay Catholic personnel in the medical missions and added that it was a matter of serious concern that Catholic children, after having been instructed in the doctrinal essentials of the catechism, still did not have the slightest glimmer, "pas un avait le plus faible luer" of the reality of the brotherhood of man which was created by the Holy Sacrament.<sup>16</sup>

Catholic responsibility to adopt broader perspectives and concern for Canadian affairs was a frequent theme of McNeil's public statements in this period. When he organized branches of the Catholic Women's League in the Diocese of Toronto, he sent a circular to the parish clergy urging them to give the new groups every encouragement and support because

If Catholics are to hold their own in Canada they must organize. Local societies are helpful in parish and diocesan matters. . . . We must take our place in the National life of Canada, not merely because this is needed in self defence, but because Catholics have civic and social duties as well as others, and in these days wide organization is an essential factor in any work of national importance.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup>Archbishop McNeil to the Cardinal Secretary of State, February 1, 1924. McNeil Papers.

<sup>17</sup>Diocesan Circular, November 27, 1919. McNeil Papers.

At the C.W.L. Convention in 1934 he reminded the members that they must try to avoid parochialism and become involved in projects requiring social action on a broader scale. The Mass, he said, provided the theological basis for such corporate action as it was essentially a corporate act. This doctrine had become obscured, however, through concentration on aspects of individual piety and a concern for Catholic survival. In this process, individualism had caused "the tradition of civic responsibility to be lost through disuse".<sup>18</sup> He concluded that although the League "had been hampered by defective social vision", their greatest work could be in helping to develop a sense of citizenship among the members and in educating them to think on a nation-wide scale.<sup>19</sup>

Archbishop McNeil hoped that The Catholic Register would be one of the instruments aiding him in this broadening and unifying process. But, following Somerville's departure in 1919, it had not, on the whole, succeeded in becoming the

---

<sup>18</sup>Address to the Convention of the Catholic Women's League, Toronto, 1934, manuscript draft, undated. McNeil Papers.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

expositor of advanced English-Canadian social thought. An analysis of its editorials and news policy has shown that in this period it increasingly reflected the pro-Irish concerns of its editors. In political matters it was evident that

the paper's preoccupation with the Irish Home Rule situation over-shadowed everything else and was the measurement for many more or less related issues.

. . . There was interest in Canadian Dominion status, not only because independence of Britain was a good thing in itself, but because the future of Ireland was also involved.<sup>20</sup>

Hostility to the British tradition erupted in such statements as, "attempts to woo Canada into closer relationship with Britain must be resisted. . . . 'Canada First' must be our motto and 'Canada a Nation', must be our hope".<sup>21</sup>

This defensive type of nationalism was not that promoted by Archbishop McNeil, but it was one with which some Catholics in the Diocese, particularly those of Irish descent, empathized.

<sup>20</sup>Margaret Prang, "Some Opinions of Political Radicalism in Canada between the Two World Wars" (M.A. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1953), 81.

<sup>21</sup>The Register (March 31, 1921), quoted by Prang, ibid., 83.

The one policy around which all Catholics could unite and one in which McNeil believed fervently himself was that of maintaining and expanding the Separate Schools. He therefore directed a high proportion of the diocesan financial resources and personnel into education.<sup>22</sup> He personally led delegations and committees in repeated attempts to secure a larger share of provincial educational funds.

The priority given in Toronto to education for the young was not unique with Catholics in North America. A similar strategy was adopted in the United States where the Irish Americans have been credited with founding the American Catholic schools system.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, in the Diocese of Toronto, it was the predominantly Irish clergy and laity who led the campaign for more Separate Schools. Their rationale for this priority was, however, primarily a

---

<sup>22</sup>Response of Rev. P. H. Kirby, Merritton to a Diocesan questionnaire March 1934. The priests in the Diocese were asked to list the Catholic Action projects in their parishes. The reply following was typical. "The main efforts toward Catholic Action, extrinsic of vital religious church duties have been directed towards arousing public interest and opinion in favour of the Catholic Schools of Ontario." McNeil Papers.

<sup>23</sup>Andrew Greeley, The Catholic Experience (Garden City, 1967), 29. Greeley's sociological analysis of the American Catholic experience is applicable in many instances to that of the Canadian English-speaking Catholic Church where the Irish priests and laity were in the majority.



defensive one, based on the conviction that Catholic schools were the chief line of defence against Protestant attempts to enervate the Catholic community. Ontario Separate Schools were in a stronger position than their American counterparts, because the fact that they were tax-supported at the elementary level gave them a civil legitimacy in the eyes of European immigrants who were anxious to integrate their children into the mainstream of Canadian life.

Archbishop McNeil was particularly anxious that the children of these Catholic immigrants be enrolled in Diocesan Schools because he believed that in Canada, the Catholic Church and the Separate Schools were the strongest bulwark protecting the immigrants from the Communist Party. During the inter-war period, many Canadian citizens, of all religious persuasions, believed that Communism was the most formidable of the nation's enemies, but the Catholic Church was the most outspoken in its warnings against the perils of tolerance or compromise.

There was some evidence to support the Church's warnings that Communists were successfully infiltrating many of the immigrants' cultural and labour organizations. The police had warned McNeil privately that the subversive activity was centred in Toronto because it had a large, poor Central European population. Communists were reaching the youth, one report stated, through cultural and sports

groups.<sup>24</sup> Canadian Catholics were warned repeatedly by the Church to avoid any organizations, no matter how laudable their aims, if there was the slightest suspicion that they were affiliated with, or staffed by groups with Communist sympathies. As the poverty and social insecurity of the immigrants increased in the late 1920's, it was feared that they would become increasingly susceptible to Communist propaganda.

The Ukrainians were believed to be the most vulnerable of all the immigrant groups to Communist inducements, but all of the ethnic groups were suspect. That there was some justification for this belief was revealed in a report from the Communist Party convention of 1929 which lamented:

The party still remains largely an immigrant Party only poorly connected with the basic sections of the Canadian working class. . . . Ninety-five per-cent of Party membership is confined to three language groups, Finnish, Ukrainian and Jewish.<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>24</sup>An unsigned report, August 17, 1926, on Ukrainian settlements included a section from the R.C.M.P. files which listed many cultural centres, and described meetings where Communist ideas were being taught. The report claimed that over 2,000 youths were being trained in these ethnic societies. McNeil Papers.

<sup>25</sup>Suzanne Skebo, "Liberty and Authority: Civil Liberties in Toronto, 1929-1935" (M.A. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1967), 78. Quotation from thesis.

One of the projects considered by Archbishop McNeil to counter the Communist thrust among the Catholic immigrants in Toronto was a Catholic Settlement House, similar to the five which already existed in the city under Protestant sponsorship. Reports were submitted by a Catholic lay social worker, outlining a comprehensive programme of language classes, lectures, crafts, concerts, dances and personal counselling which would meet the immigrant's need for education and financial advice. Above all, a Settlement House would provide facilities for their greatest need which was deemed to be "elevation of conduct and relief in spiritual distress".<sup>26</sup> In a city which equated church affiliation with good citizenship, the statistics presented in these reports were depressing.

Out of about 3,500 Polish people in Toronto, only 250 families were regarded as active members of the two Polish Catholic churches; fifty belonged to Protestant Missions; and the remainder were indifferent to religion. Of 8,000 Ukrainians, only 200 families were Greek Catholic, another fifty were scattered in the Protestant missions and the rest were "in a deplorable condition, both physically

---

<sup>26</sup>Mrs. S. F. Duplantier to Archbishop McNeil, "Report of Protestant Work among Poles and Ukrainians of Toronto", Feb. 21, 1925. See also "Brief Plan for the Settlement Work", May 9, 1925. McNeil Papers.

and spiritually".<sup>27</sup> These reports noted also that many Ukrainians already belonged to the Communist Party. Contact had been made with immigrants by the party organizers at schools where their children were instructed in Ukrainian language and culture. At these centres, parents were urged to send their children to the public, not the Separate Schools. The report concluded that "there is only one way to remedy this sad situation and that is to carry the Word of God to them rather than wait for them to come back to the Church".<sup>28</sup>

The Settlement project was deferred because higher priority was given to the financing and staffing of new Separate Schools and parishes during the 1920's. Until Friendship House was founded by Baroness de Hueck in 1932, most of the Church's social service work was organized by parish priests and the Sisters of Service, the latter a religious order founded in Toronto in 1922 to work among the

---

<sup>27</sup>Mrs. S. F. Duplantier to Archbishop McNeil, "Plan for the Catholic Settlement House, Polish Settlement", July 16, 1924. McNeil Papers.

<sup>28</sup>Mrs. S. F. Duplantier to Archbishop McNeil, "Report of Protestant Work among the Poles and Ukrainians of Toronto", Feb. 21, 1925. McNeil Papers.

immigrant poor. Their task was onerous because the immigrants' job opportunities diminished more rapidly in the '30's than those of any other group in the community. The trend was noted by the Toronto social service agencies but there was nothing that could be done about religious or racial discrimination.<sup>29</sup> Latent distrust erupted into open hostility in the newspapers as when one observed:

Communism has its strength among those who are not native Canadians. . . . None of them have the makings of good citizenship as good citizenship is understood in Canada.<sup>30</sup>

Most of Toronto's social agencies aiding these immigrants were sponsored by the churches and help was dispensed on a roughly denominational basis. Since a greater proportion of the unemployed were Roman Catholic (nominal or practising), the Church was expected to assume a heavier burden than the others as can be seen in the following report sent to Archbishop McNeil:

---

<sup>29</sup>Report of the Unemployment Council -- Board of Trade, Toronto to the Toronto Board of Control, Oct. 6, 1930. "In the labour market at present, these immigrants are seriously discriminated against. Nevertheless we have brought them to this country and they must live". McNeil Papers.

<sup>30</sup>The Toronto Telegram, November 13, 1931, quoted by Suzanne Skebo, "Liberty and Authority", 45.

Of 682 men registered at the Central Bureau during the first three days of its operation . . . some 200 of these were of the Roman Catholic faith. These men are housed and fed in such institutions as the House of Industry, Toronto Men's Hostel and the Fred Victor Mission. . . . It is already apparent that we are going to experience difficulty in housing them.

There are already a considerable number of them sleeping on benches and floors. You are fully seized of the need of proper housing to ensure that the best possible results will be obtained while the men are dependent upon public charity. We trust that Your Grace will be able to make arrangements . . . to take care of those for whom you may wish to become responsible. The Committee can furnish them with meal tickets . . . and can send them for shelter to whomsoever you may designate.

Attached is a copy of a statement giving the accommodation at the disposal of the Committee at present or in the course of the next few days. You will observe the deficiency in beds.<sup>31</sup>

The misery of the poor which was cloaked by the dispassionate phrases of these reports was displayed openly in the personal appeals which poured into the Diocesan office. A poignant description of the Slovaks was given by their priest who reckoned that there were 7,000 of them in Toronto needing varying degrees of aid:

---

<sup>31</sup>H. S. Rupert, Civic Unemployment Committee, to Archbishop McNeil, December 5, 1930. McNeil Papers.

They are despised newcomers, hated foreigners -- very few understand them, and very few care to understand them. They live in hovels . . . single men of whom there are legions walk the street . . . hungry, in rags, half frozen. . . . They have no money to return home . . . because most of them have not had a job in more than 20-22 months. The Railroad that brought them here refuses to repatriate them if they have been here for five years -- so the result is -- that they roam the streets, begging, stealing, eating out of refuse cans. . . . Many -- in this horrible destitution have bartered their faith for a membership in some radical organization -- communism, socialism, protestantism.<sup>32</sup>

When the Catholic relief agencies were short of supplies, some of the destitute applicants did not hesitate to express their dissatisfaction with the Church as in the following complaint from an Italian Catholic:

I am one of the unemployed, have been for eighteen months and all I got relief in that time was from the House of Industry and three days relief work every 3 or 4 months . . . not enough to eat but thats [sic] not my grievance -- I went to the Neighbourhood workers and they sent me to the Catholic Welfare. . . . I asked for some clothing which was needed very bad. I have no shoes at all to go even outside. . . . All I get was a pair of pants which are working pants and nothing else.<sup>33</sup>

---

<sup>32</sup>Father John Pachily to Archbishop McNeil, January 30, 1932. McNeil Papers.

<sup>33</sup>"A.P.", St. Patrick's St., Toronto, to Archbishop McNeil, May 12, 1932. McNeil Papers.

Archbishop McNeil encouraged relief work among such immigrants as a Canadian application of Catholic Action. The latter merits some explanation at this point as it was a concept which would greatly influence the posture of the clergy and laity towards Catholic participation in social reform. Originating in Europe as a response to Rerum Novarum, it had largely developed after 1914 as a movement whose primary aim was to promote the teaching and application of Catholic principles to secular activities and institutions. Pope Pius XI gave the movement official sanction when he described it as "the participation of the laity in the apostolate of the hierarchy" and urged in an encyclical that Catholics everywhere support Catholic Action.<sup>34</sup> Further definition confined it to those works done by the laity for the Church, approved by the bishop and carried out under his special mandate.

Because the scope of Catholic Action had been so broadly defined, it could take many different forms in different countries, depending on the political and social situation. The concept was promoted in Toronto by Father

---

<sup>34</sup>Pope Pius XI to Cardinal Bertram, Archbishop of Breslau, November 18, 1928. Quoted by Joseph Husslein, Social Wellsprings II (Milwaukee, 1942), 235.



George Daly, C.SS R., who wrote extensively on Catholic Action during the 1920's, explaining how its theology and practice could meet the urgent needs of the Canadian Catholic Church.<sup>35</sup> Theologically, Catholic Action rested, he said, on the Pauline definition of the Church, which, as a living organism, as the mystical body of Christ, depended on the corporate actions of the clergy and laity to be its effective witness. But the divinely ordained line of authority from bishops to priests to laity must be maintained to halt the social deterioration which afflicted both the Church and secular society when these precepts were ignored. Daly also declared that Catholics whose religion was confined to the search for personal sanctification were guilty of parochialism and a form of individualism that thwarted effective Catholic Action. The clergy therefore must provide vigorous leadership to ensure that serious social issues were not ignored:

---

<sup>35</sup>George Daly, C.SS R., Catholic Action (Toronto, 1927). See also Burton Gougeon, Readings for Catholic Action (Manchester, 1937); Luigi Civardi, A Manual of Catholic Action (London, 1935).

To stand aloof from the solution of the problems that stare us in the face . . . to confine our efforts solely to parochial institutions, and not enter into the broader field of public life is . . . nothing short of a calamity . . . A sermon now and then, on Socialism or on the rights and duties of labour, will not solve the problems and extinguish the volcano upon which we are peacefully living.<sup>36</sup>

The problem which the Catholic Church in the Toronto area had in responding to these proposals for Catholic Action was its precarious financial position. Many parishes were unable to meet their own debt payments. The Diocese had to provide these or lose the church properties with the result that funds for Catholic social agencies and projects were insufficient to cover their needs. In one year (1932-33) budgets for the fifteen Catholic charities in Toronto leapt from \$148,000 to \$169,000.<sup>37</sup> They were unable to collect the sum budgeted for because many parishes were facing the same difficulties reported by the priest of St. Dunstan's:

In justice to the people of St. Dunstan's who are harder hit by the Depression than they were last year, I should ask your Grace to excuse us from the Federation of Catholic Charities collection

---

<sup>36</sup>George Daly, C.SS R., Catholic Problems in Western Canada (Toronto, 1921), 323.

<sup>37</sup>Budget Summary, Federation of Catholic Charities, 1933. McNeil Papers.

this year. We have \$417 taxes on the first of November and next month over \$500 Interest on the Bond Issue. They are struggling to meet these payments now.<sup>38</sup>

Throughout the Depression there were appeals for funds to alleviate particular crises such as that of February, 1933, when sixteen parishes, ten of them outside of Toronto, defaulted on their interest payments.<sup>39</sup> On October 22, 1934, an appeal was made to all churches in the Archdiocese of Toronto to pay the interest due on loans made to them by the Diocese as well as their annual Cathedraticum for "at the present time there are not sufficient chancery funds to meet the November obligations".<sup>40</sup> That the response to these appeals was barely enough to meet the emergency was not necessarily due to lack of religious loyalty, but because "it was impossible to meet the obligations contracted in better times . . . people are

---

<sup>38</sup>Father M. D. O'Connor to Archbishop McNeil, September 22, 1933. McNeil Papers.

<sup>39</sup>Circular letter to the priests of parishes in the Archdiocese of Toronto, February 1, 1933. McNeil Papers.

<sup>40</sup>Circular letter, October 22, 1934. McNeil Papers.

wearied of debt appeals and are fighting for the necessities".<sup>41</sup>

The Depression, diocesan finances, and immigrant assimilation were not the only impediments to Archbishop McNeil's goal of extending the horizons of his people. He also had to contend with rigid attitudes within the Catholic community, even in the hierarchy, as the following incident illustrates.

A report was sent by a Catholic (presumably a layman) to the Apostolic Delegate drawing his attention to the fact that Catholics had been present at a meeting attended by members of several other religious denominations in Toronto, whose object was reported to be "to spread the gospel of peace, to foster feelings of religious entente and to bring about the reconciliation of religious beliefs". The Apostolic Delegate wrote immediately to Archbishop McNeil and pointed out that if this was the true purpose of the meeting it was a very grave matter "as it concerns the faith

<sup>41</sup>Priest in Charge of parish of Whitby to Rt. Rev. Msgr. Francis Carroll, October 25, 1934.

Rev. D. W. McNamara, Victoria Harbour, on June 19, 1934, had reported that he was unable to pay \$148.55 interest on his loan as "most of my people here are on relief and so can give nothing".

Father Oliver, O.F.M., Our Lady of Hungary, Welland, December 29, 1934 had to report, "I am sorry to say that the Christmas offering wasn't the way I expected it to be because 100% of the Hungarians are not working and are on relief". McNeil Papers.

and may constitute danger to the faithful".<sup>42</sup> He concluded with the injunction:

The Holy Father had reproved this recent occurrence and has ordered that for no reason whatsoever should such meetings be repeated in Toronto or elsewhere.<sup>43</sup>

Archbishop McNeil's indignant reply was very revealing for implicit in it was an acknowledgment of the policy by which he tried to diminish the religious and social isolation of the Catholic community. In the Diocese, prominent Catholics were being discreetly encouraged to join committees and organizations where, through co-operation with non-Catholics, common social and moral goals could be furthered. His reply also contained a candid assessment of the disabilities confronting Catholics in Toronto. His letter noted first that the incident had been erroneously reported. True, Protestants, Jews, and three Catholics had attended a banquet at Holy Blossom Temple, sponsored by its Men's Club, and Father John E. Burke, of St. Peter's Church had spoken on the topic, "The Unity of the Canadian People". But, McNeil emphasized, the purpose

---

<sup>42</sup>Most Rev. Andrew Cassulo, Apostolic Delegate, to Archbishop McNeil, April 14, 1928. McNeil Papers.

<sup>43</sup>Cassulo to McNeil. McNeil Papers.

of the meeting was not as had been reported because Toronto's religious community was of such a "frame of mind" that any discussion on the reconciliation of belief between its citizens was "simply foolish".<sup>44</sup> The meeting had been called to discuss a problem which was of mutual concern to Jews and Catholics, that of discrimination in employment. He then spelled out in some detail the conditions confronting Catholics in Toronto:

The Dominion Census of 1921 reported that in the city of Toronto there were 418,815 Protestants; 64,773 Catholics; and 34,344 Jews. That is, the Catholics and the Jews taken together are fewer than one in four of the Protestant population; but in business, in industries, in public influence, and in social life, the ratio is more like one in twenty. The Protestantism of the North of Ireland is a large factor in Toronto. It is aggressive and overbearing. The Catholics and the Jews know that they are subject to serious disadvantages in Toronto in professional life, in business, in employment, etc. I have some of the blank forms which must be filled by applicants for employment. The form used by the T. Eaton Co. which employs thousands of people requires the applicant to state his or her "Church denomination". The Adams Furniture Co. requires the same. The Bell Telephone Co. demands the names of all schools, elementary or secondary, attended by the applicant. The Loblaw Groceries Co. which has a large number of stores requires the applicant to state his or her religion

---

<sup>44</sup>Archbishop McNeil to Most Rev. Andrew Cassulo, Apostolic Delegate, May 9, 1928. McNeil Papers.

and the name of the city church of which he or she is a member. The Consumers' Gas Co. requires the applicant to state his or her "religion (what Denomination)". Such is the general practice and we hear frequently of Catholic applicants being refused employment. We even learn of companies which openly express the condition verbally that applicants must be Protestants. Such being the state of affairs those Jewish men bethought them of laying a foundation for improvement in the future by appealing to the national unity which Canada so much needs. All Protestants feel that Canada is far from being as united in a national sense as the good of the country requires. The speakers at the banquet in question, and especially the priest who was there, stressed this point and suggested the inference that all citizens should cultivate a better fellow-feeling. They were appealed to as citizens, not as members of religious bodies. Not all the blame is attributable to Protestants. Many Catholics of Toronto are not yet freed from the state of mind occasioned by centuries of persecution in Ireland. They are inclined to keep to themselves even in secular matters and to be suspicious of others. We can apply to ourselves the words of the Holy Father in addressing a group of Italian University students about a year ago in reference to the Orthodox of the East. He said:

"We must know one another, because the failure of reunion work is so often due, in great part, to the lack of mutual acquaintance between the two parties. Errors, misunderstandings, which persist and are repeated against the Catholic Church seem incredible. But Catholics also sometimes lack a just appreciation of their brethren; they lack fraternal charity, because they lack acquaintance with other groups".

This teaching rather than counsels of isolation is needed in Toronto. I have known here cases of the worst Protestant prejudices disappearing through acquaintance with Catholic neighbors who knew how to remain thoroughly Catholic and still to be really friendly with Protestants.<sup>45</sup>

---

<sup>45</sup> Archbishop McNeil to Most Rev. Andrew Cassulo, Apostolic Delegate, May 9, 1928. McNeil Papers.

The prejudice against employing Catholics to which Archbishop McNeil had referred was a plight which he tactfully but persistently worked at changing. It was evident that even educated and capable Catholics could have difficulty finding positions equal to their training.<sup>46</sup> After struggling to achieve professional status, some emigrated, leaving the Catholic community and the nation poorer by their absence.<sup>47</sup> McNeil sometimes drew the attention of government authorities to Catholic candidates qualified for responsible positions in the public service.<sup>48</sup> Although nearly 22% of the population was Catholic by 1934, their ratio of employment in tax-supported institutions around Toronto was still exceptionally low. In one instance it was pointed out that even staffing in the jails and mental

---

<sup>46</sup>A "cause célèbre" in Toronto had been that of Miss Daisy Dorrien, a kindergarten teacher of exceptional ability whose promotion was rescinded by the Trustees of the Toronto Board of Education when it was discovered that they had inadvertently promoted a Catholic. See The Register, Oct. 12, 1916.

<sup>47</sup>Not untypical was Gordon Duffy, who said that when he graduated from St. Michael's College in 1925, he found few positions available to him and even fewer which offered any prospects of responsibility and promotion. He chose to emigrate to the United States where he found less discrimination because of his religion. Interview with Mr. Duffy, Nov. 22, 1973, Torremolinos, Spain.

<sup>48</sup>Archbishop McNeil received a letter from the office of the Minister of Justice, Sept. 28, 1932, acknowledging receipt of his letter recommending Thomas F. Battle of



institutions was discriminatory in that there were only thirteen Catholic employees out of a staff of 300 at the Ontario Mental Hospital in Mimico. Among the 1,200 patients, there were 389 Catholics who had no chaplain on staff to help them.<sup>49</sup>

All of the foregoing problems and trends pertained particularly to the Archdiocese of Toronto where Archbishop McNeil could exercise his authority to devise and implement policies which he believed were best suited to the Catholics under his jurisdiction. However, his interests extended to broader issues affecting the Church on a national scale, and he was convinced that on these, the Canadian Catholic Church should speak in unison and implement clearly defined policies. When unity was wanting, he believed it was important for the hierarchy to recognize their differences and work towards mutually acceptable policies which did not contradict each other and confuse the faithful.

---

Toronto as a person suitable for appointment to the High Court of the Province of Ontario. The reply noted that one Catholic, Patrick Kerwin, of Guelph, had just been appointed to the bench, but that "his Grace's recommendation would be kept in mind for the next time". McNeil Papers.

<sup>49</sup>Rev. W. J. McGrath, Director of the Catholic Adjustment Bureau, to the Hon. Peter Heenan, Minister of Forests and Northern Development, August 2, 1934. McNeil Papers.

During the inter-war period he strove to establish structures within the Church which would help to promote accord on some of the issues on which diverse policies existed. One such effort was his resolution in 1919 that a committee of Bishops be formed "to study labour questions, suggest means of social and industrial peace -- also to promote agricultural associations of farmers".<sup>50</sup> The project never received Vatican endorsement and was dropped by 1928, with the result that when the Depression came there was no national episcopal organization adequate to deal with current problems, particularly those related to social action.<sup>51</sup>

Labour's problems were, as noted in the resolution, one topic which he had long believed would become increasingly perplexing in Canada. Thus he tried to keep up to date on current trends in unionism.<sup>52</sup> He received encouragement

---

<sup>50</sup>Report of the Canadian Hierarchy, Plenary Meeting, 1921, Manuscript Collection of Father Peter Nearing, Combermere, Ontario.

<sup>51</sup>Father Peter Nearing, Manuscript of He Loved the Church, 1975. I am indebted to Father Nearing for allowing me to read the first draft of this manuscript. This incident is recounted in chapter 11 of the draft.

<sup>52</sup>On October 16, 1913, the Deputy Minister of Labour, in response to Archbishop McNeil's request for information on "the strength of labour unions in the various provinces", sent him a report compiled by the Department of Labour.

As early as 1913, the Archbishop had purchased for

in this matter from Bishop Morrison in his old Diocese of Antigonish, with whom he collaborated in attempting to arrange a Canadian lecture tour for Father Plater. Although the plan failed, the correspondence arranging the tour elicited the following statement from Bishop Morrison which aptly summarized McNeil's opinions on the Church's obligations to the labour movement:

It is important for the Church to keep in close and active touch with labour, for it is bound to become a factor of some proportion in the public policy of the country, and for this reason alone it is all the more in need of some guidance. Should we maintain towards its activities an attitude of aloofness or indifference, there would be great danger of its getting beyond any helpful direction we could give for its own and the general welfare.<sup>53</sup>

With the resurgence of the Canadian union movement after the Great War, it was obvious to Archbishop McNeil (and he feared to the general public), that a serious division was developing in the Church on the strategy of

---

his private library a ten volume Documentary History of American Industrial Society, edited by Ulrich B. Phillips, John R. Commons, et al. (Cleveland, 1910-11). McNeil Papers.

<sup>53</sup>Bishop James Morrison to Archbishop McNeil, December 11, 1918. McNeil Papers.

supporting the working classes. The Quebec hierarchy were ardent supporters of Confessional Unions, i.e. unions organized by and restricted to Catholic workers. In these, chaplains were appointed by the Bishop, held executive rank and advised on the doctrinal orthodoxy of a union local's policy and practice. It was a type of organization common in Europe and therefore acceptable to the Quebec clergy whose training had made them familiar with Catholic unions in France, Belgium and Germany.<sup>54</sup> Archbishop McNeil, while understanding the motives of the Quebec clergy, had been influenced by Somerville's reports on English union organization and by the American social reformers such as John Ryan. As they, he had concluded that confessional unionism was a doubtful strategy in Canada because it was impossible to organize such unions outside of Quebec. The open hostility being shown by the Quebec clergy to labour organizers affiliated with the A.F. of L., many of whom were Catholics, was confusing all Catholic workers and alienating many of

---

<sup>54</sup> Frank Isbester, "A History of the National Catholic Unions in Canada, 1901-1965" (Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell, 1968). This thesis gives a detailed analysis of the origins, philosophy, personnel and progress of the Catholic unions in Canada. Dr. Isbester noted that in 1920 representatives of the Canadian and Catholic Federation of Labour asked the Minister of Labour, Hon. G. D. Robertson, for representation on all federal commissions where organized labour was to be recognised. The Minister was not receptive to the idea. See Isbester, 103. Archbishop McNeil was aware of the Hon. Mr. Robertson's strong opposition to the Catholic Church being involved in what he regarded as a purely secular matter.

them. In 1919 he apprised his fellow Canadian bishops of his view and asked that particular care be used in declaring a policy on Catholic membership in secular unions.

He asked that in the establishment of Catholic Unions great regard and toleration be used with respect to International Labor Unions, which felt that they were being combated on one side by socialism and on the other by Catholicism. Otherwise the position of Catholic workmen outside of the Province would be rendered difficult if not intolerable.<sup>55</sup>

Archbishop Roy, replying for the Quebec hierarchy, did not accept McNeil's advice.

Mgr. went into a clear exposition of the establishment of Catholic Unions in Quebec and showed how they had been fought from the beginning by the International Labor Unions. He declared if there was antagonism it came not from the Catholic Unions but from the International Labor Unions which might, according to the declaration of their leaders, be opposed to socialism, but were exceedingly ill-served by some of the organizers employed in the Province of Quebec.

On the remark of Mgr. McNeil that the motive of antagonism was a question of funds, Mgr. Roy showed how the Catholic Unions only had recourse to the strike as a very last resort and that so far they had been able to attain the amelioration desired insalary [sic] and conditions by conciliation and representation.

The matter was then referred to the committee of Archbishops.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>55</sup>Meeting of the Archbishops of Canada, Minutes, April 27-30, 1919. McNeil Papers.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid.

Of course, deferring the matter postponed a solution indefinitely, which was a source of anxiety to McNeil. He was aware that the differences over labour strategy reflected the different social and economic conditions under which the Quebec and Ontario Catholic Church had originated and developed. The Quebec prelates were confident of the French-Canadian trust in their leadership. They were determined to shield the Québécois from the pluralist society outside the province for they believed that the Irish Catholics as well as the Protestants in North America had scant appreciation of French-Canadian Catholic culture.<sup>57</sup> McNeil's concern about relations between French-Canadian and English-speaking Catholics had already earned him the reputation and role as peace-maker between the two factions.<sup>58</sup>

His sympathy with the French-Canadian dilemma did not deter him, however, from advocating the policy long advised by Henry Somerville, or from seeking the opinion of the American Catholic labour expert, Father Peter Dietz. Dietz

---

<sup>57</sup>The conflict within the Canadian Catholic Church between the Irish and the French Canadians had been especially bitter in Western Canada. The origins of the quarrel and the Vatican's solutions to the disputes have been splendidly summarized by Raymond Huel in "French-Speaking Bishops and the Cultural Mosaic in Western Canada", in Richard Allen (ed.), Religion and Society in the Prairie West (Canadian Plains Studies 3, Canadian Plains Research Centre, University of Regina, 1974).

<sup>58</sup>See George Boyle, Pioneer in Purple, 139. See also

vigorously supported the secular unions of the A. F. of L. because he believed that theirs was the only viable policy for labour in North America; hence he urged the Church to adopt an openly supportive position on these secular unions. In reply to a query from Archbishop McNeil on the A. F. of L., Father Dietz defended the incursion of the American unions into Canada and criticized Le Devoir and L'Action Catholique for their hostility. Dietz pointed out that their editorial policy was undoubtedly promoted by the Quebec clergy and that their criticism was unfair, and unjust, and in the long run would seriously damage the Church's relations with labour. It was, he said, politically motivated, and the Quebec clergy's hostility to the A. F. of L. had little to do with labour's welfare.

The "Devoir" takes an almost exclusive political view of the matter. It is constantly emphasizing the "fact" that the international unions are controlled beyond the border; that the Canadians are ignobly subject to imperative demands from non-Canadians, that the French nationality will eventually be obliterated by its imbibing false non-French philosophy and culture; that the French-Canadians ought in all their activities centre on their home-views and leadership only in view of ultimate complete independence and nationality etc, etc. . . .

The "Action Catholique" emphasizes these viewpoints also but makes more of the religious; using all its innuendo to make men believe that the

---

Walker, Catholic Education and Politics in Ontario, 299, 305-306; Robert Choquette, Language and Religion: A History of English-French Conflict in Ontario (Ottawa, 1975).

members of the A.F. of L. are a godless crowd or could result in nothing but godlessness and deviltry in the end.<sup>59</sup>

Dietz declared that the A.F. of L. had the finest record of all the labour organizations both in raising the standard of living for the workers and in defeating socialism. The foes of labour hated it because of its success:

And it is this element too, that just now is saying such beautiful things about the Catholic unions of French-Canada since they foresee the beautiful results for themselves. To achieve its aim the "Action Catholique" is surely guilty of the "suppressio veri" and "suggestio falsi" and it is this phase of the competition, if it may be so called, that is most offensive to the Catholic sense of justice.<sup>60</sup>

Implicit in the statements of Father Dietz and Archbishop Roy were the old differences over the two problems which had intrigued Somerville before the Great War: what constituted a "socialist" threat to Catholicism and, in pluralist societies, what was the most effective strategy for the Church to adopt in combatting 'socialism' as defined by the encyclicals? McNeil realized that the Quebec clergy viewed the problem within the European philosophic context with which they were most familiar. This was the position which

---

<sup>59</sup>Father Peter Dietz to Archbishop McNeil, October 3, 1921. McNeil Papers.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid.



Somerville and now Dietz declared was inapplicable to the English and North American milieu. These differences within the Canadian Catholic Church were not resolved before the advent of the Depression. Indeed by 1934, when Archbishop McNeil died, they had widened and they would become, as will be noted in succeeding chapters, a source of considerable concern to his successor.

When Archbishop McNeil recalled Henry Somerville to Canada in 1933 to become editor of The Catholic Register, he was eighty-one years of age and still remarkably vigorous. But even as old age inevitably had depleted his energy, his responsibilities had multiplied. The economic and social circumstances which had made possible the rapid expansion of the Church in the 1920's had now reduced the Diocesan finances to a precarious and chaotic state. At the same time, McNeil's personal prestige as the spiritual and social leader of the Catholic community had increased immeasurably. He had displayed outstanding qualities of conciliation and compassion and had succeeded in increasing the respect and attention given to the Catholic Church in Toronto. Indeed, it was fitting that the symbolic goal which he had enunciated when he arrived in 1912, was achieved at his funeral. Toronto traffic was stopped and re-routed for a Catholic procession as fifteen thousand gathered outside the Cathedral and thousands more lined the

route along which the funeral cortège passed. The Cathedral was packed for his Requiem with four hundred clergy and representatives of all ranks of government and all religious denominations in Toronto.<sup>61</sup> The Globe editorial praised him as "a patriotic Canadian . . . a cultured gentleman . . . a democrat of the democrats, yet he was a Prince of the Church and a Prince among men".<sup>62</sup>

Neil McNeil had worked hard to widen the mental horizons of his diocese but many Catholics were still isolated from the rest of the community. They were such a diverse group ethnically with such a multiplicity of cultural loyalties and they were not as receptive to the social and intellectual advances in the community as he would have wished. This was exemplified in Catholic preoccupation with the Separate School issue to the near exclusion of all other problems. For this the clergy would have to share a large measure of responsibility.

In Henry Somerville's absence the Catholic face of Ontario had changed so profoundly that he returned to a

---

<sup>61</sup>The Globe, May 31, 1934.

<sup>62</sup>The Globe, Editorial, May 26, 1934.

world vastly different from that in which he had worked during the First World War. The Catholic population had increased markedly (by nearly 30%) and rapidly through immigration and the Archdiocese of Toronto had received a high proportion of these new citizens. They were largely of Central European origin and because they were Catholic and foreign had experienced suspicion and hostility when the prosperity of the 20's turned to depression in the '30's. With jobs unavailable and government aid scanty, Catholic leaders feared that they would be won over to the Communist cause unless the Church could reach them. Consequently many new splendid churches and schools and Catholic social services were made available to serve their needs. Such a policy had increased the debts of the diocese to a dangerous level.

There had been, however, some substantial improvements in the lot of the Catholic community in Toronto. Archbishop McNeil's fine personal qualities had earned for him the respect of the non-Catholic leaders in the city. Led by the hierarchy, Catholics were becoming increasingly aggressive in pressing their claim for increased government funding for a rapidly expanding Separate School system. At the same time, improvements had been made in the range and quality of university education available at St. Michael's College.

The Depression would deprive many Catholics of further education (as it did Canadians of all religious persuasions). Somerville was encouraged that a higher proportion of the Catholic population now desired more than a minimum education for their children, but the dearth of highly educated leaders among the clergy and laity was still evident. He believed that one of his tasks would be to inform the Catholic community of the broader social and economic issues now confronting Canadians, as he had tried to do in England during the 1920's.

## CHAPTER 8

### SOMERVILLE, AS EDITOR, TEACHER, AND GAD-FLY, 1933-38

Henry Somerville worked in Canada for the next twenty years as the editor of The Catholic Register, an eight page weekly newspaper, sponsored and funded by the Archdiocese of Toronto and the Church Extension Society. Among the religious press of Canada, it was large, with a circulation of 19,000 in 1933.<sup>1</sup> Somerville's immediate aim was, of necessity, to ensure that the paper appealed to readers in Toronto, but his ultimate goal was to increase the role and influence of the Catholic press in Canada. He had always held that this press was potentially the most effective vehicle for promoting social action which the Canadian Catholic Church possessed.<sup>2</sup> That he would

---

<sup>1</sup>The circulation of the national United Church monthly, The New Outlook, was only 21,000; that of the Anglican monthly, The Canadian Churchman, 9,000; The Presbyterian Record's circulation of 39,000 was unusually large for any Canadian periodical during the Depression. Figures from The Canadian Almanac, 1933.

<sup>2</sup>Somerville proclaimed these ideas to the end of his career. They were the subject of his address to the Catholic Women's League, Annual Convention, 1947. Manuscript in the Somerville Papers.

apply himself to this task was evident in his first month as editor when the space devoted to topics on social theory and reform increased markedly. As early as the first issue which he edited he declared: "We are searching for the Catholic solution of the Social Question. Catholic social study is a waste of time if it does not lead to Catholic social action".<sup>3</sup>

Somerville would be limited in fulfilling these journalistic ambitions because The Catholic Register, like the religious newspapers of all of the major denominations in Canada, had of necessity, to satisfy the conservative taste of the majority of its subscribers. Canada's religious journals devoted most of their pages to reports of missionary and congregational projects, and devotional helps. They were restrained and cautious in their occasional comment on secular problems except when it appeared that there might be a loosening of the state's regulations controlling aspects of personal morality about which they were especially concerned. Religious journals had paid scant attention to the economic causes of the Depression or the re-evaluation of Canadian society which was being provoked in some circles by this disaster. Indeed, before Somerville's time, the grave effects of the Depression were noted in The Register mainly

---

<sup>3</sup>"Life and Labour", The Register, Oct. 26, 1933.

on the "Church Extension Page" where appeared the appeals for funds to support the priests ministering to the poverty-stricken prairie farmers. But this page's clerical writer asserted that the most serious of the farmer's problems was the moral peril resulting when no church facilities were available in their communities.

As the number of unemployed in Canada increased, The Register's editor had commiserated with the destitute, counselled prayer in adversity, and deplored the greed of the "profiteers". The notion of reforming the Canadian economic system was, however, regarded with suspicion, for it might result in "pulling down the whole system of capitalism and replacing it with some other system".<sup>4</sup> This was "too radical and too dangerous. . . . Real social reforms are not the result of direct work on organized institutions, but of individual reform in the ideas and ideals of men".<sup>5</sup>

These sentiments were not dissimilar from those of the Quebec hierarchy whose spokesman, Cardinal Villeneuve, believed that both the poor and the rich had their respective

---

<sup>4</sup>Editorial, The Register, June 15, 1933.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

roles to play in the social order. He preached:

Courage, my dear indigents. Your role is to bring back salvation to the world . . . to raise yourselves to the sublime height of the cross of Christ, who saved humanity through suffering. . . . And you who are rich, or less poor, give of your substance, in order to be happy in this world and save your souls in the next.<sup>6</sup>

Archbishop McNeil had been cautious also in his public statements, declaring that the depression was "the natural result of a long course of individual and corporate sinful selfishness . . . a time of punishment for past sins".<sup>7</sup> He had advised his clergy that

the teaching that the depression is caused more by moral defects than by financial stringency should be pointed out in the pulpits with special reference to the capital sin of greed.<sup>8</sup>

Contemplating this dearth of social and economic analysis, Somerville concluded that he had to revive the flagging interest of a whole new generation of Canadian

<sup>6</sup>The Register, October 19, 1933. Report of address by Cardinal Villeneuve.

<sup>7</sup>The Register, October 1, 1931.

<sup>8</sup>Circular Letter, May 26, 1932. McNeil Papers.



Catholics in the Church's social doctrine. He would have to repeat many of the lessons he had provided during his first stint on The Register, but they must be brought up-to-date and focused more sharply on North American society. In so doing, however, he had to recognize that his chief responsibility as editor was to make The Register appeal to as large and diverse a group as possible. He continued therefore to print congregational news, "fillers" purchased from the syndicates, home-making hints, weekly fiction, and pious trivia which did not always meet his own journalistic ideals, but which he knew his subscribers found familiar and reassuring.

Somerville served notice that in future the economic and social problems of contemporary Canada would be considered in greater detail and depth in the very first issue which he "co-edited" in October, 1933. (Out of courtesy to the former editor, the latter's name stayed on the masthead for several weeks). He resurrected his old "Life and Labour" column because, he declared, he needed a vehicle "where I can particularly address Catholic industrial workers and speak more personally and freely than in an editorial capacity".<sup>9</sup> He also intended the column to be a guide to the parish social study circles which he hoped would soon be organized

---

<sup>9</sup>The Register, October 5, 1933.

wherever The Register was read.

In this first article Somerville observed that one of the most important changes in Canada during his twelve-year absence, had been the emergence of a "distinct trend to the Left".<sup>10</sup> The Communist Party was receiving increasing support and the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation now seriously challenged the old economic system. He noted, however, that possibly these groups might soon be counter-balanced by the sudden emergence of extreme rightist groups, a phenomenon observable in Europe. Confronted with these extremes, Canadian Catholics must be prepared to promote their Church's social programme through Catholic Action. But, he cautioned, "Catholic Action to be effective must be intelligent, the Catholic Actionists must be educated".<sup>11</sup> He reminded his readers that study groups were the basis of the Antigonish Movement in which lay and clerical leaders were applying Catholic social principles to their own immediate economic problems in Nova Scotia.

Somerville's "Life and Labour" column was one of

---

<sup>10</sup>The Register, October 5, 1933.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

the four principal educational devices used by him in The Register during the 1930's. In these he placed his detailed studies of the Social Encyclicals, and his provocative criticisms of the Canadian economic system. The second educational device was the editorials, which cited specific areas in which government remedial action was necessary. To supplement the columns and editorials he also wrote or re-printed (often under a pseudonym) articles on economic theory or proposed fiscal reforms. The pseudonym disguised the fact that The Register was practically a "one-man band" with Somerville doing most of the writing as well as the editing.<sup>12</sup> His fourth device was to give extensive publicity to the activities and views of those Catholic reformers in other countries whose ideas buttressed or illustrated the proposals he presented in his own articles. These were usually in the form of news releases from the Catholic information services and so served as well to keep Canadian leaders informed of trends in international Catholic scholarship and social action.

Out of this mass of material, which had a tendency to be somewhat repetitious, a core programme of reform can be distilled. None of the planks Somerville endorsed were

---

<sup>12</sup>Interview with Mr. Alfred de Manche, Managing Editor of The Register, January 23, 1973.

original with him; he was primarily an adapter and popularizer of ideas which he believed were particularly germane to Canadian problems. In fact, most of the reform material was supplied by the National Catholic Welfare Conference in Washington, several of whose clergy had become committed supporters of the New Deal. Since the Canadian hierarchy had no apparatus through which social policy could be enunciated, Somerville, with the approval of Archbishop McNeil and the latter's successor Archbishop McGuigan, used the American reformers' news releases to introduce some specific reform proposals without appearing to endorse them officially. In this way, the speeches and political activism of Father John Ryan, Father Raymond McGowan, and Father (later Bishop) Francis Haas, served as "trial balloons" from which Church authorities could hastily back off if they proved unsuitable. This became an acceptable and frequently used tactic in Canadian Catholic circles. The American schemes had the added advantage of being enthusiastically endorsed by one of the most influential Canadian reformers, Father J. J. Tompkins of Antigonish. He had advised Archbishop McNeil to become familiar with American trends.

I have been watching carefully what is going on in the U.S.A. and it strikes me that their programme can hardly be improved on. It is scrapping individualism and Laissez Faire. . . . The Catholics

of the U.S.A. seem to be solidly behind Roosevelt.  
 . . . He has reinstated the freedom of the will  
 in the U.S.A.<sup>13</sup>

Although The Catholic Register was his principal educational vehicle, Somerville did not limit himself to this publication. He wrote for other Catholic journals in Canada and the United States: The Canadian Messenger of the Sacred Heart, and America (both Jesuit publications) and Commonweal were his most frequent outlets. Between 1936 and 1946 he also wrote four simple and concise books intended as study guides for Catholic workers enrolled in social study courses.<sup>14</sup> He did not write these books for the highly educated, but for "working men and women, sometimes 'on relief' and sometimes with small earnings and heavy family and other responsibilities". From these he hoped to recruit a group of workers "equipped with a fund

---

<sup>13</sup>Father J. J. Tompkins to Archbishop McNeil, September 25, 1933. McNeil Papers.

<sup>14</sup>H. Somerville, A Course of Social Study (Toronto, 1936). This was later revised and re-issued as A Course of Social Science (no date); Social Study for Canadians (Toronto, 1938); Employers and Workers: Studies in Industrial Organization (Toronto, 1944); Public Planning and Free Enterprise: Studies in Social Construction (Toronto, no date).

of knowledge, fluency in expression and accuracy of thought . . . equipment for leadership in social work, whether politics, labour unions, co-operative societies or other movements".<sup>15</sup>

In the time left from editing, writing, and raising his family of five children, Somerville lectured to Catholic groups throughout the Archdiocese of Toronto and occasionally further afield. In these lectures he frequently pointed out that if anyone doubted the power of social and economic discontent to effect change, they had only to look at Italy, Germany and Russia. Deplorable and unacceptable as their solutions were, North Americans, he said, must not delude themselves that it could not happen here. The Depression had only brought into clearer focus specific injustices which had made change both necessary and inevitable for some time. His task as he saw it was to instruct Catholics in Catholic principles, point out the areas where reform was most urgently needed and inform them of some of the most important trends in social reform.

The most provocative and important issues which Somerville brought before his readers were the rights of

---

<sup>15</sup>"A Canadian Textbook of Social Study", The Register, August 27, 1936.

the individual versus those of the State, the "new economics", monetary and fiscal reform, injustice in the industrial state, the rights of labour, and communism. Recognizing as he did, the importance of fundamental principles, he sought first to delimit the role of the state in society.

According to Somerville, to achieve legitimacy all social and economic reforms must be in accord with the Church's declarations on the purpose and powers of the state and the inherent rights of the individual. These had been defined by St. Thomas Aquinas, and consequently he always introduced his courses on social science with simplified explanations of the latter's position. The state, Aquinas said, is the most important of the societies which organize men into political units. It exists essentially "for purposes of government, for law and order, for keeping the peace and maintaining justice".<sup>16</sup> In carrying out these tasks, however, the state must not usurp powers which, the Church asserted, pertained by natural law to itself, the family, or the individual. In his books and articles, Somerville avoided the subtle scholastic arguments on this theme and expressed it in bold, simple terms:

---

<sup>16</sup>Somerville, A Course of Social Science, 10.

State Authority Limited: Individuals have rights which the State must hold sacred, for it is primarily to protect individual rights that the State comes into existence.<sup>17</sup>

He conceded, however, that this simple declaration masked a very complex problem for which there was no easy solution.

The problem was, allowing that controls are for the common good, what public restraints on the freedom of the individual and his use of his property are justified and to what extent should these be applied? For example, the "Utilitarian Individualist school", which had been dominant in North America until the crash of 1929, had been in serious moral error because it had advocated policies based on the premise that "a man can do as he likes with his own".<sup>18</sup> In contrast, the Christian premise was that man must use his property for the common good. Consequently, St. Thomas had declared, the property and money which people had in excess of their own need were by natural law liable for the support of the poor.<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup>Somerville, A Course of Social Science, 10.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 54.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., 66.



Somerville admitted that definitions of "common good" and "beyond their own need" (in economic jargon, surplus goods) were points of contention even among Catholics. Nor did the Church demand that all superfluous wealth be devoted to charity. It could be invested in enterprises which would provide opportunities for employment. Neither the capitalist investor nor the worker was morally free, however, to do entirely what he liked with his own money or labour; each had to "think of the social utility of his capital and his labor".<sup>20</sup> Nor could the church designate any one particular economic or political reform as absolutely the best one, but the Church could hold legitimately that no reform would work unless it was preceded by "a renewal of the Christian spirit in the hearts of men . . . a spirit of justice and charity as opposed to greed and selfishness".<sup>21</sup>

Because the Church accepted social and economic inequality in society as part of the natural order, property needs varied according to circumstances and position. It

---

<sup>20</sup>Somerville, "Economic Freedom and Planning", The Register, November 30, 1933.

<sup>21</sup>Somerville, "The One Thing Needful", The Register, January 31, 1935.

opposed the abolition of private property because infringing the natural order would not bring about social justice. Somerville pointed out that the Social Encyclicals had upheld this view of property in declaring that surplus wealth still belonged to the owner, even when used unwisely, and that misuse of property did not justify its forfeiture to the State, even for the common good. Nevertheless the Encyclicals did not leave the State powerless. It not only had the traditional right "to tax property owners so far as is necessary to provide State relief for the poor",<sup>22</sup> but also it had the right to control the use of property in order that its social function could be fulfilled. Somerville was very vague in his explanation of how far such power was licit except that it could attend to "the conditioning of its exercise".<sup>23</sup> He did not, at this time, venture further into the sticky morass of "socialistic" controversy except to observe that the Church's belief in the inviolability of private property "does not necessarily mean approval of the capitalistic forms of

---

<sup>22</sup>Somerville, A Course of Social Science, 67.

<sup>23</sup>Somerville, "The Right of Property", The Register, November 23, 1933.

property which are in dispute today".<sup>24</sup> He did give some prominence, however, to the views of Msgr. Ryan who declared that the state was obliged to

specify more accurately what is licit and what is illicit for property owners in the use of their possessions, and that both free competition and economic domination should be brought under control of public authority.<sup>25</sup>

Not only was the state concerned with the use and misuse of property, it also performed the function of maintaining the delicate balance between the rights of the individual and the need to protect the weak in society against the aggressive and selfish actions of particular people or institutions who, in the name of freedom, could take advantage of them. In contemporary society, the state could accomplish this most effectively by guaranteeing the existence and rights of those private societies, such as labour unions, which interposed between the individual and the state.<sup>26</sup> Somerville believed that if these societies' rights were not such as would allow them to flourish (and not just exist) then the state itself would become the only institution checking the abuses of individualism. In this

<sup>24</sup>Somerville, A Course of Social Science, 54.

<sup>25</sup>"Msgr. Ryan. on the Social Encyclicals", Report of radio address on "The Catholic Hour", The Register, May 24, 1934.

<sup>26</sup>Somerville, "Individualism and State-ism",

situation, the balance between the freedom of the individual and the protection of the weak and poor would be invariably upset.

These, Somerville contended, were the kinds of issues about which the study of political theory could provide some essential background and of which Catholics must become more knowledgeable before they supported any particular policies or parties.

As a popular educator, Somerville was aware that these abstract concepts must be related to specific Canadian issues, and he usually concluded his articles with piquant observations on their application to a contemporary problem. Thus he concluded his reflections on the individual and the state with a query about whether the accelerating trend to larger units in both business and government was really a progressive one. Smaller units in private and public institutions were being replaced by larger ones, but there was still widespread discontent in Canada.

What is the application of this principle to the tendency of the Federal Government to do the work of the Provinces and the municipalities? What is its application to the trust movement, to giant mergers and monster departmental stores? I do not know the answers to these questions, but it is our business as Catholic social students to find answers.<sup>27</sup>

---

The Register, January 11, 1934.

<sup>27</sup> Somerville, "Individualism and State-ism",  
The Register, January 11, 1934.

Somerville was unique among the editors of Church publications in Canada during the 1930's in that he had an interest in and some knowledge of economics. The amount of space he allotted in The Register to this most secular of topics was astonishing; indeed he was one of the first journalists in Canada to try to familiarize his readers with the economic theories of John Maynard Keynes.

His rationale for the inclusion of this material was that in the nineteenth century the alliance of the economic theories of individualism, with the philosophy of "progress through industrialization", had greatly diminished the security and well-being of the working man; hence the deterioration of the worker's position had now become a moral issue in which the Church should become actively involved. In the past, the Church's guidance in the enunciation of economic regulations had been beneficial because it had been based on compassionate, moral principles. These were still relevant although society now largely ignored them. Very broadly, Somerville argued, the Depression was but the culmination of society's disregard for the teachings of the Church which extended back to the Reformation. At that time the concern for community was replaced by the sanctioning of individualism. But there were some immediate economic causes for the depression which Catholics must comprehend if they were to contribute to its

immediate solution. Thus, through his columns in The Register he proceeded to enlighten his readers on that economic enigma. His articles on economics which appeared frequently were careful, pungent expositions of classical and modern theory in a style relatively free of jargon. In these, Somerville sometimes sacrificed scholarly accuracy in order to state a general principle as simply as possible. Yet they are remarkable for their time in that any articles on economics appeared at all in such a widely circulated church newspaper and they do represent a unique attempt to communicate economic and social analysis to an unsophisticated audience.

In Somerville's view, unlimited credit expansion by the banks during a period of boom, was one of the main causes of the current crisis in the world economy.<sup>28</sup> When times were good, the banks had used their immense loaning powers recklessly and irresponsibly for the sole purpose of increasing their profits. The policy was profitable because through the system of long-term fixed loan interest, money became the breeder of money and the investor made a profit

---

<sup>28</sup>Somerville, "How the Credit System Causes Booms and Slumps", The Register, May 7, 1936.

regardless of the social worth or the ultimate success of an enterprise.<sup>29</sup> By the late 1920's this practice had caused over-production and an increase in prices which accelerated in a dizzy spiral, deluding the public that times were prosperous. When the banks tried to halt the inflation by reducing credit and calling in loans, the spiral reversed itself so rapidly and in such an uncontrolled manner that prices completely collapsed, profits (and the ability to repay loans) were reduced sharply, bankruptcies proliferated, and workers were laid off by the thousands. "So came the Depression. It was the inevitable reaction from the Boom and the Boom was produced by excessive issues of credit".<sup>30</sup> Somerville declared that the fall in prices could have been alleviated if a proportionate reduction in production costs had occurred through a reduction in interest charges.<sup>31</sup> This had been done by governments in Australia and New Zealand with some success. It was not even considered in Canada by any govern-

---

<sup>29</sup> Somerville, "Loan Interest Caused Economic Wreck Throughout the World", The Register, November 16, 1933.

<sup>30</sup> Somerville, "The Douglas Credit Plan", The Register, May 2, 1935.

<sup>31</sup> Somerville, "To Redeem Farmers from Financial Serfdom", The Register, June 4, 1936.

ment except that of Alberta, and the federal authorities had disallowed the action of that province. The disequilibrium between fixed production costs (of which the high loan interest was a major part), selling prices, and consumer purchasing power continued. It was a situation in which "debtors are being sacrificed to creditors on the altar of the sanctity of contract".<sup>32</sup> Repeatedly, Somerville denounced "the modern system of loan interest, of demanding that money breed money; a demand that until modern times was universally condemned as contrary to nature and reason".<sup>33</sup> Such a system, he said, placed small property owners and entrepreneurs of small business at the mercy "of financial corporations that represent absentee landlordism in a worse form than Ireland ever knew in the blackest days".<sup>34</sup>

Somerville found equally deplorable the fact that large corporations had used bonds (as opposed to common stock) to finance their ventures during the 1920's. They

---

<sup>32</sup>Somerville, "A Debt Crushed World", The Register, October 26, 1933.

<sup>33</sup>Somerville, "Credit Causes Over-Production", The Register, November 9, 1933.

<sup>34</sup>Somerville, "Social and Political Effects of Loan Interest", November 30, 1933. See also "Ethical Light on the Interest Question", The Register, May 28, 1936.



had placed a higher priority on the payment of interest to the lender than on the social worth of the enterprise or the payment of just wages to the employee. As in the case of the money loans, when the economy contracted, the obligations to the bond holders were mill-stones preventing flexibility of production and price schedules. All these practices were, Somerville said, in the medieval sense, "usury", and he believed that the only remedy for the evils they produced was "to return to the old anti-usury laws and to prohibit all interest on money loans".<sup>35</sup> He admitted, however, that

public opinion is not ready for such a policy and may not be ready for a long time. We must therefore be content with whatever small steps in the right direction are immediately possible, and we must continue the work of education.<sup>36</sup>

Somerville had some difficulty presenting any moral argument against the interest system because, as he admitted to a correspondent, "It is from the beginning of the 19th century that the Church has relaxed the rigor of her discipline against interest-taking".<sup>37</sup> Yet, he believed that the

---

<sup>35</sup>Somerville, "To Redeem Farmers from Financial Serfdom", The Register, June 4, 1936.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid.

<sup>37</sup>Somerville, "The Church's Attitude to Interest", The Register, June 11, 1936.

Church has not officially changed (emphasis mine) its position because to date

the Church has given no reasoned and positive approval of interest. A few theologians maintain that interest is wrong in itself and is merely tolerated by the Church in order to avoid greater evils. The majority of theologians, who think interest is justified, not merely tolerated, at the present time are divided in the theories that they put forward for justification.<sup>38</sup>

Somerville was hopeful that the Church might issue a more definitive statement in the future because no less an authority than Msgr. John Ryan, Professor of Moral Theology, believed that "some day interest-taking might be formally and officially condemned".<sup>39</sup> In the meantime, Somerville believed that he could attack the system as an economist who found "that such interest is the major cause of collapse of world trade".<sup>40</sup>

In this project Somerville was delighted to announce that John Maynard Keynes, whom he regarded as "the most

---

<sup>38</sup> Somerville, "The Church's Attitude to Interest", The Register, June 11, 1936.

<sup>39</sup> Somerville quotes Msgr. John Ryan in "The Church's Attitude to Interest", The Register, June 11, 1936.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

challenging of all economists today",<sup>41</sup> was also questioning the monetary policies and lending regulations of western governments. Somerville surmised that few Canadians, and fewer still of his readers were familiar with Keynesian economics. He therefore used every opportunity to familiarize Catholics with the work of a man who appeared to be questioning the validity of the old assumptions of the conservative economists. Somerville was enthusiastic: "His doctrine, if true, is a gospel, that is to say it is good news".<sup>42</sup>

One of the most unusual (for a Church paper) of these articles on economics was his three-column book review of Keynes' The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money in which he pointed out that Keynes considered the ill-chosen monetary policies of contemporary governments were the source of unemployment and trade depression. They believed, said Keynes, in the saving of money through high interest rates in times of recession, a practice which pre-

---

<sup>41</sup>Somerville, "Mr. Keynes' Latest Book Reviewed", The Register, April 9, 1936. A contemporary simplified explanation of Keynes' ideas which reflects an enthusiasm similar to that of Somerville is found in John Kenneth Galbraith "The Mandarin Revolution", in The Age of Uncertainty (Boston, 1977), chapter 7, 197-226.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

vented high marginal efficiency in the use of capital. Somerville was particularly gratified by Keynes' admission that his theories on money were not unrelated to the precepts on interest and money loans of the medieval Church. These

aimed at distinguishing the return on money-loans from the return to active investment . . . [It was] an honest intellectual effort to keep separate what the classical theory has inextricably confused together, namely the rate of interest and the marginal efficiency of capital.<sup>43</sup>

In The Register, Somerville frequently deplored the fact that neither Keynes' new theories nor the monetary measures of other countries (such as Australia or New Zealand) seemed to have been grasped by either the Canadian government or the Opposition.

A reader of Hansard will find no new idea in all the speeches of Cabinet Ministers and ex-Cabinet Ministers. . . .

Two new ideas may be found, and these are new only in the sense that they have not been tried in Canada. One is the idea of deliberate inflation of the currency and the other is the ideas of a legal reduction of the rate of interest on loans contracted. . . . Canada . . . will have to make up its mind about them, after listening to the new ideas of thinkers like Mr. J. M. Keynes as well as the repetition of the ancient shibboleths of orthodox economics.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>43</sup>J. M. Keynes, The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money (London, 1936), 351. Quoted by Somerville in The Register, April 9, 1936.

<sup>44</sup>Somerville, "Recovery of Production is not Recovery of Prosperity", The Register, April 30, 1936. See also "The World in Agony Through Interest Payments",

For a prominent example of the latter, Somerville cited Mr. D. C. Coleman, Senior Vice-President of the Canadian Pacific Railway who rejoiced in April, 1936 that prosperity had returned because production was already back to that of the last "normal" year, 1926. Somerville declared this a "fallacious argument" in conflict with two facts. Coleman was ignoring the facts that there were 400,000 Canadians still on Relief and that price levels were now 30 percent below those of 1926. These prices, when coupled with the long-term debts owed by thousands of home owners, farmers and corporations were severely restricting buying power and hence, the functioning of the economy.<sup>45</sup>

Somerville's repeated condemnations of the banking system which ensured that "the highest rate of interest must be exacted from the weakest borrower . . . thus aggravating his poverty and lessening his security", had a populist ring about them which he knew was often misinterpreted as "socialistic", or at best "anti-capitalist".

---

The Register, May 21, 1936.

<sup>45</sup>The next year Somerville made a similar response to S. H. Logan, President of the Canadian Bankers Association, who declared that prosperity had returned. "We are still in the eighth year of depression. The banker wants to make the picture look as bright as he can because he wants to maintain confidence in the existing system." Editorial, "Bank Doctrine Ex-Cathedral". The Register, Nov. 25, 1937.

Somerville's retort was that the capitalist system would not survive at all unless some reforms were made in monetary policy. But to introduce legislative controls over credit and interest rates would only regulate the fluctuations in the money supply. In times of depression, when the economy needed a "shot in the arm", this could be accomplished both by lowering the interest rates and by introducing government-sponsored job programmes. Such devices would act as stimulants for the economy, reviving the flow of consumer purchasing. Production would increase, the disequilibrium between production and purchasing power would be controlled and a healthy circulation of money would revivify the economy.

The views outlined above were repeated intermittently and in various guises in The Register during the 1930's and with fair frequency. Somerville declared that their primary purpose was to indicate his chief complaints about the economic system and to pique his readers' interest in the general study of economics. He did not believe, therefore, it was necessary or appropriate to present a complete, theoretical analysis of current trends; indeed he admitted he was not hired or competent to do so. His principal contribution was that he introduced a new dimension into Canadian Catholic social thought in a Diocese that had many contacts and no little influence on other parts of Canada.

Through his promotion of an economist like Keynes, he subtly introduced the notion that Catholic education for social action would necessitate acceptance of, and more familiarity with scholarship that had no denominational bias. In the past, Catholics writing or teaching about economic and social issues (and there were few of these in the 1930's in Canada) had found their sources in the European Catholic social movement.<sup>46</sup> Most Canadian priests, and as a consequence, the laity too, were still chary of study or participation in non-Catholic reform groups. As he observed the North American scene, Somerville concluded that new, broader tactics were needed. He cautioned Catholics that

we must not pretend that religion by itself solves economic and social problems. I think we should have some practical suggestions as to how they may be solved. We should be able to make concrete applications of our abstract proposals.<sup>47</sup>

---

<sup>46</sup>Somerville's own little historical survey, Studies in the Catholic Social Movement (London, 1933), had briefly outlined the programmes of Catholic reformers only in Belgium, France, Italy and Germany.

<sup>47</sup>Somerville, "The Catholic Church and Economic Programmes", The Register, April 26, 1934.

When he used "we", Somerville meant the individual priest or layman who might be involved in social action, not the institutional Church as was frequently the case in Europe. He still did not favour the formation of exclusively Catholic parties even if they favoured social reform. He expressed this view cautiously, however, because it was not the Church's policy to emphasize the difference in tactics that already existed in Canada between the English and the French-Canadian hierarchy. He put the matter obliquely: "We must not lead non-Catholics to expect the Church to do the work of programme-making which belongs in a country like Canada to political parties".<sup>48</sup>

Somerville re-emphasized this point in a different context in an article praising the efforts of the United Church to publicize the seriousness of the "social problem". He was pleased that the Rev. Claris E. Silcox had praised the Encyclical Quadragesimo Anno as "an excellent example of what can be accomplished by expert minds",<sup>49</sup> but he cautioned Protestants not to misinterpret the Church's directive; it was not a blueprint for specific actions.

---

<sup>48</sup>Somerville, "The Catholic Church and Economic Programmes", The Register, April 26, 1934.

<sup>49</sup>Somerville, "Churches and Social Questions", The Register, Sept. 20, 1934.



The Catholic Church expects us, ordinary Catholics, laymen and women, capitalists and politicians, to do very much what Mr. Silcox regards as the essentially Protestant task of private exploration and the use of private judgment. We Catholic social students, priests and laity, are engaged in a voyage of discovery. . . . We have to do a certain amount of exploring ourselves. . . . Let us recognize our responsibility to seek and study and perhaps to make a contribution to Catholic knowledge and thought.<sup>50</sup>

Because he recognized the limitations of his readers, Somerville's attempts to teach economic theory were scattered throughout the paper. But even then, they were undoubtedly as far beyond the interest or grasp of the majority of the subscribers as such topics are for most Canadians today. They could be diffuse and even somewhat patronizing in tone. His articles which gave specific instances of social or economic injustice were much livelier reading for they were blunt and scathing in their denunciation of the Establishment. They are also worth some notice because they indicate Somerville's ability to pinpoint needs and trends on some topics of urgent social concern which were not publicized with any like degree or perception or indignation in the other denominational papers.

---

<sup>50</sup>Somerville, "Churches and Social Questions", The Register, Sept. 20, 1934.

Within a few months of becoming editor of The Register Somerville received from the Stevens Commission<sup>51</sup> news items through which he could express his exasperation at the lack of control over corporate business practices in Canada. He reprinted parts of the testimony from the hearings to illustrate his articles analyzing the meaning and application of the Social Encyclicals. In this way he linked his own protests directly to the papal teaching. He began the series by praising Stevens for his courage in initiating the investigation

for which he will be marked out for political assassination not only by the millionaires who control the big stores and chain stores but by those newspapers which owe their prosperity to store advertising more than to anything else.<sup>52</sup>

Stevens had charged that the big department stores (such as Eatons and Simpsons) had used their mass buying power to hold the manufacturers who supplied them in Canada in virtual bondage by demanding that they accept prices for

---

<sup>51</sup>Officially known as "The Royal Commission on Price Spreads and Mass Buying", this was an investigation initiated by the Hon. H. H. Stevens, Minister of Trade and Commerce in the Bennett cabinet, in March 1934 to investigate such matters as price-fixing.

<sup>52</sup>"Big Store Dictatorship", unsigned article by Somerville in The Register, Jan. 25, 1934.

their products which were excessively and unnecessarily low. The real victims in these deals were the factory workers who had to work long hours for low wages. The department stores, however, sold the goods at large mark-ups which were not passed on to their clerks in the form of a "living wage" but only benefited the already wealthy owners. Somerville expostulated:

It is time that this country asked itself whether it can afford to tolerate the dictatorship represented by a few mammoth retailing establishments. It was revolt against the chain stores that had much to do with putting Hitler in power in Germany. There may be something drastic coming in Canada.<sup>53</sup>

Somerville continued his attack on corporate ethics when the Commission's interrogation of Canada Packers' officials revealed similar immorality in the packing industry. He was particularly scathing in his comments on Mr. J. S. McLean, the President, who, he noted, "gets an enormous salary and other emoluments", but who could not answer many of the Commission's questions about his company's buying and employee practices.

---

<sup>53</sup>"Big Store Dictatorship", unsigned article by Somerville in The Register, Jan. 25, 1934.

Thus there was a case of one man getting as low as \$6.00 a week. "Short time" was the explanation of this low wage given by the Packers. . . . Men waited many hours for which they were not paid. One case was quoted of 8 men aggregating 63 hours in a week for which they were not paid. Mr. McLean knew nothing of this. One does not expect such an important person as a President to be acquainted with such details as how the ordinary workers are paid. But President McLean stood up in his dignity and wrath to protest that his firm had not been treated fairly. He complained that auditors had been sent into the Canada Packers Limited . . . without telling the company what they were after. . . . Of course one knows that if the company had only known what the auditors were after the auditors would never have got it. Just as Mr. McLean's evidence always stopped when it reached an interesting point.<sup>54</sup>

Somerville noted that, however deplorable this company's employee relations were, "it is as a buyer . . . that Canada Packers Ltd. exhibits dictatorship".<sup>55</sup> He described how, in collusion with other cattle buyers such as Swifts, they used a variety of deceits to force the farmers to accept ruinously low prices for their livestock. Yet Mr. McLean had said, "There is no combination or agreement obtaining in the packing house business".<sup>56</sup> Somerville

---

<sup>54</sup>Somerville, "Economic Dictatorship -- More of It", The Register, May 17, 1934.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid.

scoffed: "Readers can draw their own conclusions. There is some public knowledge of the profits of the packers and the income of the farmers".<sup>57</sup> McLean had testified at the hearings that "nothing governs prices but the age-old law of supply and demand. No changes could be made that would add one dollar to the amount the farmers receive for their stock".<sup>58</sup> But Somerville, even before the damning evidence had been unearthed by the Commission's auditors, had concluded that Canada Packers was

a merger formed to stop competition between companies that were previously independent. In relation to the farmers the packers are buyers and . . . the packers are always trying to lessen competition between themselves as buyers while they do all they can to increase competition between the farmers as sellers.<sup>59</sup>

Somerville declared that such combinations formed by giant corporations were what Pope Pius had in mind when in Quadragesimo Anno, he denounced the "economic dictatorship" exercised by ruthless capitalists.

---

<sup>57</sup>Somerville, "Economic Dictatorship -- More of It", The Register, May 17, 1934.

<sup>58</sup>In "The Encyclical and Mass Buying", Somerville paraphrases McLean's testimony. The Register, March 15, 1934.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid.

Economic dictatorship takes different forms in different countries. Sometimes it is the power of the capitalist over wage-labour. The most striking form in Canada is the power of a few mammoth retailers over the manufacturers with consequent injury to wage-earners and unfair competition with smaller retailers.<sup>60</sup>

A third example of "despotic economic domination" was supplied by the testimony which revealed the practices of the Imperial Tobacco Company. Somerville summarized the situation as follows:

There are a lot of small tobacco growers in Ontario, there is one buyer of raw tobacco in Canada so big that other buyers do not count. Whatever the Imperial Tobacco Company says goes. . . . When the buying season starts its agents tell the growers what price they will get. Other buyers wait and see what price is fixed by Imperial.<sup>61</sup>

The import duty put on by the Canadian government to protect the grower was useless because "the Imperial buyers took instructions from New York as to the prices they should fix".<sup>62</sup> Somerville also noted that here was a case of an international company interlocked with the British and American Tobacco Company which had a similar "strangle-

---

<sup>60</sup>Somerville, "The Encyclical and Mass Buying", The Register, March 15, 1934.

<sup>61</sup>Somerville, "Life and Labour Column", The Register, May 10, 1934.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid.

hold" on growers in other countries. He quoted the evidence given by Mr. Gray Miller, President of Imperial Tobacco, which revealed that the company had in the last five years made profits totalling \$30,000,000. This was achieved, however, by offering the farmer one third less than he had asked for. Somerville reported that Mr. Gray denied knowing that the farmers' wives had tearfully begged Imperial's buyers for a fairer price and had been refused. He concluded his report with the observation that

such a trifle as womens' tears would never be reported to the President of a Company that has averaged \$6,000,000 a year profit for five years. . . . There is no doubt of the fact that the price the growers received was cut by a third, which meant that the income for a years' labour of the growers' families was cut by a third. . . .

There are many more such stories coming from Ottawa that illustrate what the Pope said in the sentences I have quoted.<sup>63</sup>

The remedy for these situations, Somerville suggested, was to organize groups of industrial or retail companies and producers who would mutually agree on a scale of just prices. Such organizations would eliminate the necessity

---

<sup>63</sup>Somerville, "Life and Labour", The Register, May 10, 1934.

for manufacturers to cut wages and enable the small retailers to secure their supplies on the same terms as the big buyers, although Somerville conceded that the latter could, in justice, still receive some discount for bulk purchasing.<sup>64</sup> He concluded that "except along lines of industrial codes I can see no remedy for the crying evils of Economic Dictatorship in Canada".<sup>65</sup> Somerville continued to refer frequently to this type of corporate co-operation which in effect, would limit excessive competition not only between the primary producer and the manufacturer, but also within industry between management and the wage worker. He gave instances where this Corporative System was being tried with some success in Europe but he did not give details on the method of implementation. His main concern was that it represented a new approach to industrial management, based on co-operation not confrontation, an attitude which to date seemed to be lacking in the Canadian industrial system. The co-operative aspect of the system was to be worked out through industrial councils composed of both management and workers with power to legislate

---

<sup>64</sup>Somerville, "The Encyclical and Mass Buying", The Register, March 15, 1934.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid.



wages and prices for a particular industry.<sup>66</sup>

These regulatory bodies were not, Somerville admitted, the complete answer to the widening social and economic disparities in Canada. In addition, some new projects would have to be instituted which were specifically designed to equalize financial and living conditions among Canadians. One of the most obvious and urgent needs was where "poverty today is primarily a question of the size of the family".<sup>67</sup> Thus, one of the first strategems he proposed was Family Allowances, a method of increasing the income of workers which he believed had three benefits:

It is an equitable method of helping the worker who is serving his country by bringing up children. It facilitates the settlement of wage questions by providing workers with children an income additional to wages.<sup>68</sup>

Third, Family Allowances were the most effective way to correct the drastic fall in the Canadian birth rate which during the Depression, had reached a low that Somerville deemed "appalling".

<sup>66</sup>Somerville, "A Catholic Programme for Social Justice", The Register, October 10, 1935.

<sup>67</sup>Somerville, "Family Allowances", Editorial, The Register, August 18, 1938.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid.

Canada is a country that needs population. Until the onset of the present protracted depression this country was spending huge sums to get immigrants, many of whom did not stay here but crossed to the United States. Other things being equal, native Canadians are very much preferable to immigrants. The fall in the Canadian birth rate is appalling. Something will have to be done about it. Family Allowances represent a sound policy for national growth and social justice.<sup>69</sup>

In his initial campaign for Family Allowances which he began a few months after his arrival in Canada, Somerville had suggested that they should be paid from a central fund to which the employers would contribute according to the number of workers they employed.<sup>70</sup> Later, he altered his opinion, probably as a result of the deteriorating relations between labour and management during this period. The method of funding did not concern him so much as the need to have society acknowledge in a practical way that workers with families had the right of access to a basic living standard. It was for him, the papal concept of the "living wage" put into reality. When the British Government turned down a report favouring Family Allowances, Somerville decried this action mainly because, "no social

---

<sup>69</sup>Somerville, "The Price of Parenthood", Editorial, The Register, September 1, 1938.

<sup>70</sup>Somerville, "The Catholic Church and Economic Programmes", The Register, April 26, 1934.

reform can gain consideration in Canada except as a timid imitation of something long done in England".<sup>71</sup> As his enthusiasm for Family Allowances increased, he pointed out that the constitutional controversies over Dominion-Provincial spheres of authority need not prevent the introduction of this social benefit for it could be financed in the same manner as was currently being used for Old Age Pensions.<sup>72</sup>

A second project promoted by Somerville in The Register was a comprehensive, low-cost housing programme to be funded directly by the Federal government. He scorned the recent (1935) National Housing Act for "helping only the comparatively rich" because in its first two years it had made loans on only 808 units at an average cost of \$8,808 per home.<sup>73</sup> This sum, he pointed out, was far in excess of what a worker could now afford. Thousands of workers had forfeited their houses during the Depression because they were unable to pay the high interest charges on their mortgages.

---

<sup>71</sup>Somerville, "Family Allowances", Editorial, The Register, August 18, 1938.

<sup>72</sup>Old Age pensions were first established in Canada in 1927, with the Federal Government contributing 50% of the cost of the payments made by the Provincial Governments. In 1936, the federal share was increased to 75%.

<sup>73</sup>Somerville, "Call for Housing Campaign", Editorial,

There is a Catholic parish in the Toronto area where, as we have heard, not more than three families own their house today though over 100 were owners before the Depression. Very few families occupy a house by themselves; in the majority of cases there is "doubling up" by two families in houses of only five or six rooms, built for one family only . . . an appalling prospect from the religious and moral as well as social point of view.<sup>74</sup>

Low cost housing must be one of the first priorities in a democratic society, Somerville said because

a house is the material framework of the most vital and fundamental of all social institutions, the Christian home. Nothing is more characteristic of Catholic social teaching than its insistence on family life.<sup>75</sup>

Even the fortunate few who had been able to find jobs recently would not be able to save up a down-payment on a house because wages were much lower than before 1929, yet the cost of money and housing had not decreased in a corresponding ratio. Somerville declared that the responsibility for providing houses for workers must be accepted by the federal government because private enterprise did not have the desire to provide it.

---

The Register, July 22, 1973.

<sup>74</sup>Somerville, "Homes for the Workers", Editorial, The Register, December 2, 1937.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid.

Private enterprise has fallen down on the task of building working class houses in every country in the world. . . . Every other progressive country in the world has embarked upon schemes for State assistance to house building. It is certain that Canada will be obliged to do likewise.<sup>76</sup>

This demand for State funded housing did not originate with Somerville, but he did write several cogent and forceful editorials supporting men such as James F. Coughlin, K.C. who wrote a pamphlet reporting on its feasibility. Somerville did, however, disagree with Coughlin's idea of paying the housing subsidy to the builder. "We do not believe that the pre-depression system of speculative building with mortgage money can be revamped by the stimulus of a Government bonus."<sup>77</sup> In lieu of builder's loans, Somerville favoured mortgage loans guaranteed by the government and made directly to the prospective owner at 4-5% interest. The mortgage would cover up to 90% of the cost so that the down payment would be only ten percent. In some cases this could be lowered further, he suggested, if the owner was allowed to put in his own labour on the house as part of the initial instal-

---

<sup>76</sup>Somerville, "Homes for the Workers", Editorial, The Register, December 2, 1937.

<sup>77</sup>Somerville, "Housing Plans", Editorial, The Register, October 29, 1936.

ment. Somerville also suggested an alternative to outright home ownership in which the government held the mortgage in perpetuity and the "owner" held the leasehold for as long as he chose to occupy the house and paid carrying charges, mortgage interest and taxes annually.<sup>73</sup> (This latter scheme betrayed his English origins and his incomprehension of the North American psychology which had long ago rejected any leasehold system in favour of outright ownership.)

Somerville pointed out that even with all this help, home ownership might not be possible for many citizens. It was therefore equally urgent that municipalities or non-profit making housing societies build rental accommodation in large planned estates financed by Federal subsidy.<sup>79</sup> Whatever housing scheme was adopted, he concluded, "the most important factor to watch is loan interest, not only the loan interest paid by the house-owner but by the Government".<sup>80</sup>

---

<sup>78</sup>Somerville, "Homes for the Workers", Editorial, The Register, December 2, 1937.

<sup>79</sup>Somerville, "Housing Plans", Editorial, The Register, October 29, 1936.

<sup>80</sup>Somerville, "Homes for the Workers", Editorial, The Register, December 2, 1937.

These housing projects, Somerville pointed out, would be one means of providing what Keynes had stipulated as two of the most essential ingredients for economic recovery -- an easy credit policy on the part of the central banking authority and the initiation of public works as sources of new employment for wage earners. As part of the "new economics", this system of pump-priming was being used, he noted, with positive results in Sweden, England, and the United States. As he read about their success, Somerville became impatient with the caution of the Liberal government, which had been elected on the platform of position action to check the Depression.

Ottawa moves with painful slowness. It attempts no initiative of its own, but makes long range studies of what is done in the United States and in Great Britain and too often it shows that its long range vision has been very defective, as when Mr. Dunning pathetically remarked that Canada had done everything Britain had done, except balance its budget.<sup>81</sup>

Somerville enjoyed writing about these economic reform programmes because he believed they were important, but his articles were demanding for the average reader with a minimum of formal education whose immediate employment problems were uppermost on his mind. He was alert to

---

<sup>81</sup>Somerville, "Positive Employment Policy", Editorial, The Register, August 6, 1936.

the fact that most of The Register's subscribers had interests which identified them with the working class or "the proletariat" as he called "the property-less wage-worker, one who depends for livelihood on employment by a master".<sup>82</sup> Few Catholics were yet in positions of professional or managerial responsibility.

His chief goal was to illustrate to this group, particularly Catholic industrial workers and their clergy, how the Church's broad directives on social justice could be and were being applied in practical ways to current labour problems. It was important that they realize the danger to the Church and to society in general if they neglected their obligation to be actively involved in working for reform. Between 1933 and 1939 Somerville's concern was reflected in the inordinate amount of space he allotted in The Register to news and discussions about labour unions and their place in modern industrial society.

His message was, in the main, concentrated on four issues: the workers' moral and legal right to organize unions; the Catholic position on Communists in labour

---

<sup>82</sup>Somerville, "Uplifting the Proletariat", The Register, December 14, 1933.



unions; the working conditions on which unions should negotiate; and the morality of the strike. A torrent of material on these very topics was issued during the 1930's by the National Catholic Welfare Conference in Washington.<sup>83</sup> Every week The Register contained a selection of items from this source, and although their context was usually American, it was obvious from his editorials which frequently complemented the news stories that Somerville intended them as object lessons for Canadians. The remarks of these Catholic clerical leaders, most of whom were respected academics or members of the American hierarchy, provided him with authoritative directives on the Church's future role in improving the lot of the worker in North America. Equal in importance to the texts of these news releases were the headlines, editing, and page placement which were done in The Register office by Somerville to draw attention to the point in the article which he wished the reader to absorb.

The first requisite for improved labour relations in Canada was, in Somerville's view, recognition by the employers of labour's moral and legal right to organize unions. He commented that union recognition, rather than

---

<sup>83</sup> Aaron Abell, American Catholicism and Social Action: A Search for Social Justice, 1365-1950 (Garden City, 1960), Ch. VII, "The Depression Decade and Catholic Action: Social Justice to the Forefront". Abell's footnotes are particularly valuable as they supply a bibliography.

wages, had become the focal point of industrial strife. Confrontations between labour and management on this issue were made even more bitter when the Depression produced a plentiful supply of "scab labour". Believing that unions were going to become one of the most influential political and economic forces in Canada, Somerville published many exhortations by American Catholic leaders urging the industrialists to recognize union bargaining rights, and encouraging the unionists to persevere in spite of their employers' hostility. Somerville stressed that Canadian workers' right to unions was "given to them by the God of Nature. No human power can take that right from them".<sup>84</sup> This right, he continued, had been affirmed by both Pope Leo XIII and Pius XI because it accorded with Scripture and the principles expounded by St. Thomas Aquinas.

Their encyclicals

placed the trade union on the same ground as the right of existence of the State itself, so that for the State to forbid reasonable organizations of workers was to contradict "the very principle of its own existence".<sup>85</sup>

---

<sup>84</sup>Somerville, "The Truth About Trade Unions", Editorial, The Register, April 22, 1937. See also "Workers' Right to Union. U.S. Committee of Bishops Declares it Inherent Right", The Register, April 19, 1937.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid.

One of Somerville's favourite academic authorities, Msgr. John Ryan, produced three corollaries of the Encyclicals' propositions which were frequently repeated in speeches by other American reform clergy: the company union was inimical to the right of workers to bargain freely; legislators who failed to protect workers when forming free unions were to be censured for inhibiting freedom;<sup>86</sup> companies that demanded the "open shop" were using a sinister tactic to undermine the solidarity of the workers. The closed shop was declared to be "morally unobjectionable . . . necessary if unions are to be effective".<sup>87</sup>

The most vehement of the N.C.W.C. spokesmen, was the Rev. Dr. Francis J. Haas, who, Somerville frequently reminded his readers, was a leading Catholic sociologist, a member of the Roosevelt National Recovery Administration and a frequent speaker at labour conventions. Haas condemned the company union and the open shop because they

---

<sup>86</sup>Msgr. John A. Ryan, address on "The Catholic Hour", New York, May 20, 1934. Reported in The Register, May 24, 1934..

<sup>87</sup>Rev. Charles Owen Rice, Address to the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, New York. Reported in The Register, August 26, 1937.

restricted the power of the workers to bargain freely. Experience proved their wage settlements were very low and had worked to the detriment of the national economy. "Low wages means low purchasing power. Low purchasing power means under-consumption, unemployment and human debasement".<sup>88</sup> These themes were repeated frequently in The Register as evidenced by the following excerpts from Haas' Labour Day Address in 1935:

Every worker, skilled and unskilled, owes it to himself, to his family and to his fellow workers to be in his union. . . . In taking his place shoulder to shoulder with his fellows he faces perils and dangers. There will be discrimination and discharges. But when all are united, all will be free. Labor Day this year says to workers: join your union. Labor Day this year says to employers: recognize the representatives workers have chosen; receive them, deal with them . . . Labor Day this year says to the entire community: support workers in their right to organize . . . they seek to be free in industry as you are in Government; democracy can only live when all are free to enjoy it.<sup>89</sup>

---

<sup>88</sup>Rev. Dr. James Haas, address to the annual convention of the American Federation of Labour, Washington, October 5, 1933, as reported in The Register, October 19, 1933. See also "Company Unions no Protection for Workers: Dr. Haas on Right to Organize", excerpts from address by Dr. Haas to Toledo Diocese's Summer School of Social Action for Clergy, July 20, 1937, reported in The Register, July 29, 1937.

<sup>89</sup>Haas, "All Workers Should Unionize", Labor Day Address to Canton, Ohio, Central Labor Union. The Register, September 12, 1935.

The most outspoken bishop in the American hierarchy whom Somerville quoted on labour matters was the Most Rev. Robert E. Lucey, Bishop of Amarillo, Texas, who had long been an ardent supporter of unions. In a speech to the clergy, he was reported as demanding that his Church set an example for fair labour practice. It should, he said,

stipulate a wage scale as part of our building contracts and we had better insert a clause that only union labor may be used on the job in those crafts and trades that are organized. . . .

To those who do not belong to a union, our first message is -- Organize! The A.F. of L. is the nearest approach to a general organized labor movement in this country: as such it comes closer to the provisions of Quadragesimo Anno than any other social institution in American Life. . . .

We cannot now create Catholic unions so we had better use what we have -- labor unions affiliated with the A.F. of L.<sup>90</sup>

On another occasion Bishop Lucey again was reported as urging the workers to take responsibility for organizing unions because in North America the Church would not be able to do it for them. His opinion was important because it reinforced Somerville's contention that confessional unions, in which the Church appointed representatives to

---

<sup>90</sup>Most Rev. R. E. Lucey, "U.S. Bishop Advocates Union Labor for Church Building Contracts", The Register, May 16, 1935.

executive positions (as in Quebec) were simply not feasible in the rest of Canada and would probably prove obsolete even where they were accepted at present. Somerville used an American Bishop in this instance to counteract the silence of the English-Canadian hierarchy on this issue.<sup>91</sup>

News items in The Register frequently warned workers that union organizing was a perilous undertaking. At the very least, the union supporter risked losing his job if he was detected by the spies planted by management.<sup>92</sup> The American Senate labour hearings revealed that the Chrysler Corporation had discharged twenty draughtsmen when their spies reported their union; the remaining members were so terrified they stopped attending meetings and merely mailed in their dues.<sup>93</sup> Pinkerton's Detective Agency testified that employers had paid them \$1,750,000 for labour-spy and strike-breaking services since 1933; their largest

---

<sup>91</sup>"Bishop Praises C.I.O.", The Register, Oct. 21, 1937.

<sup>92</sup>Rev. John O'Brien, "Big Capital has Spies Against Labor Unions", The Register, August 5, 1937.

<sup>93</sup>Rev. John O'Brien, "How Employers Fight Labour Unions", The Register, August 12, 1937.

customer had been General Motors for \$419,850.<sup>94</sup>

Somerville pointed out in his editorials that Canadian companies were guilty of similar tactics. He noted that the Quebec Textile Strike was occasioned by the union's demand for recognition and improved working conditions. After first ignoring the union, the Dominion Textile Company, which Somerville declared, "has exercised economic dictatorship for so long that it was maddened by anger at a challenge to its power", hired strike-breakers and brought in the police after accusing the union leaders of being "Red".<sup>95</sup>

To be classified as a "Red" was, during the Depression, sure to draw to the accused feelings of fear and hostility from the middle and upper classes in Canada. The spectre of Communism was a real presence to many citizens, particularly when they were confronted with so many thousands of restless, disconsolate unemployed, largely of immigrant origin. Fear of their subversive plans was expressed by several civic and religious groups but Catholic opposition to the "Red Menace" was the most persistent and

---

<sup>94</sup>Rev. John O'Brien, "How Employers Fight Labor Unions", The Register, August 12, 1937.

<sup>95</sup>Somerville, "The Quebec Textile Strike", Editorial, The Register, September 2, 1937.

uncompromising, and to Somerville's alarm, frequently the most unreasoning and ill-informed.<sup>96</sup> Somerville's own frontal attacks on "Atheistic Communism" in Spain and Canada in The Register, were unrelenting and in the case of the former, precipitated mainly by the Loyalists' attacks on Catholic clergy and property in Spain. But so far as Canada was concerned, his principal point was still (as during the 1920's) that philosophical and religious arguments were not the weapons which would keep the desperate poor or "sweated labor" from contamination by this communist religion which counselled direct action and provided practical help in alleviating their situation.<sup>97</sup>

His message was expressed in a typical editorial:

The Catholic Church must fight her wars in the field of social action. It is not by philosophy but by action that the Communists are winning ground in Canada today. . . . We can imagine what it means to the workers in Canadian factories and mines and lumber camps and elsewhere to find that when they have grievances to be remedied it is the Communists who are quickest to give them aid, that the Communists have the most interest in them and

---

<sup>96</sup>Some examples of non-Catholic fear of Communism are cited by Suzanne Skebo, "Liberty and Authority", 54: Arthur Meighen criticized ministers whose utterances did not help in "maintenance of law and order"; some fundamentalist sects expressed their concern to political leaders about "Atheistic Communism".

<sup>97</sup>An example of help were the hostels established near the railway stations where the unemployed men riding the rails in search of work could bathe, eat and sleep. Com-



have oratorical, negotiating and organizing powers needed in labor leadership. . . . The employers are not without means of making their displeasure felt by those accused of "agitation". The workers are grateful and loyal to those who take risks fighting their cause. . . . The workers do not hear much of Marx from the Communists but they hear a good deal of some of the corporations mentioned in the course of the Stevens Enquiry. In short, the Communists are exploiting the actualities of Canada today. . . . The working masses will always be led by somebody. . . . We merely suggest very cautiously that Catholics may have to give leadership themselves. . . . But Catholics will first have to be trained to give leadership and training will take time. Meanwhile we may at least show friendliness and sympathy towards the workers and the workless.<sup>98</sup>

For this reason Somerville supported Catherine de Hueck, the émigré Russian Baroness in her plans to found "Friendship Houses" in Toronto and other Canadian centres where, under lay direction, social service work would be initiated among the immigrant poor.<sup>99</sup> She patterned her

---

munist literature and study groups were available at these centres. Interview with John Malone, retired welder, Hamilton, Ontario, April 3, 1974.

<sup>98</sup>Somerville, "Action and Philosophy", Editorial, The Register, August 22, 1935.

<sup>99</sup>Catherine de Hueck was employed by the Archdiocese of Toronto investigating Communist infiltration among the immigrant Catholics and eventually founded her first Friendship House as a social service centre in that city. Somerville was unable to give much personal financial help but she stated that even more valuable was his moral and editorial support for her projects. Interview with Catherine de Hueck Doherty, Combermere, April 26, 1976.

anti-communist approach on that of the controversial American Catholic social activist, Dorothy Day. Like Miss Day, she too was a controversial person notorious for her outspoken attacks on Catholics, even clergy, who she felt were lethargic in their attitude to social action. Nor did "the Baroness" hesitate to criticize Catholic employers if she felt their labour practices set a bad example for the Church.<sup>100</sup>

Somerville believed his views were confirmed when Tim Buck, the Secretary of the Canadian Communist Party, received 20,000 votes when he ran for the Toronto Board of Control. He commented:

The 20,000 who voted for Tim Buck were not all Communists, but they . . . are not averse to seeing a leader of Tim Buck's caliber on the Board of Control. . . . Direct attack on Communists more often helps than hinders their progress. The direct attack should be on the evil social conditions which is the soil where Communism grows. . . . Communists get positions of leadership because they are readers, students, speakers, debaters, organizers and if you like, agitators. Let Catholics show the same assiduity in social study and action.<sup>101</sup>

---

<sup>100</sup>Catherine de Hueck recalled that much to the discomfiture of the Archbishop she once led a picket line of women employees outside the Laura Secord Company, a candy plant owned by Frank O'Connor, a noted Toronto Catholic and benefactor of the Church. Interview with Catherine de Hueck Doherty, April 26, 1976, Combermere.

<sup>101</sup>Somerville, "20,000 Votes for Tim Buck", Editorial, The Register, January 9, 1936.

These ideas put Somerville at variance with the way the Church in Quebec was combatting Communism. He knew the Quebec hierarchy supported Duplessis' Padlock Law and were hostile to non-confessional unions. He usually avoided exposing the differences in views and policies between the French and English sections of the Catholic Church in Canada but at times these did erupt in The Register. He believed that the Padlock Law was an ineffective means of combatting Communist propaganda and concluded: "The mistakes of anti-Communists do more for the progress of Communism than the Communists are ever able to do for themselves",<sup>102</sup>

The most perilous mistake of all, Somerville contended, was for Catholics to label a union subversive because it received some support from Communist organizers in presenting requests for negotiation with the employers, or to turn deaf ears to requests simply because they were supported by the Communist Party. Some of these needs were justified and the Communists were clever enough to understand labour's desperate position. Thus, Somerville pointed out, in Tim Buck's second try for Board of Control, he

---

<sup>102</sup>Somerville, "The Padlock Law", Editorial, The Register, November 4, 1937.

received an even higher proportion of the Toronto vote. Labour supported him not because he was Communist but because he endorsed two policies which met their needs -- better housing and lower interest rates. He warned:

There is a grave danger of the mind of labor, the opinion of the working classes, becoming definitely anti-Catholic. To a large extent Labor opinion has been turned against the Church in Spain, and a little earlier it was turned against the Church in Italy. The responsibility for this does not rest on the Communists only, and we would make a great mistake if we concentrated on Communism as the only enemy. To see only Red is to be worse than blind. The Church's enemies are on the Right as well as the Left.<sup>103</sup>

There were many warnings in The Catholic Register that unscrupulous employers frequently used the accusation, "Communist", to stimulate Catholic opposition to unions and divert attention from their legitimate demands for recognition, higher wages and better working conditions.<sup>104</sup> Such an insensitive response from the Catholic community was identifying the Church as the protector of an unreformed capitalist system.

---

<sup>103</sup>Somerville, "Votes for Communists", Editorial, The Register, December 17, 1936.

<sup>104</sup>Rev. Raymond McGowan, "Hitting at Communists and Hurting the Church", The Register, December 24, 1936; see also Msgr. John A. Ryan, Address to Catholic Conference on Industrial Problems, Denver, May 24, 1937, reported in The Register, June 3, 1937.

It is clear that Catholic social action can ill afford to become a mere adjunct to indiscriminate secular agitation against "Communism" -- agitation which is so often shot through with poorly disguised propaganda for the perpetuation of existing abuses.<sup>105</sup>

Somerville cited as a pertinent example of this indiscriminate labelling the application of the epithet "Communist" to the new trade union organization, the Committee for Industrial Organization (the C.I.O.). He declared with some exasperation that Catholics who believed these charges were ignoring facts, and worse, even giving some credit to Communist organizers where none was due. He pointed out:

Of the three officers of the C.I.O. one, John Brophy, is a Catholic . . . a devout and exemplary one. The other two officers are John L. Lewis and Charles P. Howard, both being about the best-known Labor men on this continent. No union leader has fought the Communists more vigorously than Lewis, and he has had a hard fight, for he belongs to the Mineworkers, a body of men whose conditions of life and employment make them very susceptible to Red propaganda. . . . The only evidence . . . of the C.I.O. being Communist is that it is supported by Communists.<sup>106</sup>

---

<sup>105</sup>C.A.Z. in The Buffalo Echo, reprinted as "Catholic Anti-Communism is not Pro-Capitalism", The Register, June 3, 1937. See also Rev. Raymond McGowan, "Tax Evasions, Legislation and Strikes", The Register July 8, 1937.

<sup>106</sup>Somerville, "Truth About Trade Unions", Editorial, The Register, April 22, 1937.

His editorial continued that Communists supported the C.I.O. because they realized its potential and wanted to share in its leadership. For this reason, American Catholics were being urged by the N.C.W.C. to support the C.I.O. and seek office in their union locals.<sup>107</sup> In Canada, Communists were infiltrating the unions, including the A.F. of L. craft groups, because, Somerville concluded,

the Reds have been going to union meetings while other union members have preferred hockey and bingo. . . . But those who do the obscure work in normal times are in the driver's seat at decisive moments.<sup>108</sup>

During the Oshawa General Motors Strike Somerville rejected the charges of Premier Hepburn and most of the Ontario press, that the Canadian auto workers who chose to be represented by a C.I.O.-affiliated union, in this case, the United Auto Workers, were allying themselves with Communists. In his direct comments on the strike, Somerville earnestly advised the union to choose Canadians to be their negotiators with General Motors, but he did not demand

<sup>107</sup> Paul L. Blakely, S.J., "Can John L. Lewis Deliver the Goods?", America. Reprinted in The Register, July 8, 1937.

<sup>108</sup> Somerville, "Truth About Trade Unions", Editorial, The Register, April 22, 1937.

that their American advisers be deported as subversives.<sup>109</sup>

When the strike was settled he noted with approval:

The union has been recognized but in the final negotiations it was represented by Canadians. . . . It was vital to the workers to secure recognition of a union that could act for them effectively.<sup>110</sup>

As a result of this settlement, the C.I.O., for the next several months, carried on an "organizing campaign unprecedented to that time in Canadian history".<sup>111</sup> During this period, The Register's news and editorial items about the C.I.O.'s problems and organization, and the needs of labour increased markedly. Their main thrust was first, that the C.I.O. was a necessary and potentially powerful weapon being fashioned by labour as a counter-balance to the mammoth corporate structures dominating industry; second, the leaders of the C.I.O. in the United States and Canada were not Communist;<sup>112</sup> and third that the non-Communist leaders in the C.I.O. must receive support from an educated,

---

<sup>109</sup>Somerville, "Canadians Can Settle Oshawa Dispute", The Register, Editorial, April 15, 1937.

<sup>110</sup>Somerville, "The Oshawa Settlement", Editorial, The Register, April 29, 1937.

<sup>111</sup>Irving M. Abella, "The C.I.O., the Communist Party, and the Formation of the Canadian Congress of Labour 1936-1941", C.H.A. Historical Papers 1969, 114-122.

<sup>112</sup>N.C.W.C. News Service, "Catholics Among Top Leaders of C.I.O., Philip Murray of Miners and Jim Carey of Electrical and Radio Workers", The Register, December 1, 1938.

active Catholic clergy as well as the Catholic workers.<sup>113</sup>  
 To those who feared affiliation with an organization with some Communist members, Somerville declared that the danger lay in the exposure of the disgruntled industrial workers to the professional agitators who became irresponsible when they attained leadership positions.

The important thing is to give the right education and right propaganda to the rank and file workers. . . . to give the masses the right leadership at the bottom as well as leadership at the top. . . . This education can only be given to the rank and file by those who are trusted by the rank and file. It can be given to Catholic workers by the Church. It can be given to the general body of workers by democratic organizations like the W.E.A. But it cannot be given by organizations and publications which are known to represent the plutocracy.<sup>114</sup>

In enunciating the goals that a responsible union leadership should pursue when they had achieved the right to bargain collectively, neither Somerville nor the writers for the N.C.W.C. presented a minutely detailed programme. They did, however, cite specific injustices which must be remedied. All of their negotiable items were predicated on two important changes which must be made in the premises

---

<sup>113</sup>Somerville, "Archbishop of Cincinnati Appoints Priests to Assist Labor", The Register, July 22, 1937.

<sup>114</sup>Somerville, "The Weakness of Lewis", Editorial, The Register, July 8, 1937.



accepted by both labour and management in collective bargaining. First, both sides must concede that labour and management were partners in a co-operative enterprise of production for society's good and not adversaries seeking only to enhance their own positions. If this partnership concept was valid, then labour was entitled to a larger share of the profits of the co-operative enterprise. The present system contained within it a "fundamental maladjustment" which was both unjust and economically unsound.<sup>115</sup> Morally, the employers merited criticism because their policy of setting the lowest wage schedule possible, denied the papal concept that a worker was entitled to a living wage adequate to support a family without putting his wife or children out to work. Economically, this system resulted in a "deficiency of purchasing power in the hands of the masses and the excess of investing power in the hands of the well-to-do and the rich".<sup>116</sup>

In the light of these premises, Somerville and the American Reformers suggested several specific reforms which would, in most cases, result in a drastic reshaping of

---

<sup>115</sup>"Msgr. Ryan on Changes Required in N.R.A." Address to Conference of Catholic Charities, Cincinnati, The Register, October 18, 1934.

<sup>116</sup>Ibid. See also "Cincinnati Priest Champions Strikers in Picket Line -- Says Employers Don't Pay Living

management practice and wage patterns in North American industry. Yet these were the reforms which Somerville believed necessary if the capitalist system was to survive.

First, workers must be afforded a greater measure of job and personal protection through the enactment of comprehensive labour laws. These should be drafted co-operatively by union, employer and government representatives, and the latter should be responsible for their enforcement. Similarly, equitable wage policies could not be devised until manufacturers were forbidden to use price-fixing and limitation of production through agreement among themselves as a means of keeping prices for products artificially high. Msgr. Haas was particularly incensed during the Depression when workers yearned to buy goods and were unable to do so because they were too ill-paid themselves to afford even the necessities. If the efficient mills produced to their maximum capacity, prices would be reduced, more goods purchased and the increased consumption would provide more jobs. Instead, some workers were compelled to work seasonally from fourteen to sixteen hours a day while millions went jobless. The immediate remedy for this situation was, he declared, to reduce the work week to as low as thirty hours, and to keep the wages the

---

Wage", The Register, July 29, 1937.

same.<sup>117</sup> This would provide more employment, cut down fatigue, and make for more efficient production. Industry could afford such a policy if the justice of the principle that labour deserved a larger share of corporate income was accepted and if, as Dr. Ryan pointed out, the owners of capital gave up the expectation of six percent profit.<sup>118</sup>

At the heart of this dissatisfaction with the wage structure was the conviction that the rich were only stewards of the social wealth of the community and that in discharging this duty they had acquired a disproportionate share of the social inheritance.<sup>119</sup> Most large fortunes, Somerville noted, "are due not to proportional service, but to speculation and monopoly, usually being associated with graft".<sup>120</sup>

The fairest method of assuring equitable distribution of corporate wealth was profit-sharing.<sup>121</sup> Few

<sup>117</sup>Haas, Address to Amalgamated Clothing Workers, The Register, May 6, 1935.

<sup>118</sup>Msgr. Ryan, Address to Conference of Catholic Charities, Cincinnati, The Register, October 18, 1934.

<sup>119</sup>Msgr. Ryan, "Unusual Prayer at Labor Dept. Opening Strong Dose of Social Doctrine Injected by Msgr. Ryan", The Register, March 7, 1935.

<sup>120</sup>Somerville, "Life and Labor", The Register, March 7, 1935.

<sup>121</sup>Somerville, "Uplifting the Proletariat",

industries were ready, however, to consider the philosophical and practical changes this would involve. Yet some method must be devised, and it would be preferable to introduce the necessary changes through co-operative agreement between management and labour with a minimum of government intervention.

Whatever methods were adopted, the ultimate goal, Somerville believed, should be to ensure the worker a guaranteed yearly minimum wage. He became indignant when he observed the practice at General Motors and Ford Motor Company of laying off thirty and forty thousand men regularly, whenever business was slack. The system, he declared was iniquitous in principle and an unnecessary burden on the whole of society.

The men at the head of the big automobile companies make unbelievable profits, and they treat their human workers more negligently than they would treat their horses or their machines. . . . In a few months, perhaps weeks, these corporations will want their men back, and they will get them. . . . For days, weeks or months the men will await the pleasure and profit of the companies. The companies will have its [sic] reserve labor at no cost to itself. For its idle machines the company will have to spend money on care and maintenance but for their idle men they have to pay nothing. . . . The community kindly comes to the rescue and the

unemployed are given public relief until the companies find it profitable to put them back on their payrolls.

It is a marvellous system, the marvel being that the big employers are allowed to get away with it.

Some means should be found of making industries responsible for the maintenance of their own unemployed, instead of throwing the cost on the community through the system of public relief. Yearly wages would be such a means.<sup>122</sup>

Industrial leaders had resisted this new idea because they could not conceive the means necessary to achieve it.

Somerville pointed out that farmers, who hired their help for the year had managed to do this and stay in business.

What primitive farmers can do in a highly seasonal occupation like agriculture ought not to be beyond the organizing capacity of the heads of big industries who pay themselves salaries in the neighborhood of \$100,000, presumably because their talents are so extraordinary.<sup>123</sup>

The comprehensive National Unemployment Scheme under consideration by the government, was not, Somerville declared, the answer. Industries would not contribute to the fund in proportion to the unemployment for which they were responsible. In the long run it would be the workers who

<sup>122</sup>Somerville, "30,00 [sic] Laid Off", Editorial, The Register, January 6, 1938. See also Editorial, "Big Business, Big Blunders", February 10, 1938. "Assured Employment", Editorial, The Register, February 24, 1938.

<sup>123</sup>Somerville, "30,00 [sic] Laid Off", Editorial, The Register, January 6, 1938.

would be taxed "to pay for the upkeep of the labour reserves of giant corporations that lay off 30,000 men at a stroke".<sup>124</sup>

Somerville had to concede that the guaranteed annual wage did not seem very feasible under current circumstances and therefore the best protection in the meantime would be minimum wage laws enforced by legislation which had "teeth in it".<sup>125</sup> For this reason he supported the revisions to the Quebec Minimum Wage Act and noted that neither the current Ontario nor Quebec Wage Acts were really well enforced. Such wage legislation did not, he declared "dispense with the need for labour unions; without labour unions it is liable to fail in enforcement".<sup>126</sup>

Unions were the surest means of preventing a worker from accepting a job under conditions or for wages which damaged his fellow workers. In one reformer's view, the worker who "deliberately undercuts his fellows in the matter of wages acts immorally", because the individual right to work must be qualified by the rights of fellow

---

<sup>124</sup>Somerville, "30,00 [sic] Laid Off", Editorial, The Register, January 6, 1938.

<sup>125</sup>Somerville, "Quebec Minimum Wage", Editorial, The Register, January 6, 1938.

<sup>126</sup>Ibid.

workers.<sup>127</sup>

The belief that moral guidelines were a necessary ingredient in labour-management relations necessitated the formulation of some sort of code of ethics concerning the strike as a licit weapon in labour disputes. Catholic reformers had found in Rerum Novarum and Quadragesimo Anno some clearly enunciated natural rights of workers which provided the premises on which they could base their own principles. The Encyclicals declared that workers had a natural right to organize and join unions; to work under conditions that were safe and healthy, both physically and spiritually; and to receive a just, living wage, which by definition, was one adequate to support a family.

Early in his career, Rev. John Ryan had led the way in formulating a more detailed set of principles which North American reformers, including Henry Somerville, accepted as a correct application of the papal doctrines. They were based on the premise that arbitration was the best and most equitable method of settling labour disputes.<sup>128</sup>

---

<sup>127</sup>Rev. John Cronin, "Economic System Immoral", Summer School of Social Action, Toledo, Ohio, N.C.W.C. News Service, The Register, July 22, 1937.

<sup>128</sup>John A. Ryan, "A Country Without Strikes", Catholic World (November, 1900):145-47.

The increasing hostility of most employers during the 1930's to bargaining procedures made it increasingly improbable, however, that this technique would gain acceptance. Catholic Reformers reluctantly concluded that when employers refused to recognize a freely-chosen union as a bargaining agent, or they refused to negotiate on demands which incorporated the papal principles, workers would have to use the strike weapon and they would be morally justified in doing so. They cautioned, however, that a strike should not be initiated unless it met four conditions: the workers' demands must be just, in that they must not demand so much that the industry's existence would be imperilled or destroyed; all peaceful means of resolving the disagreement must have been exhausted; the good effects expected from the strike must outweigh the evil which invariably accompanied the use of this weapon; during the strike, the workers must respect property and refrain from violence.<sup>129</sup> When a strike occurred which met these criteria, then the Reformers, including Somerville, declared that labour deserved support

---

<sup>129</sup>See "The Right to Strike", The Register, January 28, 1937. "The Stand of the ACTU", Association of Catholic Trade Unionists, February, 1937, in Abell, American Catholic Thought, 412-414. See also "All Labor Disputes Should be Submitted to Arbitration", John O'Brien in The Register, August 19, 1937.



from Catholic clergy and laity. Neutrality in labour disputes only provided a vacuum which the Communist labour leaders were eager and able to fill.

Not long after his return to Canada, a bitter strike at Stratford afforded Somerville an example of this situation which, he warned, would become increasingly frequent. Workers here with real grievances found the most effective leadership was supplied by Communists. The employers, the daily press, and the religious leaders of the community, used this fact to ignore the needs of the workers and condemn their strike. It was, he believed, an unfair and foolish tactic.

When you are addressing an audience of employers and other comfortably situated people you may lambaste the Reds and get easy applause. . . . But go to some place where a strike is in progress, when Catholics may be among the strikers and where a leader whom the newspapers call a communist is acting as champion of the workers' cause. Address the Catholics among the strikers and tell them that communism is Atheism. They will answer you that the communism in those parts does not talk about religion but only about the content of their pay envelopes.

Suppose the strike succeeds. The workers will then think that communism is not so bad. Communism has secured for them a measure of justice which capitalism struggled to refuse. And to tell the workers that the man who led them to victory is an atheist because he is a communist does not incline them more favorably to the Catholic Church. . . .

It needs some courage to be a strike leader. It needs some courage to be a communist. A fair number are in prison in Canada today. Striking workers are always helpless without a leader. . . . The Reds

are doing quite a lot to give the Canadian workers leadership today. We need not go for examples to the coal towns of Cape Breton but to a conservative Ontario town like Stratford. The furniture workers wanted organization and leadership. . . . So a Red organizer, Fred Collins was able to form a union. There was a strike in which, if we can believe the papers, all the leadership was supplied by the Reds. The strike was a partial success. . . . Collins is certainly a communist. But to go amongst those Catholic workers whom he benefited and simply denounce communism as atheism would not be good Catholic tactics.<sup>130</sup>

Somerville's response to the conspicuous lack of Catholic leadership in labour disputes in the 1930's was to publish an increasing number of reports from the N.C.W.C. which described instances of the hierarchy organizing labour schools for priests, of priests marching in picket lines, of prominent Catholic lay and clerical appointees to government labour relations boards and boards of arbitration.<sup>131</sup>

---

<sup>130</sup>Somerville, "About the C.C.F., Also Communism", The Register, February 15, 1934.

<sup>131</sup>"Archbishop Peace-Seeker in San Francisco", Archbishop Hanna appointed as chairman of special labor board to bring settlement of the maritime strike in San Francisco; "Rev. Dr. Francis F. Haas, Appointed Federal Mediator in Truck Drivers' Strike in Minneapolis"; "Fr. J. W. R. Maguire Mediating Plumbing Strike in Kohler, Wisc.", The Register, July 26, 1934; "Priest Condemns Strike Breaking", The Register, May 9, 1935; "Strikes and Statesmanship", Editorial, The Register, April 1, 1937, notes the effective intervention of Governor Murphy of Michigan in labour disputes. "Charter of Christian Social Order", statements adopted at National Catholic Social Conference, Milwaukee, #9, "That collective bargaining through freely chosen representatives be recognized as a basic right of labor", The Register, May 19, 1938.

Amelioration of the Canadian workers' lot was made even more difficult, Somerville angrily pointed out, by the bias of the metropolitan daily press in reporting labour protests. If strikes occurred at companies which were lucrative sources of advertising revenue, they either maintained an uninterested silence or else only reported sensational acts of sabotage.<sup>132</sup> He found the Toronto papers particularly culpable during a month-long strike by women workers at the T. Eaton Company factory. The Toronto dailies did not report the views of the Toronto Council of Women "that the girls on strike were not paid a decent wage by the T. Eaton Co." He noted that the only papers reporting this statement were weeklies, of which one was a "scandal sheet", one was "the organ of the C.C.F.", and the third was "Communist".

The daily papers of Toronto, Conservative and Liberal, morning and evening, have been silent on this uprising by workers. . . . How galling it must be to the News Editors to keep out such a story. All strikes are news, a strike at Eatons is the biggest kind of news in Toronto, sometimes called Eatonia, because it is more under the economic sway of one family than any medieval

---

<sup>132</sup>"All Quiet on the Stratford Front", Editorial, The Register, October 12, 1933.

city under a feudal lord. . . .

This is an occasion when the News Editor takes his orders from the Advertisement Manager. Nothing must be published without the permission of Eatons. . . . When Eatons want silence the brave Toronto dailies that are so vociferous denouncing tyrants on the other side of the Atlantic ocean become as quiet as whipped curs.<sup>133</sup>

During this period of frequent, extensive, and violent labour disputes, reform-minded Catholic commentators moved from supporting strikes in principle to consideration of specific tactics such as the "sit-down strike". This became a particularly contentious issue during the 1930's when unions found that posting workers at their machines inside a struck factory was the most effective means of preventing strike-breaking by "scab" labour. In searching for an ethical code, American Catholic labour leaders had to rule whether this constituted "violent trespass" as the employers claimed. Somerville joined these leaders in deploring the necessity for such tactics but he gave prominent place to their decision that the sit-down strike "may sometimes be justifiable".<sup>134</sup> John Ryan declared it a weapon that could be abused, and that it would be better for labour to discard this tactic, but noted there were times when "to defend either a person's 'equitable claim'

---

<sup>133</sup>Somerville, "Masters of Newspapers", The Register, August 16, 1934.

<sup>134</sup>"Msgr. J. A. Ryan Says Sit-Down Strike May Sometimes be Justifiable", The Register, April 8, 1937, from

to his present job or 'certain natural rights'" it was a morally permissible weapon. It was less harmful than violent picketing because "it does not ordinarily involve destruction of property or assault upon persons".<sup>135</sup> At Pittsburgh for example where labour-management relations were particularly estranged, the Chancellor of the Diocese was reported as saying:

The Sit-Down Strike becomes violent trespass only when it is used to enforce unjust demands. The same motives that justify the ordinary strike seem to be sufficient also for the sit-down strike. . . . Occupation of the corporation's property and the dispossession of the owner . . . seems not to be immoral under the circumstances, since the owner is probably unreasonably opposed to the action by which the employees defend themselves against interloping strike-breakers and strategic operation of the plant.<sup>136</sup>

The Toronto Chancery office did not issue any similar public statements on the morality of strikes or make any comments on particular local labour disputes. Yet the fact that Somerville was able to put such forthright commentary in the official diocesan newspaper would justify the conclusion that Archbishop McGuigan tacitly agreed with his statements. Moreover, in a pastoral letter in 1939 the

---

N.C.W.C. News Service, quoting Ryan in The Ecclesiastical Review (April 1937).

<sup>135</sup>Ibid.

<sup>136</sup>"Sit-Down Strike Ethics, Pittsburgh Theologian

Archbishop reaffirmed the need for Catholics to become involved as leaders in community life, in political parties, and particularly in labour unions.

The Church is emphatic in endorsing the right of labour to organize itself for the maintenance of its legitimate interests. Labour Unions should be cordially accepted as necessary means of protecting workers against oppression by capital. The faults of labour unions are not a reason why they should be wholly condemned, or why a grudging resistance should be set up against every step forward which the unions endeavour to make. The labour unions are democratic organizations and, as in political democracy, their success or failure in furthering the common good depends on the quality of their leadership. . . . Good Catholics who fit themselves for the service of their fellows in positions of leadership are to be commended. Pastors should encourage Catholic men and women to devote themselves to this important field of social action.<sup>137</sup>

In summary, through a study of Somerville's news selections and editorial comment on social and economic issues in The Register and of his books and articles during the 1930's one can discern the emergence of a distinctive Catholic view of those issues which was new and of significance ultimately for the Catholic Church in Canada. Somer-

---

Defends Labor Claims", The Register, July 22, 1937.

<sup>137</sup>Archbishop James C. McGuigan, Pastoral Letter, to the Reverend Clergy and Faithful of the Archdiocese of Toronto, Ash Wednesday, 1939, reprinted in The Register, March 2, 1939. Parts of this pastoral letter, particularly the above quotation, were undoubtedly written for the Archbishop by Henry Somerville who, at this time, usually composed his public statements on social and economic matters.

ville's role was important first because he influenced the archbishops, McNeil and McGuigan. Under the Catholic system they must have at least tolerated, if they did not officially endorse, the opinions and policies Somerville presented. Both prelates, however, willingly accepted Somerville's advice on social issues. Their views were of necessity expressed in more moderate and restrained prose than Somerville often selected for the newspaper, but the phraseology of the statements they issued indicated that he usually had a hand in drafting them.<sup>138</sup> Moreover, Somerville's method of presentation was important as an object lesson in the best way of presenting new ideas to the Canadian Catholic community.

In his attempt to broaden Catholic horizons, he first established very carefully the doctrinal orthodoxy of his views by relating them to the Catholic doctrine on the origin, purpose, and rights of the State as enunciated

---

<sup>138</sup>One statement on the concern for social justice in the McGuigan Papers (at present uncatalogued), has changes and comments in Somerville's handwriting. Mrs. Somerville and Mr. Alfred de Manche, the managing editor of The Register, confirmed in interviews that Somerville was consulted on the drafts of statements made by Archbishop McGuigan. The Lenten Pastoral for 1939 used phrases which appeared in Somerville's writing.

in Catholic tradition and the Encyclicals, and particularly to the Church's teaching that the common good takes precedence over the rights of particular individuals. When he applied this premise to contemporary economic and social problems, Somerville concluded that new approaches were necessary in Canada -- the role of the State had to be reconsidered.

If this were done, the logical result would be stronger legislative protection devised to benefit the wage earner, or the proletariat as he called the propertyless workers. Complementing this legislation and equally essential, were proposed revisions in fiscal policies which would enable the economy to adjust to economic change or crisis. More funds, Somerville declared, should be made available by the government to provide increased benefits for workers, particularly low-cost housing at low interest rates and family allowances.

Much of this programme was imported by Somerville from England where he had become familiar with the new theories of John Maynard Keynes during the 1930's. It is remarkable that a weekly religious newspaper, with a circulation of 19,000 was one of the first Canadian popular periodicals to explain and promote Keynes' ideas; ideas which were later adopted by the Mackenzie King administration.



In Somerville's view, the increasing tension between labour and management was an equally urgent matter, which necessitated study and change. Hence, the development of new approaches to labour relations became one of his most important goals during the Depression. In so doing, he drew heavily on the writing and activities of American Catholic reformers, particularly the National Catholic Welfare Conference. The latter were conducting searching discussions on the basis of labour-management negotiations. Somerville declared that in Canada the change most urgently needed was acceptance by government and management of the natural and legal right of the workers to form unions. Unions alone should act as bargaining agents for wages and working conditions and participate eventually in the making of management decisions which directly affected the welfare of the workers or the future of the industry in question.

Somerville's motive for putting so much of this material in The Register was to persuade the clergy and the laity that they must become involved in union organization, or support those Catholics who did. At the very least, they must become familiar with economic and social problems through private study and participation in Catholic-directed social study groups. Catholics must not forfeit their opportunity to be participants in the important new alignments of the work force in North

America and allow the Communists, by their ability, study, and hard work to capture the executive positions in the unions. The lethargy of the Church on matters of social justice was not, Somerville declared, going unnoticed by the workers and they were fast concluding that the Church was primarily committed to upholding an unreformed capitalist system.

This deplorable situation would only be corrected if the Church in Canada took seriously the papal doctrine that the promotion of social justice is a religious obligation. Funds and energy must be used for education in economic issues, and social service projects actively involving the laity must be initiated; in effect, Catholic Action must be adapted to work in the English-Canadian context. Where such attempts had been made, such as at Antigonish, they had been successful. Urban Catholics in Central Canada must emulate the Maritimers' devotion to Catholic social principles and be open to new ideas suitable to their more highly industrialized society.

The new unionism exemplified by the U.A.W. and the C.I.O. was, Somerville pointed out, indicative of these new trends. Catholics must not be deceived by those who called the leaders of these unions "Communist" for their own nefarious purposes. The Communist threat was real, but its most likely source would be the disillusioned working

class, led by a dedicated, educated élite of communist-trained workers. They must in turn be confronted by a Catholic clergy and laity equally knowledgeable and fearless, or the Canadian Church would lose the working classes as in Spain and Italy.

The scope and complexity of this reform programme was so vast that many Catholics would, Somerville concluded, find they could best work toward these goals through active involvement in the political process. But for many Catholics, the two traditional Canadian parties seemed either too timid, too unimaginative or too tied to corporate interests to bring greater social justice to all Canadians. Two new parties, the Social Credit and the C.C.F. offered policies which had attracted some supporters. Social Credit Somerville had dismissed long before as a theoretical absurdity.<sup>139</sup> He found the Alberta version equally impractical and in any event, its legislation was declared ultra vires.<sup>140</sup> Moreover, with its strongly Protestant evangelical support it did not attract many Catholics. Somerville observed with some interest that it had gained a foothold in Quebec, and noted that the Church had no

---

<sup>139</sup> Somerville, "Credit Reform Schemes", Studies (September 1933):409-420.

<sup>140</sup> Somerville, "Life and Labor, Major Douglasism",

quarrel with it as a political or economic panacea.<sup>141</sup>

The programme of the C.C.F. would make it a much more difficult group for the Church to tolerate. How to approach a party with an ostensibly "socialist" orientation was a problem with which Somerville had wrestled years before as a youth in England. He had been actively involved in changing the attitude of the Catholic clergy towards the British Labour Party, and from the inception of the C.C.F. he foresaw similar difficulties in Canada. This time, however, the situation was more urgent because of the economic crisis in Canada, and more complicated because of the great variety of opinion within the Canadian Catholic Church which had its roots in long-established linguistic and national traditions. Fragmentation of the Church's policy on this issue would, Somerville believed, seriously impair the credibility of the Church and yet this appeared likely within a month of his arrival. Somerville made a significant contribution to the resolution of the vital question of the Church's attitude to the Canadian socialist vision.

---

The Register, April 19, 1934; "Life and Labor, Douglas Credit", The Register, April 11, 1935; "Life and Labor, Douglas Credit Again", The Register, May 2, 1935.

<sup>141</sup>Somerville, "Alberta Under Aberhart", Studies (September 1938):424.

## CHAPTER 9

### THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE C.C.F.

Several months before Somerville's arrival some Canadian Catholic leaders had indicated that they viewed the prospect of a socialist party as a viable political force in their country with much apprehension. They began to make comments shortly after the Calgary Conference of 1932 and thereby initiated a controversy which would be continued intermittently within the Catholic community throughout the 1930's.

After Somerville resumed his editorial functions, his influence began to be felt in the development of the arguments used in the dispute over the relationship between the Catholic Church and the Catholic laity and the C.C.F. Ultimately, Somerville's views would operate as a moderating force, helping the Church and its members to develop a constructive posture towards the policies advocated by the new party. Before this was brought about, however, there would be a long period of conflict and dispute, the effect of which lasted long after the problem was resolved. Somerville's role was a difficult and subtle one, in that in order to preserve the unity of the Church, much of the persuading and negotiating took place behind the scenes and

involved members of the hierarchy with whom he had formed cordial personal links during his years of writing and lecturing for the Church in Canada.

Typical of the initial phase of the controversy was the Pastoral Letter issued in 1932 by Joseph Prud'Homme, Bishop of Prince Albert and Saskatoon, warning that subversive doctrines threatening the social order were abroad.

Votre conscience de catholiques a déjà flétri  
comme il convient ces hideuses monstruosités,  
qu'elles s'appellent de quelque nom que ce soit,  
communisme, socialisme ou bolchévisme.<sup>1</sup>

Similarly, the editor of the London diocesan newspaper exhorted his readers to

ignore these restless critics who have gone up  
and down the country trying to create unrest by  
preaching principles and advocating practices  
directly subversive of good order and discipline.<sup>2</sup>

The Quebec hierarchy likewise issued a circular which, although it did not name a party, condemned all forms of socialism as illicit and warned the faithful not to confuse

<sup>1</sup>Evêché de Prince Albert et Saskatoon, Msgr. Jos. H. Prud'Homme vol. II, no. 12, L.P., 21 nov., 1932. Quoted in Hulliger, L'Enseignement social, 191.

<sup>2</sup>The Catholic Record, Editorial, March 25, 1933.

the abuses of capitalism with capitalism itself which was an acceptable economic system.<sup>3</sup> Their meeting was reported in The Register, whose headline drew attention to the fact that "Quebec Bishops in Communiqué Justify Capitalism".<sup>4</sup>

The paper later reported that the Quebec prelates condemned not only Soviet Communism but they also

condemn equally all systems which "wrongly estimate the role of liberty and of private initiative in the economic-social organization". It warns the faithful against "alluring programmes and the tempting theories which, neglecting the considerations of the moral order, more or less openly, preach the recourse to force in view of re-adjusting present conditions, and tend towards the subversion of our politico-social order, in defiance of the rights proper to the Provinces in the Federal State."<sup>5</sup>

When the Regina Manifesto was adopted at the first convention of the C.C.F. party in late July, 1933, it confirmed the fears of those Catholics who suspected that the new political party advocated radical socialism. The Manifesto declared that the party's goal was to replace the capitalist system with "a planned and socialized economy in which our natural resources and the principal means of pro-

---

<sup>3</sup>Archevêché de Québec, Déclaration collective, 16 mai 1933, no. 11, C.cl., 31 déc. 1933, XII. Quoted in Hullinger, L'Enseignement social, 192.

<sup>4</sup>The Register, May 18, 1933.

<sup>5</sup>The Register, June 8, 1933.

duction and distribution are owned, controlled and operated by the people". This, the Manifesto anticipated, would be accomplished through a National Planning Commission with a mandate

to plan for the production, distribution and exchange of all goods and services necessary to the efficient functioning of the economy; to co-ordinate the activities of the socialized industries.<sup>6</sup>

The Manifesto concluded with the warning that

no C.C.F. Government will rest content until it has eradicated capitalism and put into operation the full programme of socialized planning which will lead to the establishment in Canada of the Co-operative Commonwealth.<sup>7</sup>

The immediate official Catholic responses to these declarations, of which several examples follow, were so varied in both their content and fervor that it is no wonder confusion, uncertainty and animosity resulted within and without the Church on the issue of whether the new party was condemned.

The editors of the leading English Catholic paper in Saskatchewan, The Prairie Messenger, reacted at first,

---

<sup>6</sup>The Regina Manifesto, Programme of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, July 1933. Reprinted in W. D. Young, Anatomy of a Party (Toronto, 1969), 304, 305.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 313.



with caution but not condemnation.<sup>8</sup> The C.C.F. leaders were, it noted, "capable men" who eschewed force. They were admittedly attempting to make drastic changes, but their methods were constitutional. It was therefore "entirely wrong to characterize the C.C.F. organization as 'red'".<sup>9</sup> This editorial noted that although it could not endorse policies which were "avowedly socialistic", many "good Canadian citizens" were party members and concluded:

there is plenty of evidence that the C.C.F. is out to fight a relentless battle against the graft, corruption, the greed, the selfishness, with which the present system of capitalistic abuse is saturated. With this object of the new party we are in deep sympathy.<sup>10</sup>

In contrast, the Saskatchewan French-Canadian Catholic paper, Le Patriote de l'Ouest, immediately denounced the

<sup>8</sup>The Prairie Messenger, which advertised itself as a "Catholic Family Paper", was published by the Benedictine Fathers of St. Peter's Abbey, Muenster. Its circulation was 1250. (Canadian Almanac, 1934, 481.) The editorial mast-head claimed "the approval and recommendation of the Saskatchewan Hierarchy, the blessing of the Archbishop of Regina, the Bishop of Prince Albert and Saskatoon, the Bishop of Gravelbourg and the Abbot-Ordinary of Muenster".

<sup>9</sup>The Prairie Messenger, Editorial, "The C.C.F. Teaches a Lesson", July 26, 1933.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

# C.C.F. Manifesto as pure socialism:

Woodsworth et ses professeurs ont tout simplement glané chez les doctrinaires socialistes d'Europe qui à leur tour, se sont inspirés du vieux juif Karl Marx, le père du collectivisme qui écrivait, en 1847, son Manifesto du parti communiste.<sup>11</sup>

The Montreal English-language diocesan paper, The Beacon, found that the C.C.F. programme contained nothing of the socialism condemned by Leo XIII. Shortly after, Archbishop Gauthier of Montreal withdrew his official approval of this paper and on September 17, 1933, he preached a sermon warning Montreal Catholics against socialist philosophy in general and the C.C.F. party in particular:

There are a number of persons among you . . . who will soon exercise their right to vote. I wish to warn them against those who speculate in human misery and who tend to impose measures frankly Socialistic on our young country. . . . Their system will only plunge us into greater depths of want. . . . That which saddens me above all is the thought that there are Catholics who are deluded by the promises of men who speak for the C.C.F.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup>Le Patriote de l'Ouest, July 26, 1933. Quoted in George Hoffman, "Saskatchewan Catholics -- The Coming of a New Politics 1930-34", from Richard Allen (ed.), Religion and Society in the Prairie West, Canadian Plains Studies 3, University of Regina (1974), 74.

<sup>12</sup>The Prairie Messenger, October 4, 1933.

Although it published these statements, The Prairie Messenger hesitated to issue a condemnation. "The Prairie Messenger does not take it upon itself to decide whether or not a Catholic may join the C.C.F. That question may well be beyond our reach".<sup>13</sup>

When the Canadian hierarchy met early in October, 1933, at Quebec City, it was apparent that they were divided as to the best policy to adopt regarding the C.C.F. The minutes noted that Archbishop Gauthier

croit utile que les Evêques, sans condamner un parti comme tel, donnent un enseignement. Les déclarations de Woodsworth sont remplies d'incertain de danger.<sup>14</sup>

Archbishop McNeil had been able to confer with the recently arrived Henry Somerville on the question of socialism just before the meeting. He suggested moderation and further study before the new political movement was condemned.<sup>15</sup>

In the declaration issued following this meeting the Canadian hierarchy condemned Communism, criticized the

<sup>13</sup>The Prairie Messenger, October 4, 1933.

<sup>14</sup>Notes on the meeting of the Canadian hierarchy, October 5, 1933. McNeil Papers.

<sup>15</sup>Interview with Father James McGivern, S.J., Feb. 26, 1976. The complete notes of the meeting were missing from the papers but Father McGivern recalled noting McNeil's statement on one of the missing pages.

capitalist system for its propensity to nurture greed and injustice, censured Socialism for advocating principles contrary to Christian truth, but omitted any specific reference to the C.C.F. It was soon apparent, however, that the Quebec and Toronto archdioceses were becoming increasingly divergent in their views. Cardinal Villeneuve, Archbishop of Quebec, issued a Pastoral Letter deploring the "discontent, disturbance . . . and confusion of minds" brought about by the economic crisis. He drew attention to the fact that "socialism is not an efficacious remedy for our troubles. It still stands condemned in the words of the Holy Father".<sup>16</sup> It should be noted that with Henry Somerville now in charge of The Register, the Pastoral was given much less extensive coverage, and the Cardinal's admonition given a more moderate translation: "Let us be alert to check ideas that are more or less subversive".<sup>17</sup>

The most vehement attack on the C.C.F. party was made at this time in Montreal by Rev. Louis Chagnon, S.J.

---

<sup>16</sup>The Prairie Messenger, Dec. 6, 1933. See also The Catholic Record, Dec. 3 and 9, 1933, where the Pastoral was also extensively reproduced.

<sup>17</sup>The Register, Nov. 30, 1933.

who was regarded as a recognized authority on the social doctrines of the Church and a leader in the Jesuit-conducted L'Ecole Sociale Populaire. His public lecture on the C.C.F. was translated and published in The Beacon (by which it regained the Archbishop's Imprimatur) and The Prairie Messenger. Investigation of the party's written policies and the texts of its leaders' speeches had convinced him that some of its propositions were "erroneous and dangerous".

Taking into account the tendencies and the spirit of the leaders of the party with regard to private property, class warfare and the materialistic conception of the social order, we believe that this movement is subject to too much suspicion and is too dangerous to warrant the support of Catholics. . . .

The Directors of the C.C.F. do not seem to be able to reconcile themselves to the authentic principles submitted by the Encyclicals.<sup>18</sup>

Henry Somerville recognized in all these condemnations a hostile attitude similar to that faced previously by the Catholic Social Guild in England. In his initial attempt to give some guidance on the problem, he ignored the C.C.F. and set about to define the nature and extent of episcopal authority.

---

<sup>18</sup>The Beacon, November 24, 1933.

There are certain social, political and economic questions on which the Church has spoken. . . . The Church has spoken on Socialism. It will be our business to learn what the Church teaches on Social Reconstruction. . . .

Of course we must not confuse the teaching of Catholic individuals with that of the Church. . . . I am free to disagree with a great deal that I see put forward as Catholic social teaching. If the Bishop of my diocese teaches a doctrine in a pastoral letter, I cannot dispute it. If the Bishop has only made the statement in passing in a public speech or a contribution to a newspaper, I am less bound by it. And if the Bishop is not my Bishop, his words have still less authority over me.<sup>19</sup>

When, two months later, Somerville wrote on the C.C.F., he questioned whether Catholics could not join the party, and challenged the Quebec point of view when he observed: "Many things are called Socialism which are not Socialism. Is that the mistake made about the C.C.F.?"<sup>20</sup> Further, he noted that the party did not call itself Socialist nor did it require any profession of Socialism from its members. Its stated objective, so to regulate the production, distribution and exchange of goods

---

<sup>19</sup>Somerville, "Life and Labor", The Register, Nov. 16, 1933.

<sup>20</sup>Somerville, "Life and Labor -- Catholics and the C.C.F.", The Register, Jan. 4, 1934.

that priority was given to human need over the making of profits, was in harmony with Catholic doctrine. Agricultural land was excluded from the party's plans for socialization. Moreover, it was proposed that owners would receive compensation for any other resources which the party might find necessary, in the public interest, to remove from private ownership. This too was in harmony with Catholic doctrine. He concluded therefore:

As long as there is no pronouncement by ecclesiastical authority against the C.C.F., a Catholic is free to join that organization. The basic declarations of the C.C.F. are capable of an interpretation consistent with Catholic doctrine.<sup>21</sup>

Somerville informed his readers that the C.C.F. had borrowed its programme from the British Labour Party. In the unlikely event that it attained power, it would soon encounter the same difficulties, restrictions and anomalies in implementing its plans as had the older party in England. The rhetoric of these groups should not be taken so seriously.

I have before me the latest "Policy Report" of the British Labour Party. It is entitled "Socialism and the Condition of the People". One of its headlines is "Labor's Goal Socialism". There is any amount of this kind of stuff said and written, but nobody says that a Catholic in

---

<sup>21</sup>Somerville, "Life and Labor -- Catholics and the C.C.F.", The Register, Jan. 4, 1934.

Britain may not belong to the Labor Party. . . . Cardinal Bourne has explicitly stated that Catholics may belong to any one of the three main parties in England . . . though not one is perfect from the Catholic point of view. I daresay that the three parties in Canada . . . are open to criticism in the light of Catholic principles and claims. The C.C.F. may possibly be more exposed to criticism than the others, not because it is more fundamentally defective in its philosophy than the other parties but because it states its philosophy while the other parties simply take for granted the principles of utilitarianism and secularism that lie at their base, though utilitarianism and secularism are as un-Catholic as Socialism. A Catholic who joined the C.C.F. would not be subscribing to everything in it any more than a Catholic Conservative in Ontario identifies himself with the inactivity of the Henry Government on the School Question.<sup>22</sup>

Even as Somerville, with the approval of Archbishop McNeil, was counselling moderation and study, it became known that Archbishop Gauthier was planning to issue further denunciations of the C.C.F. Among those who would be particularly affected by such action were some English Catholics in Montreal, several of whom were labour leaders, who had joined the new party. They drew up a memorandum criticizing the Archbishop's outspoken political views and defending their involvement with the C.C.F. It was not a tactful document; indeed it contained criticism which was

---

<sup>22</sup>Somerville, "Life and Labor -- Catholics and the C.C.F.", The Register, Jan. 4, 1934.



unusual for a lay group at that time. In it they grieved that so far the Archbishop's

only concrete suggestion for lifting of the depression . . . was a reduction of wages. We were scandalized by the attitude of His Grace (and of all the Catholic hierarchy) in allowing the Church to be identified with the capitalistic system in the public mind when the last joint pastoral was published.<sup>23</sup>

The group pointed out that when French-Canadian Jesuits and Dominicans had studied the C.C.F. program, albeit "in the light of the French mentality",<sup>24</sup> their conclusions were that it could not be condemned although it had "dangerous tendencies". They asserted as well that the Catholic laity had the right and duty to undertake political and economic activity free of direct ecclesiastical control. They admitted that they had become active workers for the C.C.F. because

after years of telling each other about our fundamental principles, in study clubs, we have decided that we must apply them. . . .

The C.C.F. program . . . provided us with an opportunity to make a beginning at least, at carrying out the idea of the Encyclicals . . . it offers the minimum of change required to establish

---

<sup>23</sup>"Memorandum -- Catholics in C.C.F.", ascribed to Joseph Wall, Madeleine Sheridan, G. Starkey. Ballantyne Papers, A-5-1, Redpath Library, McGill University, Montreal, Quebec.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

the semblance of a Christian social order.  
(Society cannot wait under the present stress  
for the moral reform of the individual.) . . . .

Unfortunately, our critics shriek "Socialism!"  
and then all judicial [sic] thought ceases . . .  
they paint a picture of Marxian nightmare, than  
which nothing could be further removed from the  
real C.C.F. . . . We fully accept the idea that  
a large measure of "socialization" will enter  
into the new economic order.<sup>25</sup>

Finally, the Memorandum drew attention to the fact that  
Henry Somerville had recently written an article in which  
he had noted the changing meaning of the word "socialism".  
They concluded therefore that their fellow-workers had the  
right to call themselves socialists even if it was impossible  
to do so. "We cannot allow ourselves to be separated from  
men of good will -- and common sense -- by a mere word."<sup>26</sup>

This unusual document concluded with the assertion that

we Catholics feel we cannot conscientiously leave  
the (very belated) Christian movement, formulated  
in the C.C.F. program, to our brothers outside the  
fold, be they Protestants, as most of the leaders  
are, or unbelievers. Catholics constitute 40% of  
our population and could substantially affect the  
bias of the party. Whether we choose it or not, we  
are always looked upon as the Right Wing.<sup>27</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup>"Memorandum -- Catholics in C.C.F.", ascribed to  
Joseph Wall, Madeleine Sheriden, G. Starkey. Ballantyne  
Papers.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., A-5-3.

This Memorandum was then presented to the Apostolic Delegate by Joe Wall with the plea that

you may be able to help us in our effort to avert the proposed action of His Excellency Archbishop Gauthier. If His Excellency carries out the threat he has made, I feel sure that the affects of it all will be felt detrimentally to the Catholic body, not only in Montreal, but elsewhere.<sup>28</sup>

The Apostolic Delegate refused, however, to grant Mr. Wall an audience, sending word that he had no jurisdiction in the matter, and advised Wall and his friends to "take the question up directly with Archbishop Gauthier".<sup>29</sup> The group at this time also contacted Henri Bourassa, Garland of the U.F.A. (the M.P. for Bow River), and the Bishop of Calgary.<sup>30</sup>

None of this lobbying deterred Archbishop Gauthier in his determination to give direction to Catholics on the dangers of the C.C.F. On February 11, 1934, he denounced the party in a blunt and bitter pastoral letter addressed

<sup>28</sup> Joe Wall to His Excellency Mon Signor [sic] Casullo, Apostolic Delegate to Canada, Jan. 27, 1934. Ballantyne Papers, A-5-6. Note: Joe Wall was styled "General Organizer" of the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees.

<sup>29</sup> Joe Wall to Rev. Father Wm. X. Bryan S.J., Loyola College, Montreal, April 9, 1934. Ballantyne Papers, A-5-B.

<sup>30</sup> Joe Wall to W. X. Ryan, S.J., Loyola College, Montreal, Feb. 28, 1934. Joe Wall to Rt. Rev. P. J. Monahan, D.D., Bishop of Calgary. Undated, but internal evidence

to the 816,000 Catholics of Montreal. Following a long opening tirade against communism, he then defined socialism as "communisme à longue échéance". The C.C.F. did not deny its association with socialism.

Le principal auteur de la C.C.F. a pu déclarer que ce programme "est fondé sur des principes franchement socialistes". Il dit la vérité. Tel quel, il s'appuie sur une philosophie sociale que nous ne pouvons approuver. . . . Trois erreurs, en effet, caractérisent le socialisme condamné par l'Eglise: la suppression ou l'amoindrissement excessif de la propriété privée, la lutte des classes et une conception matérialiste de l'ordre social. Mettons en regard la doctrine de la C.C.F. et voyons, sans discussion de détail, si nous avons raison de l'incriminer. Une erreur sur un seul de ces points suffirait à la vicier et à la rendre inacceptable pour un catholique.<sup>31</sup>

The Archbishop noted that the C.C.F. proposed to nationalize institutions which were identical with those whose control by the state had already caused such misery in Soviet Russia.

---

suggests it was sent between Jan. and March, 1934. The letter was signed Jos. Wall, Madeleine Sheridan, G. Starkey. Copy in Ballantyne Papers, A-5-1.

<sup>31</sup>Msgr. Georges Gauthier, La doctrine sociale de l'Eglise et la Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, C.C.F.: Lettre Pastorale (Montreal, 1934), 9. Bishop P. A. Chiasson, of Chatham, N.B. issued a similar Pastoral Letter: "The doctrine of the C.C.F. is socialistic. . . . This is why we ask you to keep aloof from this movement which would fatally draw you towards the abyss of false doctrine on social life, and even perhaps, become a menace to your Catholic faith". The Register, March 1, 1934.

Not only did this threaten the rights of private industry and commerce, but also the rights of the family were in some doubt because the limits of the power of the state had not been clearly enunciated in the C.C.F. declarations. The party's protests that it had no direct connections with Moscow were negated by remarks of its spokesmen who had expressed approval of the events and the leadership in Russia.

L'un des Co-Ops nous annonce que Karl Marx est un "vieil ami", il vante "son génie" et "sa doctrine profonde". Mais Karl Marx, c'est le déterminisme économique, et le matérialisme érigé en dogme.<sup>32</sup>

In spite of Gauthier's declaration, Somerville continued to express an opposing view in even more decisive terms. Responding to a reader's request for more information on the C.C.F., he began by candidly admitting that on this topic he must

proceed with caution. We cannot deal with purely political issues here, and I would not without necessity, engage in controversy with other Catholics on the religious aspects of the C.C.F.<sup>33</sup>

---

<sup>32</sup>Msgr. Georges Gauthier, La doctrine sociale, 9.

<sup>33</sup>Somerville, "Life and Labor -- About the C.C.F. and Communism", The Register, Feb. 15, 1934.

He would, he said, rather let another Catholic layman who was much better known than he was speak for him. The article then quoted Henri Bourassa on the C.C.F. from a recent speech in Parliament.

They are a new group with a new programme. Let us be frank and admit that there is much in them which is good. I commend this one thing to my young Conservative friends from Quebec. Cease the campaign of slander which has been carried on by calling these men the agents of Moscow. . . . When the people begin to read, and there are people in Quebec who do read; when they find out that there is so much good in that platform, they will draw the conclusion . . . that if that is Moscow, then Moscow is not so bad.

To my Liberal friends in the Province of Quebec I give this further advice. Do not raise your hands in horror and say, "Oh no, we have nothing in common with these men from the West, these semi-Bolsheviks and quarter Communists". . . . But suppose there are among them men of advanced views. Are you prepared to say there is no one in your party who does not hold some wrong views on some things? When you make use of the Pope's Encyclical to denounce the C.C.F. why do you not read that part of it which denounces the system that has been built up, maintained and protected by the two great historic parties since Confederation? . . . Let us admit that there is much good in the program of the C.C.F. and let my hon. friends of the C.C.F. realize that they cannot expect to have their whole program swallowed by all the people of Canada.<sup>34</sup>

Somerville's article concluded with the cryptic comment:

---

<sup>34</sup>Somerville, "Life and Labor -- About the C.C.F. also Communism", The Register, Feb. 15, 1934. The quotation is credited to Henri Bourassa, speech in the House of Commons, Jan. 30, 1934.

Mr. Bourassa has said all I want to say about the C.C.F. and if some of my Quebec friends object, as they have already objected, I ask them to turn their guns on the member for Labelle.<sup>35</sup>

Both the Bourassa statement and the Gauthier Pastoral received wide publicity. Joe Wall and his group felt they had been placed in an impossible position. In one last attempt to plead their cause, Wall wrote to his Archbishop:

It is incumbent on me, as the representative, English-Catholic, labor leader of your archdiocese, to request answers to the following, that may serve to guide myself and those others (Catholic members of the C.C.F.), directly interested and affected by the Pastoral.

Accepting the doctrinal conclusion of the recent Pastoral, and admitting that the C.C.F. programme and party as at present constituted are not entirely acceptable; there remains the following fact:-

In the political arena there are three parties:- Liberal, Conservative and C.C.F.

Does the Pastoral mean that it is forbidden for Montreal Catholics,

- 1) To be workers for the C.C.F. Party?
- 2) To be candidates?
- 3) To vote for C.C.F. candidates?

In other words, must Catholics either work, represent, vote for either Liberals or Conservatives, as one alternative;

or remain entirely inactive politically, as the other alternative.

If there is Episcopal prohibition for Montreal Catholics to be active C.C.F. members, what is the nature of that prohibition? Is it formal, absolute, authoritative? Under what sanction? Or, is it indicative of his Excellency's wishes,

---

<sup>35</sup>Somerville, "Life and Labor -- About the C.C.F. also Communism", The Register, Feb. 15, 1934.

and advisory?

If a Montreal Catholic removes to another part of the Dominion, what must be his attitude?<sup>36</sup>

Gauthier's reply was brief, incisive, unyielding and immediate:

My dear Mr. Wall

I am in receipt of your letter of the 28th February 1934. To the questions which you have asked in that letter.

I cannot answer you in a better way than have you refer to the pastoral letter which I have just published, and which letter is sufficiently clear in itself.

A Catholic in your position and of your Calibre knows very well wherein his duty lies.<sup>37</sup>

In Saskatchewan, the heartland of the C.C.F., the hierarchy led by Archbishop McGuigan of Regina, also issued a Joint Pastoral Letter, containing advice somewhat more temperate than that which was now directing Montreal Catholics. These clergy expressed concern about the various guises in which socialist ideas were being cloaked but they were equally critical of the "abuses of materialistic capitalism".<sup>38</sup> Socialism was declared out of harmony

<sup>36</sup> Joseph Wall to Archbishop Gauthier, Feb. 28, 1934. Ballantyne Papers, A-5-4.

<sup>37</sup> Archbishop G. L. Gauthier to Joseph Wall, March 3, 1934. Ballantyne Papers, A-5-5.

<sup>38</sup> James Charles McGuigan, Joint Pastoral Letter #51, Pastoral Letters and Circular Letters (n.p., n.d.), Feb. 2, 1934, 218.



with the dogmas of the Catholic Church but the C.C.F. was not, as in the Quebec dioceses, singled out by name. It was understood however that the C.C.F. party was the target of their cautionary "note of warning against all prophets of a new social order whose principles differ in any essential point from those upon which alone the Christian world-order can securely rest".<sup>39</sup> Nevertheless, the Pastoral did not condemn, but noted instead "need of much patience, of serious study and calm speech to find the best way out of the world's troubles in so far as they affect our own communities, our own provinces and our own nation".<sup>40</sup>

Although this Pastoral undoubtedly inhibited many western Catholics from supporting the C.C.F., there were some notable exceptions who joined the party and became its respected and articulate spokesmen.<sup>41</sup> As Hoffman has noted, it was the moderate stance of the Saskatchewan hierarchy and The Prairie Messenger which kept the debate about the party's relationship to socialism and Catholicism an open issue in the West. This was particularly so after Archbishop

---

<sup>39</sup>McGuigan, Pastoral Letters, 219.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., 223.

<sup>41</sup>See Gregory Baum, "Joe Burton: Catholic and Saskatchewan Socialist", The Ecumenist, 14, no. 5 (July-August 1976):70-77; George Hoffman, "Saskatchewan Catholics and the Coming of a New Politics 1930-1934", in Allen, Religion and

McGuigan assured Mr. M. J. Coldwell that "the Church has no desire to be drawn into politics and would maintain a strict neutrality".<sup>42</sup>

At the time of Archbishop McNeil's death on May 26, 1934, it was distressingly clear to Somerville that two opposite policies regarding the C.C.F. had been established in the Canadian Catholic Church. Without better articulated and united direction he believed the effectiveness of Catholics in public life would be seriously impaired. There were, however, more immediate problems than this one confronting Monsignor Francis Carroll, the Vicar Capitular appointed to administer the Archdiocese of Toronto until McNeil's successor was named. The diocesan finances were in such a depressed and chaotic state that most of Carroll's attention was directed to fund raising. That this would be a difficult task was revealed by the discouraged responses of the local clergy to his appeals for some repayment of the loans which were owed the Diocese.<sup>43</sup>

---

and Society, 65-68.

<sup>42</sup>Hoffman, "Saskatchewan Catholics", footnote 93 from Regina Leader-Post, May 23, 1934, 2. In an editorial entitled "To Make Things Clear", The Prairie Messenger, June 6, 1934, stated that the paper did not believe that a Catholic was committing a grievous sin if he supported that C.C.F., nor had the paper condemned the party.

<sup>43</sup>An appeal was sent, signed by Msgr. Carroll on October 22, 1934 to all the parishes in the Archdiocese of

Somerville was not deterred by these conditions from his task of informing Catholics about contemporary social and economic issues through the press, and from forming study groups. That interest in the latter was at a low ebb was revealed by a Diocesan study ascertaining the number of parish social study groups and social action projects. The responses revealed that very few Catholics were enrolled. More discouraging was the fact that only five of the churches in the city of Toronto reported having formed study groups.<sup>44</sup> This confirmed Somerville's view that The Register must be the primary vehicle of education for Catholics in Toronto, given the indifference with which most parish priests and their parishioners viewed the whole topic of social study and social action.<sup>45</sup>

Yet this interregnum was an important period for Somerville because during it he established a cordial relationship with Msgr. Carroll. Not long after the new arch-

---

Toronto asking that interest payments be made on loans made by the Archbishop to the parishes and also for their Cathedralricum as "at the present time there are not sufficient chancery funds to meet the November obligations". McNeil Papers.

<sup>44</sup>Figures taken from a document summarizing replies to a Diocesan questionnaire on parish lay activities in the Archdiocese of Toronto, March 21, 1934. Archives of Toronto.

<sup>45</sup>The one project which had attracted public attention was a land settlement scheme organized by Father F. J. McGoeey and Father Michael Oliver at King, Ontario. In the spring of 1934 five families totalling thirty-eight people

bishop arrived in March, 1935, the latter was appointed Bishop of Calgary. Thus a link was established between Toronto and a western diocese whose Bishop was familiar with Somerville's argument concerning the C.C.F. and its "socialist" doctrines.

The new Archbishop, James McGuigan, was a surprise appointment. Born in 1894 in Prince Edward Island, educated on the island and at the Grand Seminary, Montreal, he had been acclaimed as a brilliant student. Soon after his ordination in 1918, he was sent to Edmonton where he was made Chancellor of the Diocese and then Rector of the Cathedral. After six years in Edmonton he enrolled in the Catholic University of America, Washington, where he received his doctorate in canon law.

In 1930, James McGuigan was made at age 36, Archbishop of Regina, becoming the youngest archbishop in North America. His see, with its Catholic population of 65,000 was in a severely depressed state. Except in Regina, most

---

were settled on ten acres of land donated by a wealthy Catholic. It finally reached forty families farming ten acres each in a self-sustaining co-operative community. Although it did get families off relief, living at the bare subsistence level precluded the experiment from becoming a large-scale movement. Interview with Father F. J. McGoey, April 7, 1973. A similar project at Rockwood, Ontario, led by Father Francis Kehoe in 1936, failed when the eight families found their isolation and lack of expertise too difficult. Interview with Father Kehoe, Aug. 2, 1973.

of the congregations were served by tiny missions which were not self-supporting; were scattered geographically; and divided among a diverse cultural mix of Hungarian, French-Canadian, Polish, German and English settlers. McGuigan's special task had been to consolidate and order the diocesan business affairs which were in a state of crisis, and to infuse hope into a flock whose sufferings from the depression were more severe than those of any other area in Canada. Translation to Toronto, the largest English-speaking diocese in Canada, was considered an unusual and rapid promotion. Yet, the multiple cultural mix, heavy debt load, and extensive investment in educational and charitable institutions of the Toronto diocese made for problems similar to those with which McGuigan had grappled successfully in Regina. The objective to which his predecessor, Archbishop McNeil, and Henry Somerville had been addressing themselves, the development of confidence and self-awareness in the Catholic community, was exemplified by the public acclaim Archbishop McGuigan received on his arrival. An estimated crowd of 15,000 met his train and another 75,000 watched the parade to the Cathedral.<sup>46</sup> The public reception at Maple Leaf Gardens

---

<sup>46</sup>The Globe, March 21, 1935.

following his enthronement was attended by dignitaries from all levels of government and all faiths.

Although the new prelate soon instituted extensive administrative and financial changes in Toronto,<sup>47</sup> he continued to use Henry Somerville as his principal adviser on social and economic affairs.<sup>48</sup> In this role Somerville followed the same strategy in the argument over socialism that he had used to date. Whenever statements had been made by Catholics opposed to the C.C.F., he had carefully examined the texts of the Church's condemnations of Socialism

<sup>47</sup>Several of these reforms were outlined in the Archbishop's Circular No. 7 (Private and Confidential) to the Clergy of the Archdiocese, Sept. 8, 1936. He requested that parishes report quarterly to fit a new system of accounting at the Chancery Office. He firmly notified the clergy that "when reports are vague or not properly filled out, I shall send a priest to explain the difficulties to you. . . . You are just as anxious as I am to see the Diocese placed on a proper financial basis and will, I know, be glad to comply with all directions, which, while they may seem tedious and even unnecessary in your particular case, are none the less very necessary for the proper administration of the temporal goods of the Diocese as a whole" (7). This document also discussed investments of parish funds, debt fund contributions and a "Year Book" in which the "position of the Diocese is clearly shown".

<sup>48</sup>This same Circular also noted, "It seems more and more necessary for the Church to popularize her mind on the principles of social justice as outlined by Leo XIII and Pope Pius XI. Mr. Henry Somerville has done much through 'The Catholic Register' to give expression to the social thought of the Church. His articles have been embodied in a little booklet entitled, 'A Course of Social Study'. I recommend it to you" (4).

and contrasted them first with the practices of the Labour Party and Government in Great Britain and then with the platform of the C.C.F. in Canada. In his comments, Somerville had acknowledged that "Socialism, using that word in its accurate sense, is condemned by the Church".<sup>49</sup> But, he argued, the fact that the C.C.F. proposed "socialization" of many industries and utilities did not mean that Socialism as defined by the Church was part of the C.C.F. Party agenda.

Though the C.C.F. has much to say about the socialization of natural resources it does not propose to socialize the greatest of all natural resources -- agricultural land. . . .

I would hesitate to say that if the C.C.F. socialized everything it mentions in its programme, from banks to gasoline stations, the resultant condition would be more out of harmony with Catholic doctrine than is the existing capitalistic condition. . . .

The C.C.F. would be acting on a Socialistic principle, if it socialized . . . without proper compensation. However the C.C.F. programme reassures us that "it does not propose any policy of outright confiscation". There is a paragraph about compensation, the wording of which is capable of an interpretation satisfactory to Catholics. . . . To tell the truth, the kind of Socialism that the C.C.F. is sponsoring has long become a joke in the older

---

<sup>49</sup>Somerville, "Catholics and the C.C.F.", The Register, Jan. 4, 1934.

countries. My impression of the C.C.F. programme . . . is that those who drafted it have done nothing more original than borrow from the propaganda literature of the British Labor Party. In deference to Canadian conservatism they have toned down the language of the British Laborists.<sup>50</sup>

Some months later, following the Quebec clergy's denunciations of the C.C.F., Somerville repeated his lessons on Socialism. It was, he implied, too simplistic to define it merely as "the substitution of public ownership for private ownership of land and capital". It must also be "substitution . . . on a sufficiently large scale to become significant".<sup>51</sup> Some public ownership was licit and necessary in the modern state. He noted:

We have a lot of publicly owned things in Canada but private ownership is immensely larger and therefore we do not say there is Socialism in Canada. . . . The publicly owned businesses in Canada are part of the dominant capitalistic system, they are not socialistic oases in the capitalistic desert.<sup>52</sup>

Somerville contended that the main difference between the Communist and the Socialist was in the means by which each

<sup>50</sup>Somerville, "Life and Labor, Catholics and the C.C.F.", The Register, Jan. 4, 1934.

<sup>51</sup>Somerville, "Life and Labor, Socialism and Communism", The Register, Nov. 1, 1934.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid.



would bring about public ownership of land and capital. The former

does not believe (nor do I) that it is possible to socialize land and capital without a revolution and the use of force. The Communist thinks (and I do) that nearly all schemes for "buying out" the private owners do not advance socialism, but endow capitalism at the public expense.<sup>53</sup>

The difference in tactics could be observed in union demands at the bargaining table where, he believed, the communist presence was most visible in the "Red" trade unions:

The conservative trade unions are out to secure for the workers all that they think the capitalist can afford to give. The Reds are out to get more than the capitalist can afford. They want to put him out of business.

. . . . .  
There is a certain crazy logic about the Communists. That is why they are effective for destruction.<sup>54</sup>

Socialism, Somerville contended, was not the bogey some authorities believed it was because "it is always abandoned by its professors (unless they are Communists) when they get into positions of responsibility".<sup>55</sup> It was

<sup>53</sup>Somerville, "Life and Labor, Socialism and Communism", The Register, Nov. 1, 1934.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid.

<sup>55</sup>Somerville, "Life and Labor, the Foggy Word, Socialism", The Register, Nov. 8, 1934.

for this reason that there could exist the "strange state of affairs in Great Britain", where "tens of thousands of excellent Catholics belong to the Labour Party. Some of its leaders are Catholics".<sup>56</sup> This party passed resolutions declaring "Socialism" to be its ultimate goal and used "Socialist" phraseology in its literature. Somerville frequently reminded his readers that

the Church makes absolutely no difficulty about Catholics belonging to the Labour Party . . . because the Church judges by deeds rather than words. Though the Labour Party literature is full of compromising expressions, Labour Party majorities on town councils, county councils, in the House of Commons, and on public bodies generally, have as good a record as any other party for justice to Catholics and for good government anywhere.<sup>57</sup>

Somerville admitted that this was a paradox which was "hopelessly puzzling to foreigners" particularly the French and German scholars who had tried to explain and comment on it. "Their explanations are ingeniously rational but quite wrong. The true explanation is the irrational one that the British do not care twopence for formal consistency in their politics."<sup>58</sup> He then pointed out that the proof of the

<sup>56</sup>Somerville, "Life and Labor, the Foggy Word, Socialism", The Register, Nov. 8, 1934.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid.

wisdom of the stance adopted by the British hierarchy lay in the fact that

in English-speaking countries there has not been that tragic estrangement between the modern working-class movement and the Church which in some European countries was the great scandal of the 19th century.<sup>59</sup>

These oblique cautions to the hierarchy on the perils of applying the logical syllogisms of European Catholic theologians to the Canadian situation did not, of course influence the Quebec clergy who, with one important exception, remained intellectually isolated from the English-Canadian hierarchy on the issue of socialism and social justice.<sup>60</sup>

---

<sup>59</sup>Somerville, "Life and Labor, the Foggy Word, Socialism", The Register, Nov. 8, 1934.

<sup>60</sup>See Marie Agnes of Rome Gaudreau, "The Social Thought of French Canada as Reflected in the *Semaine Sociale*", Ph.D. dissertation, Catholic University of America, Washington, 1946. In the introduction to her thesis, Sister Marie Agnes noted that the Jesuits in French Canada were impressed with the efforts of the Catholic Social Guild founded by Rev. Charles Plater, S.J. and intended the *Semaine Sociale* to be an equivalent organization for French Canada. It is all the more striking therefore, that in this thesis, no mention was made of the British Labour Party or the C.C.F. In the author's analysis and in the statements quoted from the organization's leaders, "socialism and communism" are always coupled as equally false and insidious doctrines. They believed that the main difference was only that "socialism doesn't attempt to apply all its errors at once; it goes halfway hoping thereby to attract sympathy". (Quotation from Joseph Barnard of the *Semaine sociale*, 208.)

In Toronto, Somerville and Archbishop McGuigan agreed that for the Church to forbid or discourage Catholics from supporting the C.C.F. would alienate the working class and identify the Church in their view as the supporter of an unreformed and oppressive capitalism. That the Church's opinion of the C.C.F. was a matter of real concern to his readers, was proven, Somerville noted, by the fact that his articles on the subject had elicited the greatest reader response of any study topic to date.<sup>61</sup> Practical politics were of more import than explanations of the abstract principles of social justice. As he was a loyal Catholic Somerville was not anxious to draw attention to differences in the Church's policy. Although he made his position clear, he tried hard to explain why the Pope had rejected even a moderate kind of Socialism. But in so doing he was very careful to distinguish the C.C.F.'s relationship with the forbidden philosophy from doctrines of the European Socialist parties.

This moderate kind of Socialism is found in the C.C.F. Please note my exact words. I do not say that the C.C.F. is Socialist, moderate or extreme. What I say about the C.C.F. is that it makes some ambiguous declarations that may mean

---

<sup>61</sup>Somerville, "Life and Labor", The Register, Jan. 3, 1935.

Socialism. As all political parties resort to ambiguity on occasion the C.C.F. may not be worse than its rivals. But there cannot be doubt that a moderate kind of Socialism is found in the C.C.F. and an extreme kind of Capitalism is found in the Conservative and Liberal parties.<sup>62</sup>

Implied here of course was the contention that since extreme Capitalism had been condemned in the Encyclicals, the Catholic hierarchy should, to be consistent, condemn those political parties which used Capitalist rhetoric, with the same severity with which the C.C.F. Party and leadership was condemned when it used Socialist rhetoric. He drove this point home in a subsequent article when he observed: "There is danger to faith and morals in Capitalism as well as in Socialism. Some Catholic employers bring shame on the Church to which they belong".<sup>63</sup>

It was common knowledge that many western Catholics were reading C.C.F. literature and some were joining the party. Somerville was careful neither to praise nor reprove this exposure to socialism. "Much in that literature may be quite all right from a Catholic viewpoint, but there is

---

<sup>62</sup>Somerville, "Life and Labor -- Why 'Moderate' Socialism is Condemned", The Register, Jan. 10, 1935.

<sup>63</sup>Somerville, "Life and Labor -- On 'Catholic Socialists' and Some Catholic Capitalists", The Register, Jan. 21, 1935.

much that is wrong".<sup>64</sup> To counteract the latter influence he mildly reminded his readers that "there is no Catholic literature that is a specific antidote, but all good Catholic literature is a general antidote".<sup>65</sup> By "good" he meant, he said, Newman's Sermons, Chesterton's essays and biographies of Catholic reformers such as Ozanam or St. John Bosco. (Conspicuously missing were the anti-socialist pastorals of the hierarchy.)

Having defined what he believed was a fair and sensible policy, Somerville did not refer very frequently to the C.C.F. in The Register from then on. He periodically reminded Catholics, however, that "to identify the C.C.F. with Socialism does it a grave disservice".<sup>66</sup> He reprinted without comment The Prairie Messenger's evaluation of Mr. Woodsworth's contribution to Canadian political life:

He must be given credit for being one of Canada's foremost apostles of social justice. As such he has rendered Canada a great service. He, perhaps more than any other member of the House of Commons,

---

<sup>64</sup>Somerville, "Life and Labor -- On 'Catholic Socialism' and Some Catholic Capitalists", The Register, Jan. 21, 1935.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid.

<sup>66</sup>Somerville, "A 'Socialist Reply' and a Rejoinder", The Register, March 5, 1936.

has drawn the public's attention to the abuses of our social system . . . and pointed out the inevitable result of Communism gaining a foothold in Canada if steps were not taken to remedy the abuses. . . .

Some do not agree with Mr. Woodsworth's plan. But he must be given credit for seeing conditions and the possibilities lying underneath them. That was doing a great deal for there can be no doubt that in general parliaments have not until very recently taken the matter of social justice seriously enough.<sup>67</sup>

The diverse diocesan policies, and especially the differences between the hierarchies of Quebec and Ontario, troubled the Papal Nuncio. In December, 1938 he wrote to Archbishop McGuigan concerning the forthcoming meeting of the Provincial Council of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario.

I would be grateful to your Excellency if on this particular occasion . . . the attention of the Most Excellent Bishops who will convene in Toronto would be called upon the C.C.F., its nature, its finalities, its standing in regard to religion and the Church.

I am aware that in the Quinquennial meeting of 1933, the Most Excellent Bishops of Canada have discussed the participation of Catholics to that political party; however in the acts of the last meeting of June 1938, I do not find any mention of it. Since it is a momentous question of actuality, I would request the Most Excellent Bishops of that ecclesiastical province to open to me their mind on this particular subject.<sup>68</sup>

---

<sup>67</sup> The Register, Feb. 8, 1937, reprint of Editorial from The Prairie Messenger, Jan. 20, 1937.

<sup>68</sup> Msgr. Antoniutti to Archbishop McGuigan, Dec. 9, 1938. McGuigan Papers, Archives of the Archdiocese of Toronto, Toronto. The differences in policy were particularly obvious in view of Cardinal Villeneuve's recent speeches in

Archbishop McGuigan's reply was very firm.

I have placed the matter before the Bishops gathered at Toronto for the second Provincial Council. At this meeting the following were present, Most Rev. J. J. O'Brien, D.D., Most Rev. Felix Couturier, D.D., Most Rev. John T. Kidd, Most Rev. Joseph F. Ryan, D.D. and myself. The following expresses the sentiments of the Bishops present.

As far as our own dioceses are concerned, the C.C.F. has not been sufficiently prominent to necessitate a complete and exhaustive study of its social doctrine and implications or the objective content of its programme. We have learned that it is somewhat different in different provinces and it is difficult to know just what philosophy of life is behind it.

Considering however, the evils of the existing social order and the possibility of great and even perhaps radical changes, some of them desirable and in accordance with true social justice, we feel that, according to our present knowledge and light on the C.C.F. Manifesto that we would not positively condemn this political party as holding a social doctrine opposed to or unacceptable to the social teaching of the Church as revealed in various papal announcements notably the Encyclicals. On the other hand, we would not positively approve the C.C.F. programme.

As the movement is nation-wide and particularly in Western Canada, we respectfully suggest that the question be very carefully studied by a Committee of expert representatives of various sections of the country under the guidance of the Bishops of the West where Catholic candidates have at times been elected as C.C.F. members to Parliament.

Meanwhile we do not think that Catholics should be hastily condemned for joining the C.C.F. nor should they be absolutely forbidden to do so, until a more exact analysis of their social teaching is made. This will give an opportunity to the

---

November, 1938, condemning C.C.F. Socialism before the Canadian Club and the Montreal Junior Board of Trade.



leaders of the C.C.F. and interested Catholics to fully explain their ideas and ideals, avoid disunity, unfair criticism of the Church and confusion on Church social ideas.<sup>69</sup>

This statement appeared to settle the matter for the time being. Somerville, however, was still unhappy that many Catholics believed that they could not join the C.C.F. party. He knew that few of them were familiar with the subtleties of canon law; yet to remind them that a prelate's directives applied only to his own diocese would have been an unseemly open challenge to Archbishop Gauthier. He concluded that the Canadian House of Bishops must clarify the issue, but at that time there seemed little chance of any French-Canadian prelate reaching an agreement with Archbishop McGuigan and the western bishops on the matter. Then other matters of greater urgency soon preoccupied the Church authorities. Soon after, war was declared and the social unrest caused by the Depression subsided as mobilization for the armed forces and the war industries took up the unemployment slack.

The problem of the C.C.F. returned to centre stage, however, when their candidate, J. W. Noseworthy, defeated Arthur Meighen, the new leader of the Conservative Party, in

---

<sup>69</sup>Archbishop James McGuigan to Msgr. Ildebrando Antoniutti, December 17, 1938. McGuigan Papers.

the York South by-election of February, 1942. Somerville interpreted this as a sign that the climate of opinion was changing:

The great dividing line between political parties in the future will be between those who trust more to government action and those who prefer to place their faith in private enterprise.<sup>70</sup>

Somerville fortunately found a colleague in Murray Ballantyne, an influential lay journalist, who agreed with his assessment of the political situation and was keen to persuade the hierarchy to do something about it. Ballantyne was the former editor of The Beacon, and the newly appointed editor of a Montreal edition of The Catholic Register. He was an interesting contrast to Somerville in his family background, his wealth and social connections and even his physical appearance. Nineteen years younger than Somerville, of tall and commanding stature, he was the son of Senator Charles Ballantyne who had been a prominent Conservative politician and a federal cabinet minister (1917-1921) under Sir Robert Borden. When Murray Ballantyne was a student at McGill in the early 1930's, he had met Eugene Forsey and Frank Scott and was attracted to the ideas proposed by the

---

<sup>70</sup>Somerville, "Where Do We Go from Here", The Register, March 21, 1942.

League for Social Reconstruction.<sup>71</sup> Around 1933 he converted to Catholicism and, like many converts, sought practical opportunities to apply his adopted faith to contemporary problems. As he described it:

The world was in collapse and as a convert and a Catholic I wanted to do something. I wanted to take what was good from the League and apply it. Its ideas had affinities with those of the Social Encyclicals. But English Catholics in Canada were very bourgeois, very satisfied, very unintellectual and paranoid about communism. I hadn't become a Catholic to fight communism but to apply the faith to life. Frank Scott had taught me that "Communism is the unpaid bill presented to humanity for our injustice".<sup>72</sup>

When the C.C.F. was founded, Ballantyne rejoiced that at last there has been established "a party which was modelled so closely on the British Labour Party, which was not doctrinaire socialist but was proposing pragmatic solutions and had a great deal of Christian inspiration".<sup>73</sup> "Doing something" meant that he could now act as a liaison between the Catholic community and the intellectuals in the C.C.F. through his position as editor of The Beacon. He

<sup>71</sup>Founded in January, 1932 by Frank Underhill, Frank Scott and others.

<sup>72</sup>Interview with Murray Ballantyne, Combermere, July 19, 1974.

<sup>73</sup>Interview between Murray Ballantyne and Sister Louise Sharum, Combermere, July 31, 1974. I am indebted to Sister Louise for a transcription of the tape taken at this interview.

would also encourage both the French and English-speaking Catholics to break out of their intellectual ghettos and become active in more Canadian political and scholarly organizations. His frank description of the situation as he found it in the early 1930's is probably not exaggerated:

We don't participate in national movements. For example, on the intellectual level, we have a whole series of learned societies . . . they meet every year. . . . All the intellectuals get together and take in one another's washing and compare notes. Well, I discovered there wasn't a Catholic on any of them. Perhaps I could have dug out one or two at the most. It never occurred to them to use their faith, to take part, to be the leaven. . . . The whole training was just to hang on for dear life lest we lose this faith if we don't preserve it -- and I mean preserve like pickles! So they played no part and their intellectual contribution was zero.<sup>74</sup>

Ballantyne was aghast when the Quebec hierarchy condemned the C.C.F. At every opportunity he tried through private interviews to persuade influential Quebec clergy to alter their position.

I said, Oh, don't don't! You don't understand us. That is not the way we work. . . . Please, join in -- understand -- sympathize -- moderate, modify. Get it changed. Let Catholics play

---

<sup>74</sup>Interview between Murray Ballantyne and Sister Louise, July 31, 1974.

their part as they do in the Labour Party. . . .  
 They couldn't see it. This is tragic.  
 What Quebec needed was reform -- social reform.  
 What Quebec needed was not to retreat to the  
 bush, but to humanize and christianize the  
 social order, joining hands with progressive  
 forces on the English side. But it was blocked  
 right there.<sup>75</sup>

Although Ballantyne was aware of the work being done by his fellow Catholic journalist in Toronto, Henry Somerville, he was not able to publish editorials or news items for the purpose of enlightening and molding Catholic opinion with the same freedom enjoyed by Somerville. Then, in 1940, Archbishop Gauthier died and a new, younger prelate, Archbishop Joseph Charbonneau now became the sole ecclesiastical authority in Montreal.<sup>76</sup> Ballantyne seized the opportunity provided by the unexpected results of the York South by-election to write a long letter to Archbishop

---

<sup>75</sup>Interview between Murray Ballantyne and Sister Louise, July 31, 1974.

<sup>76</sup>Born in 1892 in Ontario, the son of a farmer, Archbishop Charbonneau had studied at the Catholic University in Washington and the Collège Canadien, Rome, and had taught philosophy in Paris. He had received early recognition as a brilliant academic and capable administrator, and, most important, he was familiar with the North American interpretations of the social doctrine of the Church. For several years he was Chief Administrator of the Diocese of Ottawa until, in 1939, he was appointed first Bishop of the newly created diocese of Hearst, Ontario. Less than a year later he was appointed coadjutor Archbishop of Montreal. With the appointment went the authority to administer the Diocese, and the right of succession to Archbishop Bruchési (who had

Charbonneau pointing out that this event was a sign of a political situation "of potential danger to the Church".<sup>77</sup> Since the C.C.F. he noted, would as a dynamic party, be at least the core of the Opposition in parliament, "it would seem to be imperative that the relations between the Church and the CCF should be cleared of all ambiguity".<sup>78</sup>

Labourers in Canada in increasing number were, Ballantyne pointed out, looking to the C.C.F. as a means of achieving their legitimate goals, as were the youth of the country outside Quebec.

If the Church were to frown on such a party, it would drive deeper the wedge between the Faith and the worker. . . . Furthermore, a clarification of relations between the Church and the CCF Party would end the anomalous difference between Catholics in Quebec and in the remaining Provinces . . . it is known to be a fact that

---

been ailing for many years) and whom Archbishop Gauthier had expected to succeed. Joseph Charbonneau was the first Archbishop of Montreal to come from Ontario's French-Canadian community and this fact, coupled with his early training in Europe and the United States and his knowledge of the non-Catholic as well as the non-French-Canadian world had, as Edmund Wilson noted, "saved him from the provinciality so often characteristic of the Quebecois clergy". (See Edmund Wilson, *O Canada* [New York, 1966], 198.) Murray Ballantyne, a friend of Charbonneau, believed that this breadth of experience and attitude and the fact that he was promoted over Gauthier, always made Charbonneau "something of an alien" to the Quebec clergy.

<sup>77</sup>Ballantyne to Archbishop Joseph Charbonneau, October 26, 1942. Ballantyne Papers, B-1, Redpath Library, McGill.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid.

many of the English-speaking members of the hierarchy are, and always have been favourably inclined toward the CCF. . . . Therefore, it appears to be eminently and urgently desirable that the situation be reconsidered. . . . There is everything to be gained if the CCF Party can, as it were, be "baptized".<sup>79</sup>

His own recent research had revealed:

1. That the practical proposals of the CCF Party as they now stand are generally acceptable to Catholics. Many of them indeed, are more consistent with Catholic teaching than the policies of the traditional parties.
2. That the philosophy, generally unformulated, which has led to these practical policies is fundamentally materialistic and humanitarian.
3. That the criticisms formulated in Msgr. Gauthier's Pastoral Letter are no longer wholly applicable.<sup>80</sup>

In regard to his second point, Ballantyne declared that the idealistic and compassionate "CCF mentality" and the fact that its policy and programmes were determined by the party members were a strong defence against communism, particularly if Catholics formed a decisive proportion of its membership. The question, he had concluded, was "whether the Church can reconcile to itself and harness the forces of the future".<sup>81</sup>

---

<sup>79</sup>Ballantyne to Charbonneau, October 26, 1942.  
Ballantyne Papers, B-1.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid.

Ballantyne then proposed a solution which, he said, had been discussed with several prominent Catholic social experts including Henry Somerville and Archbishop McGuigan of Toronto. A committee of experts should be formed in Quebec to "reconsider the programme and principles of the CCF party from the point of view of faith and morals".<sup>82</sup> If this committee did find the C.C.F. licit for Catholics,

it might be desirable not to publicize the result -- for fear of seeming to repudiate past pronouncements -- but simply to follow the new course in future without fanfare. That is to say that French and English-speaking Catholic publications might henceforth discuss the CCF Party in such a manner as to indicate that it was an open subject concerning which all Catholics were entirely at liberty to follow their own convictions.<sup>83</sup>

Archbishop Charbonneau accepted Ballantyne's advice; this marked the beginning of a relationship which flourished until Archbishop Charbonneau was forced by the Vatican to "resign" his post in 1950. Like Somerville in Toronto, Ballantyne became the Archbishop's chief lay adviser on the social doctrine of the Church. When the Archbishop named the committee shortly after, Ballantyne was its only English-speaking member.

---

<sup>82</sup>Ballantyne to Charbonneau, October 26, 1942. Ballantyne Papers, B-1.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid.



At the first meeting, it became evident to Ballantyne that several members on the committee were not anxious to have the C.C.F. "cleared" because they were concerned that the C.C.F. spirit and programme would dilute French-Canadian national consciousness, a result which would be incompatible with their own goal of "survivance". Ballantyne argued that this was an irrelevant issue since the problem they had been commissioned to address was the compatibility of the C.C.F. with Catholic doctrine, not cultural survival.<sup>84</sup> When the committee next met (without Ballantyne) it reconstituted itself as an Institute for Social and Economic Research. Some other means, Ballantyne concluded, would have to be used to indicate that the party was no longer banned for Catholics in Quebec.

Somerville had begun to work towards this objective through his contacts in the western dioceses. Bishop Carroll of Calgary invited him to give four lectures, and the former, reporting on his visit, endorsed Somerville's public declaration that "a Catholic could belong to the C.C.F. without any qualm of conscience".<sup>85</sup> Following Somerville's visit to

---

<sup>84</sup>Murray Ballantyne, "The Catholic Church and the CCF", Canadian Catholic Historical Assn. Report (1963):36.

<sup>85</sup>Bishop Carroll to Murray Ballantyne, n.d., probably November 1942. Ballantyne Papers, B-1.

Nelson, B.C., Bishop Johnson advised Ballantyne:

Try to contact him [Somerville] as he is well informed and can give you a very balanced analysis of current attitudes throughout Canada. Personally I am not in the least alarmed about the C.C.F. . . . To the average man in my district the CCF is his chief hope of a real change. . . . I am in favour of Catholics joining the CCF and directing policy along Catholic lines of reform. For this we need educated Catholics.<sup>86</sup>

Somerville and Ballantyne agreed that the Canadian Episcopate must issue a public statement on the C.C.F. and started to calculate where they might find support.

Somerville reported on his cordial reception by Bishops Carroll and Johnson and added:

I have seen a letter from the Archbishop of Edmonton suggesting that the C.C.F. is innocuous. I have also seen a letter from the Bishop of Antigonish saying that he had been watching the C.C.F. for a number of years and did not think it was more open to criticism . . . . . than are other political parties. Six or seven years ago the present Archbishop of Toronto told me that when he was in the West the Bishops deliberately refrained from condemning the C.C.F. . . . recently two persons upon whom I rely have told me that he is . . . more than favourable, to Catholics being active in the C.C.F.<sup>87</sup>

<sup>86</sup>Bishop Johnson to Murray Ballantyne, n.d., probably Nov.-Dec. 1942. Ballantyne Papers.

<sup>87</sup>Henry Somerville to Murray Ballantyne, January 4, 1943. Ballantyne Papers, B-1.

Thus encouraged, Somerville and Ballantyne lobbied these and other sympathetic bishops to have the matter placed on the agenda of the Quinquennial Plenary Meeting of the Canadian Hierarchy scheduled to meet in Quebec in mid-October, 1943. Although their work was done behind the scenes, it was they who spearheaded the education and organization of the bishops who would vote affirmatively on the Catholic's right to support the C.C.F. In the West, Bishop Carroll was a staunch ally contacting bishops he believed would be sympathetic:

Archbishop MacDonald of Edmonton, who has recently studied the C.C.F. from our angle and has a good idea of the non-Catholic mind, is away at present or I am afraid I would discuss the information with him. Why can't we get a committee of experts (!!) to work from the English-Catholic viewpoint? . . . If Archbishop MacDonald comes this way en route from California, I may give him the "news". I think we, too, should do something and not wait until it is too late. But to move bishops!<sup>88</sup>

As the time for setting the agenda drew near, Murray Ballantyne sent a "Second Letter on the CCF" to Archbishop Charbonneau outlining his concern over the virtual dissolution of the Montreal Committee formed to study the C.C.F. He reported on a "remarkably frank discussion" he had with the Secretary of the Institute (the successor to the Committee):

---

<sup>88</sup> Bishop Francis P. Carroll to Ballantyne, February 23, 1943. Ballantyne Papers, B-1.

I put it to him that the committee had failed to answer the question laid before it. . . . It then developed that he personally believed the CCF to be indifferent. . . . Our conversation centred around the following two points: the cloud under which the CCF now rests; and the role of English-speaking Catholics.

The Secretary believed that the Hierarchy should make no move to declare or acknowledge the indifference of the CCF, and this for three reasons: (a) that "we have no need of the CCF because we can do better with our own party"; (b) that such a move would be misinterpreted as endorsement by the Church; (c) that in any event no Bishop had ever officially condemned the CCF. My comments on these three points were as follows: (a) that the respective merits of party programmes was a political matter with which I was not concerned; (b) that the possibility of some misunderstanding was not a good reason for withholding justice, and that to tolerate such an unjust situation would be far more dangerous than to remedy it. . . . (c) that although it was strictly true that the Hierarchy had never condemned the CCF, the general impression was, that it had. The practical situation was that the vast bulk of Catholics in this Province -- and many elsewhere -- felt that they could not support the CCF without at least acting rashly, with indocility, and scandalously. To say that the party was not condemned was a mere technicality.

It was . . . apparently even the opinion of the former committee, that English-speaking Catholics should join the CCF because it was the least of three evils. . . . I replied that I thought such a situation would be intolerable. Either the Bishops thought the Party indifferent or they did not. . . . Moreover it seemed to me regrettable and even scandalous that different policies should be followed by the two language groups. . . .

Consequently the conclusion which I respectfully submit to Your Grace is that the Montreal Committee has misinterpreted its mandate. Apparently it has given insufficient consideration to the claims of justice. . . . it has thought in political rather than in doctrinal terms. . . . of local and immediate

advantages rather than of the whole situation and of the welfare of the Church. . . .

I think it is extremely dangerous and possibly unjust to leave the CCF Party under a cloud; and therefore I respectfully recommend that the Party should -- if at all possible be declared, . . . to be indifferent, from the point of view of faith and morals.<sup>89</sup>

Archbishop Charbonneau was so impressed with Ballantyne's presentation that he requested him to arrange a meeting with Mr. M. J. Coldwell. This discreet encounter took place in September, 1943 at Mr. Ballantyne's house where the host, Professor Frank Scott, Mr. Coldwell and Archbishop Charbonneau "spent several hours in amicable discussion. . . . On both sides the talk was frank and friendly. No major point of disagreement was found".<sup>90</sup> The Archbishop agreed to join Cardinal McGuigan and the other members of the hierarchy who had organized to press for official clarification of the Church's position on the C.C.F. The matter was placed on the agenda of the forthcoming meeting of the Canadian Hierarchy under "POLITICO-RELIGIOUS AND POLITICO-SOCIAL QUESTIONS", item 2 of which was listed as "That official condemnation of federal political parties be made by one Bishop only after consultation with

---

<sup>89</sup>Second Ballantyne memorandum to Archbishop Charbonneau. Ballantyne Papers, B-1-7.

<sup>90</sup>Murray Ballantyne, "The Catholic Church and the CCF", The Canadian Catholic Historical Association Report (1963):39.

other Bishops"; the Sponsor was the Bishop of Edmonton (John Hugh MacDonald). Item 3 was "The C.C.F. Party"; its sponsors were listed as "Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Kingston, Vancouver, Keewatin".<sup>91</sup> (These were all archdioceses with the exception of Keewatin.) The result of the discussion and vote was the decision that the C.C.F. should be declared "Indifferent", and a sub-committee consisting of the Archbishops of Montreal and Toronto, and Bishop Carroll of Calgary was asked to prepare and release a declaration to this effect.

Archbishop Charbonneau showed Ballantyne a draft of the declaration which contained four points: the first was a general appeal "to the faithful, and to all in authority" to promote urgently needed social reforms already advocated by the hierarchy; point two gave special commendation to the social action projects already instituted by St. Francis Xavier University (Antigonish) and the Semaines Sociales du Canada; point three dealt with the contentious political party issue:

---

<sup>91</sup>Quinquennial Plenary Meeting of the Canadian Hierarchy, Quebec, October 12-13, 1943. McGuigan Papers, Archives of the Archdiocese of Toronto. "A synopsis of the questions proposed for the Agenda mostly by the Episcopal Meetings of the Provinces". Questions 14 and 15.

As the authorized spiritual advisers of the Catholic people, the Bishops declare that the faithful are free to support any political party upholding the basic Christian traditions of Canada, and favoring needed reforms in the social and economic order which are demanded with such urgency in political documents.<sup>92</sup>

Point four restated the Church's condemnation of Communism:

The Bishops reiterate their condemnation of the doctrines of Communism, under whatever name may be used to mislead the good faith of the people, since Communism is that form of Revolutionary Socialism which is materialistic in its philosophy, which denies the right of private property, and by concentrating all economic as well as political power in the State, sets up a system of Totalitarianism destructive of liberty and degrading to the human person.<sup>93</sup>

Ballantyne expressed disappointment with point 3 in that the C.C.F., having been condemned by name, had not been cleared by name in the declaration. Archbishop Charbonneau admitted that this had been discussed but the bishops had concluded it was obvious the C.C.F. was the intended subject and that to name the party specifically might be interpreted as going beyond acceptance to approval. Moreover, since official condemnation had only been given by one bishop, and the clearance was being given by all of the hierarchy, that was deemed to be sufficient.

---

<sup>92</sup>Ballantyne Papers, "Appendix C".

<sup>93</sup>Ibid.

To remedy this obscure wording Somerville and Ballantyne persuaded McGuigan and Charbonneau to have the declaration released first through the "semi-official" Catholic Register and L'Action Catholique, with an accompanying editorial written by Somerville which would identify the C.C.F. clearly as the subject of point 3. Obtaining episcopal approval of this strategy delayed release of the declaration for a week but the two journalists believed the issue was so important that this merited careful stage-managing in order to impress not only Catholics, but also to ensure maximum coverage in the secular press. Somerville reported to Ballantyne:

The Archbishop . . . is quite willing to let us have the scoop for the Catholic Press. Will you please be responsible for giving the release to the C.P. [Canadian Press] and the B.U.P. [British United Press] informing me of whether the release is for morning or afternoon papers first. I will advise the C.P. here because it is the head office and the Assistant Manager, Gillis Purcell, is a Catholic, but I will tell him the actual release is being made by you in Montreal.

The text is revised by Archbishop McGuigan and approved by him and Bp. Carroll whom he consulted has been sent to Archbishop Charbonneau and I believe to the Cardinal Villeneuve also. The Cardinal is coming here on Monday. . . .

I have written an editorial which the Archbishop has approved. . . . I am absolutely specific and unqualified about the C.C.F. There will be no initials to the editorial so that it will not look like a personal view.<sup>94</sup>

---

<sup>94</sup>Henry Somerville to Murray Ballantyne, October 15, 1943. Ballantyne Papers, B-1.



Ballantyne replied confirming their plan:

I am glad you have been able to persuade Archbishop McGuigan to break the announcement in L'Action Catholique and the Canadian Register. Archbishop Charbonneau is very keen about the idea, so this only leaves the Cardinal. Cannot you and Msgr. McGuigan operate on him on Monday? Even if the Cardinal wants to release the story himself as originally planned, it could still be arranged for us to follow immediately with the declaration and "officieux" comment. The comment would be more news-worthy than the declaration alone, and would be picked up by the agencies. As this whole matter has taken 18 months to put across, I think we should try to hold the announcement a week or two if necessary to obtain [sic] a uniform release in the two papers. . . . I hope you don't mind my leaving all this to you, but all the big ones are in Toronto and I can do nothing here alone.

Would you mind, also if I asked you to give the release to Canadian Press? I know BUP intimately, but I know no one at CP. As you do, as the head office is in Toronto, and as you will be more au fait with what is happening . . . would it not be better, if you handled CP. Indeed I cannot even handle BUP properly unless you keep me fully informed. . . . Also I will need an advance copy of your editorial. Can you send it to me?<sup>95</sup>

And so as planned, the Bishops' Declaration was published in The Register, L'Action Catholique and Le Devoir on October 20, 1943. As anticipated, the editorial that Somerville had written for the former's Toronto and Montreal

---

<sup>95</sup>Ballantyne to Somerville, October 16, 1943.  
Ballantyne Papers, B-1.

editions was quoted extensively in the secular press across Canada which carried the story. Indeed, the Montreal Gazette and the Montreal Star carried it in toto noting in both cases that the interpretation in the Catholic Register could be regarded as "official". In his lengthy editorial Somerville stated that

the statement is primarily a declaration of the freedom of political opinion by Catholics . . . to set at rest the question recently agitated in certain quarters of the legitimacy of Catholics giving support to the political party known as the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation. The hierarchy does not name the C.C.F., for it would not wish to use words which could be interpreted as favoring one political party exclusively, but it is made quite clear that Catholics have the same liberty of supporting this as the older parties. . . . In the early days of the C.C.F. there was some misgiving among Catholics . . . and it was by no means clear for a time that Communists would not succeed in their endeavors to infiltrate themselves into dominant positions in the new movement. . . .

Time has shown, however, that the C.C.F. has maintained a sincere and effective opposition to the Communists. . . . The C.C.F. has given all the guarantees it could be reasonably expected to give of no truck or trade with the Communists . . . politically it may be said to be a matter for congratulation that there is such a party as the C.C.F. to attract those voters who . . . are dissatisfied with the older parties and who, in the absence of the C.C.F., might give their support to the Communists disguised as a labor party.

The statement . . . is also a declaration of social duty. . . . The Bishops tell all Catholics, and all who are in positions of authority, that reform and remedy are mandatory. . . . It is the duty of Catholics to bring the light of Catholic doctrine and the strength of Catholic spirit into social action as individual, . . . workers,

employers . . . and as holders of positions of power and responsibility.<sup>96</sup>

The Declaration and the editorial did not please everyone. Some Catholic papers, notably The Catholic Record (London), The Northwest Review (Winnipeg) and L'Action Catholique (Montreal) ignored the Somerville "interpretation" and in subsequent issues cautioned that the C.C.F. still had to prove it was untainted by Socialism. Toronto's Saturday Night published an article by P. J. Mulrooney, repudiating the editorial. Somerville was more angry at the "perverse casuistry" of the Montreal Jesuit paper Relations which "makes out the Bishop's Declaration to mean nothing at all".<sup>97</sup> Mulrooney Somerville dismissed as a "man of no importance himself and . . . prompted by others . . . trying to undo the effect of my own articles on the C.C.F." <sup>98</sup> Somerville was not concerned however that "a few high-placed Liberals are kicking" and

---

<sup>96</sup>The Montreal Gazette, October 21, 1943.

<sup>97</sup>Somerville to Ballantyne, Dec. 13, 1943.  
Ballantyne Papers, B-1.

<sup>98</sup>Ibid.

"was amused to learn that Mr. Mackenzie King derived a lot of comfort from something Frank Russell of the North West [sic] Review was reported to have said".<sup>99</sup>

Both men regretted that their strategy had failed to influence much of the Catholic press but Somerville consoled Ballantyne that even

if angels had handled the release there would not have been complete agreement . . . there are some who do not wish to understand the importance of the Declaration.

. . . For my part I am entirely satisfied with what the Declaration has done. It has given the C.C.F. all the clearance it could fairly ask for and it has given all the necessary guidance to Catholic consciences.<sup>100</sup>

Ballantyne however wanted additional interpretative articles published in The Register but Archbishop McGuigan refused permission, probably on the advice of Somerville, for as the latter pointed out:

Your article . . . goes further than any article should go. The function of a Catholic paper is to protect the Bishops in a matter like this, not to push the Bishops out in front. It matters little if a paper is criticized but the Bishops should stay out of the controversial arena as far as possible. . . . An editorial's chief beauty is

---

<sup>99</sup>Somerville to Ballantyne, Nov. 25, 1943. Ballantyne Papers, B-1. Prominent Liberals were indeed concerned about the Bishops' Declaration and even more so with Somerville's "interpretation". Senator Bench wrote to Mr. King enclosing copies of The Register and other papers to keep him informed. Senator J. J. Bench to W. L. M. K., Dec. 3, 1943, M.G.26.J1 V.337, 289695-7; J. J. Bench to Mr. Henry, Dec. 13, 1943, M.G. 26 J, v.337, 289609. King Papers, P.A.C., Ottawa.

<sup>100</sup>Somerville to Ballantyne, Dec. 8, 1943. Ballantyne

that it is unofficial, ecclesiastically speaking.<sup>101</sup>

Somerville was not averse, however, to keeping the matter before the public in less controversial ways. In yet another instance of his old strategy of reprinting contentious material from "objective" American sources, he reprinted (with Archbishop McGuigan's permission) from Commonweal an article by Ballantyne describing in detail the debate over the C.C.F. in the Canadian Catholic Church.<sup>102</sup> Probably because of his background, his longer experience in dealing with the clergy and his sympathy with the complexities of the hierarchy's position, Somerville was more satisfied than Ballantyne with the resolution of the affair. He wrote to Ballantyne:

Almost since last October you have been stressing that the C.C.F. was not sufficiently "cleared". I assured you that it was regarded as cleared in Ontario, that we had the more trouble here from the misinterpretation of those who said the Canadian Register, if not the Bishops, had gone C.C.F. Now you say "it is commonly beleived [sic] that the Register is routing for Coldwell." Archbishop McGuigan has had that thrown against him since last October. But I would not say that it is commonly believed. My experience is that the

---

Papers, B-1.

<sup>101</sup>Somerville to Ballantyne, Dec. 8, 1943. Ballantyne Papers, B-1.

<sup>102</sup>Murray Ballantyne, "The Church and the C.C.F.", Commonweal (March 3, 1944):489-492; The Catholic Register, April 15, 1944.

vast majority distinguish the issues quite clearly. And I will say this for our muddle-headed critics, including my good friend Pat Mulrooney, that their objection to us is chiefly because they think we are trying to debar them from criticizing the C.C.F. as Socialist. I tell them they are free to criticise Godbout [Premier] as well as the C.C.F. as Socialist if they want to, but they must admit the right of other Catholics to vote C.C.F. without disloyalty to Catholic teaching.

It happens that my Where Do We Go article next week will be about the Saskatchewan election, or rather about the limits of socialization. The question I am always being asked by priests as well as laity, is "how far can public ownership go without going too far?". Whether my latest article will strengthen the impression that I am a C.C.F.'er I do not know. Should I be more flattered or mortified to know that my name is quoted more than my articles are read?<sup>103</sup>

Somerville's bemused reflection on the stir his writings had caused could not disguise his satisfaction in their accomplishments. The Declaration and the interpretative editorial were for him, the culmination of the first stage of a long struggle which, in a sense had begun in his youth, when his own Bishop in Leeds had forbidden him to organize a study group for the examination of socialist ideas. He had then sought out clergy of broader interest, greater tolerance and keener awareness of the serious results which would accrue from the Church's neglect

---

<sup>103</sup> Somerville to Ballantyne, June 23, 1944.  
Ballantyne Papers, D.

of lay opinion on social issues.

On his arrival in Canada, Somerville had observed the same anti-socialist and anti-intellectual bias, and that these prejudices had been reinforced by cultural and language barriers which precluded an unprejudiced exchange of views. His observations on his arrival for the second time in 1933, in which he noted the turn to the "left" Canadian opinion had taken in ten years, proved to be an accurate forecast of public policy. In that interval he had striven to keep both clergy and laity informed and sensitive to social and economic change. He was fortunate in being able to share his insights with prelates of exceptional ability who welcomed and encouraged his analytical ability and journalistic flair. In spite of all of his efforts, however, an impasse was evident by 1942. Although it centred on the issue of the C.C.F., Somerville realized that a larger question was involved -- the freedom of Catholics to participate fully in the political life of the community where clerical influence could not always be present to guide lay opinion. Somerville reasoned that if the Church did its job of education adequately and the members took their obligations, both religious and civil, seriously, the result would be an enrichment for both the Church and the country. But the time, he sensed, was drawing short, for the public, within

and without the Church, were impatient with its hesitation and seeming equivocation on matters which linked politics with social justice.

Somerville was doubly fortunate at this juncture to encounter Murray Ballantyne. He was a man who combined ability with the convert's impatience and assurance in dealing with the traditional structures of the Church. Moreover, Ballantyne was able to present the problem to a prelate, Archbishop Charbonneau, whose training had already prepared him for a world not governed by French-Canadian tradition and attitudes. Archbishops McGuigan and Charbonneau worked in harmony with like-minded prelates from across Canada, all those who had encountered Somerville and accepted his ideas to a greater or lesser degree.

Winning the case on the principle of freedom of political participation for Catholics, however, did not mean that the freedom in practice would be automatically effective for all Catholics in Canada. This was particularly true for the clergy who were (and still are) under obedience to the directives of their own Bishop in matters of diocesan discipline. It was on these grounds that Bishop Pocock of Saskatoon dismissed Father Eugene Cullinane in 1948. Father Cullinane was the first priest in Canada to join the C.C.F. and work actively and openly for the party. Such political involvement was not, in his bishop's opinion,



to be tolerated, and Cullinane's religious order (Basilian), was asked to remove him from the diocese on less than forty-eight hours' notice.<sup>104</sup> Cullinane in his youth had met and been greatly influenced by both Henry Somerville and Baroness de Hueck, and had subsequently studied at the Catholic University of America before becoming treasurer and lecturer in the Department of Economics and Political Science at St. Thomas More College, Saskatoon, the position he held at the time of his expulsion.

The principle of freedom of political participation for Catholics was accepted in its entirety in other parts of Canada, but most notably in Cape Breton. Here the tradition of clergy involvement in local social and political reform extended back to Archbishop McNeil.

Archbishop McGuigan's leadership role in the Canadian Church was recognized by the Vatican in 1946 when he was made Canada's first English-speaking Cardinal. On his trip to Rome for the investiture he chose to take Henry Somerville with him for what was undoubtedly the highlight of the latter's professional and religious life.<sup>105</sup> Cardinal

---

<sup>104</sup>Interview with Father Eugene Cullinane, April 26, 1976.

<sup>105</sup>Henry Somerville, Rome and Home (Toronto, 1947).

McGuigan later arranged for Somerville to receive a high pontifical decoration in recognition of his outstanding service to the Church. Ironically, in spite of his early notoriety, the twenty years as editor of the leading Catholic journal in Canada and his recognition by the Pope, Somerville was still comparatively unknown to many of his contemporaries. He never made Who's Who in Canada. This was partly due to the still extant prejudice against Catholics which barred them from access to many social and intellectual circles, and also to his modest income and living standard which did not permit him to be seen in places of conspicuous consumption. Nevertheless, his long list of publications is a witness to the diligence with which Somerville pursued his object, to convince Catholics and non-Catholics that the Church had a contribution to make in the solution of the economic and social problems which were preventing individuals and the community from reaching their highest potential.

## CHAPTER 10

### CONCLUSION

Henry Somerville continued as editor of The Register until his death in 1953, but he had made his principal contribution to the life and work of the Catholic Church in Canada some years earlier. In assessing his influence on the development of Catholic social thought in Canada, it must be emphasized that Somerville's conception of the ideal social order was rooted in the Catholic assumption that the Judeo-Christian tradition as interpreted by the Church was the highest ideal to which any society could aspire. The essence of this tradition was that each individual is a creature of worth to his Creator and his ultimate destiny is to return to Him. Rebellion against divine authority had so damaged man's ability to achieve this goal that the natural and the civil laws were given as divinely sanctioned means of curbing and regulating man's imperfect actions to the end that the whole of society could be protected. This was essentially a conservative view of mankind in which various forms of physical, social, and intellectual inequality were accepted as part of the natural order. Given these premises, the function of the

state was to legislate, not only to ensure the welfare of individuals but also to restrain the strong and successful from using their power and their wealth irresponsibly or ruthlessly.

The Social Encyclicals were issued by the Papacy in response to appeals by working class leaders and perceptive Catholic reformers to the Church to provide constructive means for resolving the problems arising from the breakdown of the traditional social order in the face of rapid industrialization and urbanization. These pronouncements were designed to define a middle way between laissez-faire liberalism and the Marxist advocacy of revolution leading to the establishment of a collectivist society. The Encyclicals were, as Barbara Ward has pointed out, an attempt at a new synthesis in which were combined acceptance of the principle of competition and private ownership, and concern for the misuse of private property and exploitation of the public.<sup>1</sup> The papal solution was self-regulated co-operation within and between the various corporate units in the social order. The state's role was to oversee the whole, ensuring that the ultimate objective of the common good was effected through the passage and enforcement of regulatory laws. Moreover, it was accepted that some forms of property and some specific power must

---

<sup>1</sup>Barbara Ward, "Planned Economy in Catholic Social Thought", Dublin Review:408,5.

always be retained by the State, but because the Encyclicals were not intended to be blueprints, these were left unspecified, to be determined by the general structure and conditions at any given time within the society.

The social reconstruction for which the Church pleaded, would, the Encyclicals concluded, only be achieved through a renewal of the Christian spirit from which so many individuals and governments had lamentably departed, and more particularly by individual Catholics accepting their obligation to participate in public life and to work actively for the adoption of the Church's principles.

The Church's teaching was not endorsed by society and initially was not accepted by many Catholics. In accepting it Somerville placed himself with that group of twentieth century Catholics who were inaugurating what Ahlstrom has dubbed the "New Catholicism".<sup>2</sup> His associates were the pioneers of the movement; in England these were Cardinal Bourne, Father Charles Plater, Father Henry Parkinson, Hilaire Belloc, Gilbert Chesterton and Virginia Mary Crawford; in the United States, Father John Ryan, Bishop Francis Haas, Father Raymond McGowan and other

---

<sup>2</sup>S. E. Ahlstrom, A Religious History of the American People (New Haven and London, 1972), 1009.

leaders of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, and Dorothy Day; in Canada, Archbishop McNeil, Father James Tompkins, Father M. M. Coady, and Catherine de Hueck.

Somerville's early apprenticeship for this work was spent in popularizing Catholic social thought among the working class in England between 1912 and 1915. He soon discovered that the most immediate problem was lack of education among the laity and lack of information among Catholic clergy and laity about contemporary political and economic issues. This was a major cause, he concluded, of the conspicuous absence of Catholics in public life and their consequent inability to influence public policy. He set about to remedy the situation. He was commissioned by the Catholic Social Guild to organize study groups; for this his own family background and his working experience particularly fitted him. In fulfilling this task he discovered his talents as a journalist, and his articles on a wide variety of topics pertinent to general Catholic education were widely distributed.

Called to Canada during World War I to inaugurate a similar programme for Canadian Catholics, Somerville formed a personal and professional relationship with Archbishop McNeil which was a mutually enriching experience. He attacked the insular and defensive attitudes of Canadian

English-speaking Catholics with precision and gusto while pointing out to those in authority that they were not making adequate use of their greatest educational asset in a far-flung and divided Catholic community -- the Catholic press. Somerville believed that in addition to providing Church news and devotional help, the religious press should fulfil two functions. First, it should educate Catholics in the social doctrines of the Church as they had been stated in the Social Encyclicals. Educated Catholics who were familiar with these would be able to play a larger role in public life and help to devise solutions to the nation's economic and social problems. The second function of the press was to inform Catholics of instances where Catholic social thought and people were providing effective leadership. If they were armed with both information and examples, Somerville believed that Canadian Catholics would and could play a more influential role in public affairs.

This passion for education often made The Register heavy reading for the average Catholic, but it did provide a consistent body of knowledge and opinion by inserting selected news items with appropriate editorial comment. Throughout the 1930's Somerville unleashed a steady barrage of messages on social and economic policy. At a time when

many religious publications ignored the secular world, Catholics were kept informed of the economic and social reforms of the New Deal, of new schemes for work projects for the unemployed, of the struggles of the American labour unions and the role the American clergy were playing in the formulation of labour law and the settlement of labour disputes. These items were intended to provide a broad context and a fresh approach to the consideration of contemporary Canadian problems.

Somerville's interest in education extended to include the institutions which Catholics attended and to the availability of continuing educational opportunities for those with little education. In support of the former, he urged his readers to educate their children to their utmost potential. Ideally, Catholic institutions of high quality at the secondary and university level should be available for them. For the workers, he urged the Church to provide at the parish and the diocesan level, short term courses, retreats and seminars in Catholic social thought, labour law, civics, and principles and responsibilities of union organization. Such study groups, he contended, would give Catholic working men urgently needed training to equip them for leadership roles in political and labour organizations. The failure of these groups to attract large numbers because of the lethargy of the clergy and the laity does not detract



from the fact that for the first time Catholic workers gained some awareness of their own capacity for leadership.

Somerville's policy of keeping Catholics informed about secular affairs included the introduction of new concepts in economics into his newspaper columns and journal articles. Especially innovative was his early promotion of the ideas of John Maynard Keynes before the secular press or Mr. King's advisers discovered them. Conversely, he did not hesitate to "debunk" a number of panaceas such as Distributism and Social Credit. In the darkest days of the Depression he chided the government for offering inadequate palliatives to cure massive unemployment, economic stagnation, and crushing debt. He advocated an overhauling of the whole monetary system by which profits were made through the imposition of fixed loan interest, a burden which put companies out of business and labour on relief. Along with these reforms, however, he contended that some specific measures must be instituted to aid the working man in acquiring a home and income adequate to raise a family. Somerville suggested that these should include government-guaranteed, low-interest housing loans, family allowances, and large rental projects financed by government subsidy to keep rents low.

At a time when the Depression-induced labour surplus encouraged employers to challenge labour's right to

organize labour unions, Somerville pleaded with Catholic workers to support and become leaders in the union movement. This was not only because he believed unions were the workers' principal protector against injustice, but also because he foresaw that unions would be important social and economic institutions in the future. Catholics must be in positions of influence when union policies were formulated. If these were responsible and functioned in accordance with the principles enunciated in the Social Encyclicals, then, Somerville pointed out, co-operation could be achieved between labour and management that would reduce industrial strife to a minimum, and subvert the Communists' plans to foster social confrontation as the necessary prelude to the establishment of the collectivist society. He recognized, however, that the promotion of confessional unions by the clergy, a policy pursued by the Church in Quebec, would not prove, in the long run, a useful form of Church support for Canadian labour. He pointed out that church-affiliated unions were not viable in the pluralistic society of English-speaking Canada, and he surmised that when Quebec became more heavily industrialized they would become obsolete in that province as well.

When the C.C.F., a political party with special appeal to the working class, was formed, Somerville encouraged investigation of and comment on this new Canadian

political phenomenon. Particularly directed to the clergy were his admonitions to distinguish between those policies whose intent was to protect the weak and remedy injustice and those that would destroy the capitalist system. He encouraged reasoned analysis of the C.C.F. programme because, although it was critical of the liberal-capitalist ethic, he did not believe its implementation would destroy the Canadian economic structure. Somerville based this opinion on his experience and observation of the Labour Party in England to which the C.C.F. itself looked for inspiration and example. Many prominent Catholics and especially members of the hierarchy, were reluctant to admit, however, that politics were a neutral issue on which the laity should be able to decide for themselves. This was a situation similar to that faced by the Quebec Liberal Party in the first years of the Laurier era, but Somerville believed that this issue could be more damaging to the Church because the agonizing over political affiliation was affecting the welfare of the Catholic Church throughout Canada. He cautioned Catholics that when they became involved in ideological controversy they must examine their opponents' proposals dispassionately, avoid irrelevant clichés and inaccurate and irresponsible statements, and refute their opponents' claims with clarity and precision. His success in persuading leading members of the hierarchy

to accept his views on the need for clarification of the status of the C.C.F. for Catholics was the culmination of several years of effort and a definitive example of the trust accorded him and his views by the hierarchy.

Henry Somerville was, for many years, particularly during the 1930's, the most influential layman in the English-speaking Catholic Church in Canada. His long years of service had made him a particularly trusted confidant and adviser to two archbishops. They had tolerated and sometimes had abetted his schemes to acquaint the laity and the clergy with the views and the people that were making significant contributions to the Catholic Church and to public life and education. He possessed neither wealth nor personal influence through any political affiliation, but he had other assets which were recognized and appreciated by the clergy in the Archdiocese of Toronto and by bishops in other Canadian dioceses as well.

First, it was obvious that his social concern was rooted in his deep religious convictions. He accepted the teaching of the Church and never wavered from it. He was aware of the new theological movements in the Church initiated by the Modernists such as Alfred Loisy and George Tyrrell, but he never ventured into public discussion of these ideas in his own writing. He took care that The Register did not become a forum for the consideration

of ideas that could lead to theological controversy, although he never hesitated to take up the cudgels for other causes with which he was passionately involved. Rather, his principal concern was to arouse the Church's awareness about the shape and quality of Canadian society in the light of the papal teaching on this subject. Second, Somerville was a man of above average education as compared with most Catholic immigrants of his era. He was largely self-taught, but he was canny enough to use his own academic credentials (honorary though they were) to lend legitimacy to his opinions. In addition, he had the good newspaperman's ability to investigate, absorb and interpret new ideas. He was well-read and he used The Register to introduce new books or ideas which he believed could make a useful contribution to his readers' education.

To accomplish all he believed needed to be done was a difficult and lonely task. Essentially, through his writings and his relationship with hierarchy, clergy and laity, Somerville was endeavouring to alter the spiritual and intellectual quality of the Catholic Church in Canada. In assessing his success, the first question to be asked is how effective was he? The second is, what conditions determined the extent of his influence?

In trying to answer the first question, one must recognize that the criteria of effectiveness in this context

are ill-defined and that the evidence for assessing it is inadequate. How therefore does one define "success" in this context? Perhaps the most suitable way of denoting this is to liken the role of individuals such as Henry Somerville to that of a catalyst or a form of leaven.

Somerville thought of himself in this way, undoubtedly intending that the primary effect of his work should be to encourage both the clergy and the laity in the Church to consider critically and knowledgeably their role in bringing about social change, and to widen the Church's perspective when necessary.

When one turns to an assessment of Somerville's influence in his time, one is confronted first with the inadequacy of the available evidence. For example, The Register contains almost no indication of readers' reactions to Somerville's views. This reflects the rather passive social attitude of the Canadian English-speaking clergy and laity against which Somerville frequently chafed, and which was reinforced by the discipline of the Church, the emphasis on works of personal piety, and the hostility or indifference of the majority of people to change in the church or in society. Second, the reminiscences of those who understood and admired Somerville's ideas, such as Father Cullinane and Catherine de Hueck Doherty, must not lead one to suppose that their opinions necessarily repre-

sented those of the majority of his readers. The only overt contemporary evidence of his influence was acceptance of his views by the two archbishops under whom he worked in Toronto, and the outcome of the controversy within the Church respecting its stance on the C.C.F. His role in the latter event was certainly not clear at the time to most of those outside the hierarchy.

The most that one can say regarding his wider influence is that, after 1945, the atmosphere in the Church was less hostile to radical social or economic ideas than was the case a decade earlier. This should be qualified, however, by the recognition that Canadian opinion generally became more acclimatized to new ideas than in the pre-Depression period, a change that was symbolized and in part influenced by the adoption of Keynesian principles by the federal civil service. Here again, Somerville's role is ill-defined but it cannot be dismissed. A second indication of the effect of Somerville's long career as a propagandist was the willingness of many Catholics at a later date to respond favourably to new currents of social thought in the Church.

Turning to the second broad question -- what factors shaped the extent and character of Somerville's influence, it should be noted first that when he arrived in Toronto he did not find an active, organized group of informed clergy

and laity comparable to those with whom he had worked in England. After years of toil he still had to admit that

in Canada we have scarcely begun to pay attention to the social doctrine common to all Catholics but distinct from current opinions in the world. . . . We are slow at getting anything practical because the few people who are willing and competent have their hands full of other projects.<sup>3</sup>

He remained an outsider, in part because he failed to recognize that some of his specific proposals were inconsistent with Canadian experience and in part because he assumed that the Canadian workers were as self-conscious and aware of their status in society as workers in England and as willing to improve themselves by private study. The community which, with the support and encouragement of prelates such as McNeil, he sought to influence preferred to leave the initiative in all matters to the hierarchy, a group which, with few exceptions, did not assign a high priority to social action. Both laity and clergy were largely isolated from the currents of change in the Catholic world outside Canada by their minority status, the inadequacy of Catholic educational institutions, and the need for the majority of members simply to concentrate on economic survival. Moreover, Catholics shared in the

---

<sup>3</sup>Somerville to Ballantyne, Nov. 23, 1943. Ballantyne Papers.



prevailing complacency and optimism of the rest of Canadian society, an attitude that did not begin to change until the onset of the Depression. Catholics and Protestants alike were shaken by the collapse of the economy in the thirties; the significant fact is that few were brought to challenge the fundamental assumptions of the Canadian social order. Somerville was unable at any time to look beyond his own Church for allies among proponents of social reform in the Protestant churches because the latter would not accept the Catholic concept of authority, a premise which he never questioned or doubted. Somerville himself was cognizant throughout his career of the necessity of walking a narrow line between obedience to the authority of the Church embodied in the local hierarchy, and the teaching of the Church as expounded by the papacy and the hierarchy, and his own sense of responsibility as a religious journalist whose function was to direct attention constructively to the new forms of the Church's social teaching and the new interpretations which related that teaching to the problems of contemporary society.

Yet if the response from Catholic clergy and laity to Somerville's message was evidently limited in his lifetime, it was nonetheless significant. He accepted the fact that both the Canadian Catholic tradition and the hierarchic framework within which the Church operated,

would control the pace of change. He knew too, that the Church, in matters other than theological, was not the monolithic structure that most outside the Canadian Church and many within it assumed it to be. His influence was not conspicuous during the prosperity of the 1950's, but when the prosperous and optimistic 50's were succeeded by the turbulent 60's, Pope John and Vatican II reminded the world again that the search for social justice must continue. At this point, those who had experienced the influence of Henry Somerville emerged to play new roles. This group, many of them, the children of that generation that Somerville had pressed so ardently to support higher education and public involvement, achieved some of the goals he had envisioned for the Catholic community. These folk were examining critically the larger world beyond their local parishes and dioceses and were considering new means of dealing with increasing economic and social disorder.

One of his main goals was achieved through the strengthening of Catholic educational institutions which has made possible an increase in the proportion of Catholics in the professions in Canada -- in law, medicine, architecture and science, as well as in the humanities and in the public service.

The participation of the Church in the United States in labour and civil rights movements has been matched to a lesser degree by Catholic espousal of similar causes in Canada. Public recognition of the contribution of the Church to social thought, the acceptance of Catholic laity in positions of power and influence, the willingness of the hierarchy to speak and act in support of social justice are the legacy of the ideas that Henry Somerville introduced to his adopted country. His successor as editor of The Register declared, "Perhaps more than any other layman he has helped to form the minds of Catholics of his time".<sup>4</sup>

There still remain, however, some unconsidered issues and unanswered questions related to this topic which should be investigated in the future. For example, bearing in mind that the Archdiocese of Montreal was a heavily industrialized area in the interwar period, can any useful comparison be drawn between the experiences of the two Dioceses in this matter? Some of the groundwork has been laid for this subject with Terry Copp's Anatomy of Poverty (1974), but no

---

<sup>4</sup>Monsignor J. G. Hanley, May 15, 1975.

study of the Church has been done. A second question which arises is whether the experience of the Church in Toronto was similar to that of other English-speaking areas with large populations such as Winnipeg and Vancouver. What kinds of leaders did they have and what was their influence on the community? Similarly, research on the attitudes of Catholic political and labour leaders, particularly those of Somerville's era should be very productive. Gregory Baum has begun to investigate the pioneer members of the C.C.F. who were Catholic, but there have been no studies of the Catholic pioneers in the Canadian Labour movement. Of course one question which the researcher should consider in such studies is to what extent these persons were influenced by the ideas that Somerville introduced. Much of this waits upon more extensive and more detailed quantitative analysis of the structure of labour and political leadership in Canada and of the patterns of legislation.

Similarly, Canadian religious and intellectual history would be enriched by scholarly studies of two of the great pioneers of Catholic social thought in Canada, Archbishop Neil McNeil and Archbishop Joseph Charbonneau. The works produced to date on these men give one a glimpse of their talents, but they do not place them in the whole context of their Church or their age.

In effect, this thesis has drawn attention to the significance of the developments which have taken place in the Roman Catholic Church's social teaching and in the relationship between the Church and society in the twentieth century. By focussing in detail on the work of Henry Somerville within the context of English-Canadian Catholicism and the Archdiocese of Toronto in particular, it is hoped that the complexity of this process has been demonstrated and that some light has been thrown on the contribution of Somerville to this.

Somerville's influence was limited and yet made possible by his combination of orthodoxy and cautious radicalism, as well as by the traditions and characteristics of the religious community to which he belonged. It is hoped that the study of his career will stimulate further research into the role of the Church in the social and intellectual history of twentieth century Canada and that it will indicate how useful and yet elusive the examination of this subject must be.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### PRIMARY SOURCES

#### 1. Manuscripts

##### Papers

- (a) Redpath Library, McGill University.  
Murray Ballantyne Papers.
- (b) Archives of the Archdiocese of Toronto.  
James, Cardinal McGuigan Papers.  
Archbishop Neil McNeil Papers.
- (c) Public Archives of Canada.  
William Lyon Mackenzie King Papers and Diaries.
- (d) Library of Father Peter Nearing, Combermere, Ontario.  
Archbishop Neil McNeil Papers.
- (e) Somerville Family, Toronto.  
Henry Somerville Papers.

#### 2. Books and Pamphlets

Somerville, Henry. Trade Unionism. London: Catholic Truth Society, 1913.

\_\_\_\_\_. The Apostle of Organized Charity, St. Vincent de Paul. New York: Paulist Press, 1916.

\_\_\_\_\_. Higher Education and Catholic Leadership in Canada. Toronto: Catholic Truth Society, n.d. [c. 1919].

\_\_\_\_\_. Why the Church has Condemned Socialism. Oxford: Catholic Social Guild, 1923.

\_\_\_\_\_. Letters on Social History. Oxford: Catholic Social Guild, 1924.

\_\_\_\_\_. Who is My Neighbor?: A School Manual of Civics. London: Harding & More Ltd., 1929.

- \_\_\_\_\_. Britain's Economic Illness. London: Harding & More Ltd., 1931.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Studies in the Catholic Social Movement. London: Burns and Oates Co., 1933.
- \_\_\_\_\_. A Course of Social Study. Oxford: Catholic Social Guild, 1936.
- \_\_\_\_\_. A Course of Social Study: First Year. Toronto: Extension Print, 1936.
- \_\_\_\_\_. A Course of Social Science. Toronto: Canadian Register, n.d.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Revolution in Review. Oxford: Catholic Social Guild, 1938.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Why the Guilds Decayed. New York: Paulist Press, 1938.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Social Study for Canadians. Toronto: The Canadian Register, n.d. [c. 1938].
- \_\_\_\_\_. Employers and Workers. Toronto: The Canadian Register, n.d.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Public Planning and Free Enterprise. Toronto: The Canadian Register, n.d.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Rome and Home. Toronto: Canadian Register, n.d. [c. 1946].

### 3. Articles

#### The Christian Democrat:

- Somerville, Henry. "What We Are" (January 1, 1921):1-3.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Letter to a British Working Man", 7 (July 1921):1-5.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Tyneside and Durham Tour" (July 1, 1921):13-16.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Letter to a Capitalist" (August 11, 1921):1-6.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "Catholics and the Labour Party"; "Is the Labour Party Socialist"; "Can a Catholic Be a Socialist" (November 1, 1921).
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Machinery Without Motive Power", 2 (January 1922):1-6.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Social Subjects and Catholic Evidence" (February 1922):6-9.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Note from Canada" (March 1922):4-5.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "In Canada and the United States" (May 1922):4-9.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "An Industrial Entente", 2, no. 7 (July 1922):1-4.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "In Hoc Signo Vincas", 3 (January 1923):2-3.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "How a Marxian Looks at History", (July 3, 1923):1-6.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Labour Party's Socialism", 3 (August 1923):1-4.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Making of Money" (June 4, 1924):81-86.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "What's Wrong with Great Britain", 4, no. 7 (July 1924):97-102.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Public Financial Aid to Study Clubs", 5, no. 3 (March 1925):41-45.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Do We Want a Programme", 5, no. 4 (April 1925):57-60.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Coal Outlook", 5, no. 9 (September 1925):132-33.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Catholic Worker and Political Parties" (April 1926):58-64.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Labour and Birth Control", 7, no. 5 (May 1926):69-72. 0
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Question of Strikes", 6, no. 6 (June 1926):95-98.



- \_\_\_\_\_. "Birth Control and Christian Teaching", 6, no. 6 (June 1926):i-iv.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Arbitration Versus War", 6, no. 7 (July 1926):107-111.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Capitalism the Incurable", 6, no. 10 (October 1926):153-158.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Reasons Against Socialism", 6, no. 11 (November 1926):172-176.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Scheme of Economic Reconstruction", 7, no. 1 (January 1927):10-15.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Worker's Control of Industry", 7, no. 2 (February 1927):25-28.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Economic Internationalism", 7, no. 4 (April 1927):49-52.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Distribution and Some Distributists", 7, no. 5 (May 1927):65-70.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Catholic Emigration and Colonisation [sic]", 7, no. 7 (July 1927):97-101.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "More Comments on Some Distributists", 7, no. 9 (September 1927):129-134.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Arbitration Versus Industrial War", 7, no. 10 (October 1927):145-148.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "G.K.C's Retreat", 7, no. 11 (November 1927):161-165.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Mr. Snowden and Socialism", 8, no. 2 (February 1928):17-19.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Studies in Social History. I. -- Serfdom and its Humanization", 8, no. 3 (March 1928):41-45.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Studies in Social History. II. -- Serfdom Becoming Obsolete", 8, no. 4 (April 1928):54-57.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Studies in Social History. III. -- Thirteenth Century Life on the Land", 8, no. 6 (June 1928):81-86.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's Malthusianism", 8, no. 7 (July 1928):97-102.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Studies in Social History". IV. -- Christian Democracy and Catholic Orthodoxy", 8, no. 8 (August 1928):119-123.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Studies in Social History". V. -- Catholic Ethics and Medieval Progress", 8, no. 9 (September 1928):129-134.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Studies in Social History. VI. -- The Medieval Church and Usury", 8, no. 10 (October 1928):145-150.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Catholics and Socialism", 8 (November 1928):166-170.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Studies in Social History. VII. -- Social Dislocation by the Black Death", 8, no. 12 (December 1928):180-184.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Studies in Social History. VIII. -- Agitation and the Great Revolt of 1381", 9, no. 1 (January 1929):8-13.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Arena in America", 9, no. 3 (March 1929):33-36.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Emancipatrix of England", 9, no. 4 (April 1929):49-52.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Labour in Modern England. I. The Poor Law of Queen Elizabeth" (June 1929):97-100.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Labour in Modern England. II. Work and Wages Under Queen Elizabeth", 9, no. 8 (August 1929).
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Labour in Modern England. III. The Stuart Monarchy", 9, no. 10 (October 1929):166-169.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Labour in Modern England. IV. All Power to the Landlord", 9, no. 11 (November 1929):182-186.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Labour in Modern England. V. The Darkest Age in English History" (January 1930):4-8.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Labour in Modern England. The Protestant Parentage of Capitalism", 10, no. 2 (February 1930):19-23.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "Labour in Modern England. Religious and Economic Individualism", 3 (March 1930):39-42.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Russia and Ourselves", 10, no. 4 (April 1930): 51-55.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Popes in the Modern World", 10, no. 5 (May 1930):71-74.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Blue Book on Malta", 10, no. 7 (July 1930): 100-104.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Further Thoughts on Malta", 10, no. 8 (August 1930):115-120.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The C.S.G. Looking Forward", 8, no. 9 (September 1930):136-139.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The New Russia at First Sight", 10, no. 10 (October 1930):151-155.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Making the Soviet Mass Mind", 10, no. 12 (December 1930):180-184.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Red Army", 11, no. 2 (February 1931):20-22.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Cardinal Manning and the Encyclical Rerum Novarum", 11, no. 4 (April 1931):52-55.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Facing the Wages Question", 11, no. 6 (June 1931):84-88.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Macmillan Report", 11, no. 8 (August 1931): 116-119.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Question of Lower Wages", 11, no. 9 (September 1931):134-137.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "What's In the Macmillan Report", 11, no. 10 (October 1931):151-153.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Medieval Liberties and Modern Dictatorships", 13, no. 11 (November 1933):163-166.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Sir John Gilbert", 15, no. 4 (April 1935).
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Protestant Parentage of Capitalism", 10, no. 12 (February 1930):19-23.

Miscellaneous:

- Somerville, Henry. "How to Work Social Study Clubs",  
The Month 70 (August 1912):141-152.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Work Before the Catholic Social Guild",  
The Month 71 (January 1913):33-43.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Disintegration of Socialism", The Month  
(November 1913):173-181.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Catholic Principles and Social Policy",  
The Month 72 (December 1913):572-582. 0
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Variations of Socialism", Studies 2, no. 8  
(December 1913):369-383.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Working Class Wives", The Crucible 1 (1913):  
207-215.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Confessions of a Catholic Socialist", Dublin  
Review 115 (1914):101-115.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Living Wage and Economic Law", Studies 3,  
no. 13 (March 1914):602-615.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Successors to Socialism", The Month (May 1914):  
173-180.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Socialism and the War", Studies 3, no. 12  
(December 1914):419-435.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Labour Disputes in 1913"; "Socialism in 1913";  
"Syndicalism in 1913"; "Socialism in 1913"; in  
Catholic Social Year Book for 1914. London: P. S.  
King & Son, 1913.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Review of International Socialism and the War,  
by A. W. Humphrey, in Studies 4, no. 14 (June 1915):  
325-327.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Labour Disorders in Wartime", Studies 4, no. 16  
(December 1915):589-600.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Eclipse of Socialism", in National Recon-  
struction: The Catholic Social Year Book for 1916.  
Westminster: P. S. King & Son Ltd., 1916, 56-58.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "The National Conference of Catholic Charities", Catholic World 55 (August 1917):587-597. ○
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Henri Bourassa and Canadian Nationalism: An Anglo-Canadian Appreciation", Studies 7, no. 27 (September 1918):485-98.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Notes on Social Work in Canada", Studies 8, no. 30 (June 1919):296-305. ○
- \_\_\_\_\_. Review on The Guild State, by G. R. Stirling Taylor, and Guild Socialism, by Francis Goldwell, in Studies 8, no. 32 (December 1919):691-692.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Economics of Nationalization", Studies 9, no. 33 (March 1920):20-40.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Political Impotence of British Labour", Studies 10, series 37 (March 1921):1-18.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Review of Historical Sketch of State Railway Ownership, by W. M. Acworth and The Case for Nationalization, by A. Emil Davies, in Studies 9, no. 34 (June 1920):311-312.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Review of Social Theory a Book by G. D. H. Cole", Studies no. 39 (September 1921):497-498.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Catholic Labour College", Studies 10, no. 39 (September 1921):391-400.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Engineering Lock-out and After", The Messenger (August 1922):260-262.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Recent Development of Socialism" 12, no. 48 (December 1923):571-583.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Control of Credit and Currency", Studies 13, no. 50 (June 1924):273-290.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Catholic Church and International Law", Studies 14, no. 55 (June 1925):207-217.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Catholic Social Order", The Messenger (July 1925):212-214. ○
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Religion and Labour in the Days of the Gilds [sic]", The Messenger (August 1925):240-243.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "Catholics and Economics", The Commonweal (October 21 1925):583-584.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Dignity of Labour", The Messenger (November 1925):343-345.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Human Wage Plan", The Commonweal (November 18, 1925):40-41.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "An Alternative to Capitalism", Studies 14, no. 56 (December 1925):521-530.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Catholic Church in Canada", The Messenger (January 1926):4-6.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Guild Plan for Industry", The Commonweal (February 10, 1926):374-375.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Fallacy of Credit Power", The Commonweal (May 26, 1926):65-66.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Great Strike in Britain", The Commonweal (June 9, 1926):121-123.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "How the Reformation De-Humanized Economics", Month 148 (August 1926), 125-134.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "What's Wrong with Arbitration", The Messenger of the Sacred Heart (September 1926):284-286.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Possibilities of Co-Partnership", Studies 15, series 60 (December 1926):649-659.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Perils of Migration", The Commonweal (January, 19, 1927):294-295.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "James Ramsay Macdonald", The Commonweal (May 4, 1927):711-712.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "English Law and Labor Unions", The Commonweal (June 22, 1927):176-77.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Devil of Malthus", Month 140 (September 1927):202-211.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A History of Socialism and Social Struggles", Studies 16 (September 1927):425-435.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "News Finding for the Empire: The Work of a Special Correspondent", The Toronto Star, September 6, 1927. Reprinted from T. P. & Cassell's Weekly.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "Upholding Authority", The Messenger (September 1927):257-260.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Canada's Promotion at Geneva", T. P. & Cassell's Weekly, October 15, 1927, 769 and 794.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Changes in English Socialism", The Commonweal (November 9, 1927):664-665.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Mind of G.K.C.", T. P. & Cassell's Weekly (November 1927):167.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Church and the Law", Catholic Mind 25 (1927):175-180.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Review of The Social Catholic Movement in Great Britain, by Georgiana McEntee, in Studies 16, no. 64 (December 1927):714-715.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Programme for the Catholic Social Guild", Month 151 (January 1928):23-29.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "World Problems of Population", Month 151 (April 1928):302-310.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Anglican in Rome", T. P. & Cassell's Weekly (May 5, 1928):59-60.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Economic Results of the Black Death", Month 151 (June 1928):491-500.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Catholic Answer to the Social Question", The Messenger (July 1928):193-196.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "George Bernard Shaw, Socialist", Studies 17 (September 1928):455-464.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Review of Commodore Vanderbilt, by Arthur D. Howden, in Studies (September 1928):493-494.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Review of A Survey of Socialism, by F. J. C. Hearnshaw, in Studies 17, no. 68 (1928):715-716.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Care of the Aged Poor in England", Catholic Charities Review 13 (February 1929):41-42.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Catholic Social Movement in England", Catholic Charities Review 13 (March 1929):81-82.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Pope's Patrimony: The New Sovereignty of the Vatican", T. P. & Cassell's Weekly (March 2, 1929):449-450.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Antichrist in Russia", The Messenger (October 1929):292-296.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Reflections after Visiting Russia", Studies 18, no. 1 (1929):556-568.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The End of England's Yeoman", Month 155 (January 1930):39-45.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Challenge to Christian Society", Catholic World 130 (February 1930):606-608.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Religion in Russia", The London Times, February 17, 1930, 15.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "How Socialism Puts Itself in the Wrong", Month 155 (March 1930):218-225.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "How Britain Trades", The Commonweal 12 (May 21, 1930):69-71.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Catholic Church in the News", Month 156 (July 1930):69-72.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Economic Position of Great Britain", Studies 19 (September 1930):376-386.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Soviet Five Year Plan", Studies 19 (December 1930):624-636.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Review of The Five Year Plan of the Soviet Union, by G. T. Grinko, and The Experiment of Bolshevism, by Arthur Feiler, in Studies (December 1930):690-692.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Russia: Especially her Children", The Messenger (January 1931):1-6.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Vicious Principle of Capitalism", Columba (February 1931):41-42.



- \_\_\_\_\_. "Wages and Unemployment", The Commonweal (February 25, 1931):459-460.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Catholic Industrial Order", Columba (March 1931):73-74.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The 'Rerum Novarum' after Forty Years", Studies 20 (March 1931):1-12.
- \_\_\_\_\_. [Bezimya]. "The Riddle of Russia" (May 1931):143-144.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "England and the 'Rerum Novarum'", America 45 (June 6, 1931):207-208.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Riddle of Russia. II. -- Communism Versus the Family", Columba (June 1931):175-176.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Labour Party and Socialism", Month 158 (July 1931):1-7.
- \_\_\_\_\_. [Bezimya]. "The Riddle of Russia. III. -- God and Anti-God", Columba (July 1931):212-213.
- \_\_\_\_\_. [Bezimya]. "The Riddle of Russia. IV. -- The Corps D'elite of Bolshevism", Columba (August 1931):239-240.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Latest Socialism", Studies 20, no. 79 (September 1931):439-448.
- \_\_\_\_\_. [Bezimya]. "The Riddle of Russia. V. -- The Beliefs of Bolshevism", Columba (September 1931):273-274.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Usury as a New Issue", The Commonweal (September 16, 1931):457-459.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Review of Une Date dans l'Histoire des travailleurs, by G. Guittou, in Studies 20, no. 80 (December 1931):699-700.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Economic Evil of Loan Interest", Studies 20 (December 1931):627-636.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Interest and Usury in a New Light", The Economic Journal 42 (December 1931):646-649.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "Tourists in Russia", Month 158 (1931):229-33.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Disraeli and Catholicism", Month 159 (February 1932):114-124.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Battle about Loan Interest", Studies (June 1932):298-306.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Social Work among the Unemployed in Britain", Catholic Charities Review 16 (June 1932):163-165. 0
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Usury and Standstill", The Economic Journal 37 (June 1932):318-323.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Economists and Canonists", Month 160 (July 1932):49-57.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Interest and Usury", Everyman (August 4, 1932): 38.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Villain of the Economic Piece", The Commonweal 17 (November 16, 1932):71-72.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Communism in Perspective", Month 161 (February 1933):126-134.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Evil Genius of Bolshevism, Karl Marx", Month 161 (March 1933):257-264.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Rich Man and the Needle's Eye", Studies 22 (March 1933):101-112.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The End of the Five Year Plan", Catholic World (April 1933):68-75.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Get Rid of Interest", New Britain (May 31, 1933): 33 and 62.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Marx's Theory of Money", Economic Journal 43 (June 1933):334-337.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Criticism of Professor Soddy", New Britain (June 21, 1933):136.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Fallen Kings of Finance", New Britain (July 5, 1933):203 and 216.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Outlook in Germany", The Messenger (July 1933):210-215.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "Catholic Social Action Abroad", Month 162  
(August 1933):145-153.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Credit Reform Schemes", Studies 22, no. 87  
(September 1933):409-420.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "How the Faith Made Canada", Month 163  
(February 1934):138-144.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Creed of Karl Marx", The Canadian Messenger  
of the Sacred Heart (March 1934):184-189.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Can We End Labor-Sweating", The Canadian  
Messenger of the Sacred Heart (August 1934):518-522.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Canada's Four Centuries", The Commonweal 20  
(September 7, 1934):444-445.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Mr Aberhart Analyzed", The Commonweal 22  
(October 11, 1935):572-574.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Mr Keynes and the Canonists", The Commonweal  
24 (June 12, 1936):177-179.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Studies in Communism or Marxist Socialism",  
The Catholic Register, November 19, 1936; November 26,  
1936; December 3, 1936; December 10, 1936; December  
17, 1936; December 24, 1936; December 31, 1936;  
January 7, 1937; January 14, 1937; February 11, 1937;  
February 25, 1937; March 4, 1937; March 11, 1937;  
March 25, 1937; April 8, 1937; April 15, 1937;  
May 6, 1937; May 13, 1937; May 20, 1937; June 3,  
1937; June 10, 1937; June 17, 1937; June 24, 1937;  
September 9, 1937; September 16, 1937; September  
23, 1937.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Social Credit in Alberta", Studies 25, no. 100  
(December 1936):71-80.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Catholic Youth In Germany", Christian Front  
2 (January 1937):2-3.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Economic Indictment of Loan Interest", Thought  
12 (June 1937):252-264.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "Patronage in Politics", Catholic Digest 2 (June 1938):31-34.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Three Demons", The Canadian Messenger of the Sacred Heart (June 1938):77-81.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Alberta Under Aberhart", Studies 27, no. 108 (December 1938):415-424.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Modern Revolution and the Church", Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa 8 (December 1938):474-483.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Family Allowances", Clergy Review 16 (March 1939):201-212. 0
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Commonwealth of Mankind", Catholic World 151 (July 1940):452-458.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Canada is United in Her War Against Hitler", America 63 (September 21, 1940):648-649.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Racial Groups in Canada", Studies 29, no. 115 (September 1940):431-440.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Christian Civilization and the Workman", The Eikon (February 1941):103-105.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Social Health Insurance", The Eikon (April 1941):153-156.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Encyclicals' Anniversary", The Eikon (May 1941), 201-203.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Church and Society", Saturday Night 56 (May 31, 1941):22.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Industrial Peace in Canada", The Commonweal 34 (May 30, 1941):126-128.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Canada 1641-1941", Studies 30, no. 118 (June 1941):173-182.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The World Movement for Family Allowances", Saturday Night (June 14, 1941):14-15.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "An Anglican Bishop's Sociology", The Eikon (July 1941):272-274.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "Canadian Sword of the Spirit", The Eikon (August 1941):256-258.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Right of Private Property", The Eikon 14 (1941):17-19.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Duties of Ownership", The Eikon 15 (1941):42-44.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Social Mission of the Catholic Workingman", The Eikon 8 (1941):280-283.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Good of Our Times", The Canadian Messenger of the Sacred Heart (December 1941):768-772.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Pope Pius Speaks! A Glance at the Encyclical", The Eikon (March 1942):63-64.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Commonwealth of Mankind: Will the League be Revived?", The Eikon (April 1942):86-89.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Is Socialism Coming: Old Name for Something New", The Eikon (May 1942):182-184.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Passing of Capitalism: Who Will Hold the Contracts", The Eikon (June 1942):208-210.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Best of Beveridge is Childrens Allowances", Mother of Perpetual Help Magazine 1 (1943):164-166.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Beveridge Plan Abridged", Catholic Digest 7 (March 1943):74-76.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Beveridge Plan", The Canadian Messenger of the Sacred Heart 53 (1943):93-97.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Oxford's Catholic Worker's College", America 69 (June 26, 1943):317-318.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Novel Exhibition Points Out Our Mission Role", Saturday Night 59 (October 16, 1943):20.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Religious Demand for a New World Order", Saturday Night 59 (October 23, 1943):22.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "45 Nations Debate on International Fund", Saturday Night 59 (July 15, 1944):34-35.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "Unsuspected Quarters Preach Corporatism", Saturday Night 60 (October 21, 1944):8.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Solution of the Labor Problem", Culture no. 7 (December 1946):431-435.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Congress Takes Theme of Prayer for Peace", Saturday Night 62 (June 7, 1947):16-17.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A National Organization of Catholic Men", Culture 8 (1947):315-320.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Profit-Sharing and Copartnership", The Canadian Messenger of the Sacred Heart 62, no. 12 (December 1952):779-786.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Can Socialism be Baptized?". The Canadian Messenger of the Sacred Heart (April 1952).
- \_\_\_\_\_. One Hundred Birthdays, 1852-1952. (An historical review of St. Mary's Church, Toronto, Ontario.) n.p., n.d.

### 3. Newspapers and Periodicals

America. 1920-1946.

The Canadian Messenger of the Sacred Heart. 1930-1950.

The Catholic Record (London, Ontario). 1930-1938.

The Catholic Register (Toronto, Ontario). 1912-1942.

The Canadian Register (Toronto, Ontario). 1942-1946.

The Christian Democrat. 1921-1934.

The Commonweal. 1918-1953.

The Month. 1908-1953.

Studies, 1912-1945.

#### 4. Official Documents

- Ellis, John Tracy, ed. Documents of American Catholic History. Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Co., 1962.
- Fremantle, Anne, ed. The Papal Encyclicals in their Historical Context. New York: Mentor Book of the New American Library, 1956.
- \_\_\_\_\_, ed. The Social Teachings of the Church. New York: Mentor Omega, 1963.
- Gauthier, Georges. Archevêque-Coadjuteur de Montréal. La Doctrine sociale de l'Eglise et la Cooperative Commonwealth Federal: Lettre Pastorale de S. Exc. Georges Gauthier. Montréal: L'Ecole Social Populaire Publication Mensuelle, 1934.
- Husslein, Joseph Casper, S.J. The Christian Social Manifesto. Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Co., 1931.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Social Wellsprings. Vols. I and II. Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Co., 1949.
- McGuigan, James Charles, Cardinal. Pastoral Letters and Circular Letters 1930-1935. Archbishop of Regina. n.p., n.d.
- McLaughlin, Terrence, P., c.s.b. ed. The Church and the Social Reconstruction of the Modern World: The Social Encyclicals of Pius XI 1922-1939. Garden City: Image Books, Doubleday & Co., 1957.
- Nell-Breuning, Oswald Von, S.J. The Social Encyclicals Explained: Reorganization of the Social Economy. Translated by Bernard W. Dempsey. Milwaukee: Bruce Publications, 1936.
- Treacy, Gerald C., S.J. Five Great Encyclicals: Labour, Education, Marriage, Reconstructing the Social Order, Atheistic Communism. New York: Paulist Press, 1939.

## 5. Manuscripts and Speeches

Somerville, Henry. "Capitalism, Socialism and Catholicism",  
1913, n.p.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Cath. [sic] Principles of Social Reform",  
1913.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Social Mission of the Catholic Workingman",  
1913.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Influence of Catholicism on Social Progress",  
1913.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Graduation Address", Mount St. Bernard,  
Antigonish, May 1917.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Speech to McMaster Alumni Association", n.p.,  
n.d. [c. 1934].

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Encyclical Quadragesimo Anno", Montreal  
[c. 1937].

\_\_\_\_\_. "Organization Versus Anarchy in Industry" for  
Stationers Guild, Montreal, October 5, 1937.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The World Crisis", speech at St. Patrick's  
Church, Ottawa, Ontario, March 26, 1938.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Labour Problems and the War", Address to Separate  
School Trustees Section, Ontario Educational Association,  
April 7, 1943.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Study Paper on Catholic Membership in Neutral  
Societies and Labour Unions", prepared for Archbishop  
James McGuigan, Toronto [c. 1945].

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Apostolate of the Catholic Press", Speech  
to the National Convention of the Catholic Women's  
League, Windsor, Ontario, n.d.

\_\_\_\_\_. "A Catholic Social Platform", address, England,  
n.d.

\_\_\_\_\_. "A Catholic Policy of Social Reform", n.p., n.d.

\_\_\_\_\_. "An Atheist State. Shall England Follow Russia",  
n.p., n.d.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Capitalism, Socialism and Catholicism", n.p., n.d.



- \_\_\_\_\_. "The C.S.G. its Methods and Aims", n.p., n.d.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Encyclical on Atheistic Communism", n.p. n.d.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Fallacies of Socialism", n.p., n.d.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Influence of Catholicism on Social Progress",  
n.p., n.d.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Life and Labour in the Middle Ages", n.p., n.d.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Mistake of Marx", n.p., n.d.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Nationalization", n.p., n.d.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Pope and a New Social Order", London,  
n.d.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Social Results of the Protestant Reforma-  
tion", n.p., n.d.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Visit to Russia", Talk, n.d., n.p.

## 6. Interviews and Correspondence

- Ballantyne, Murray. Combermere, Ontario. Interview, July 19,  
1974; May 9, 1975; July 4, 1977.
- Barresi, Nata and Dominic. Dundas, Ontario. Interview,  
September 2, 1976.
- Brennan, Father Thomas. Hamilton, Ontario. Interview,  
August 1, 1973 (deceased).
- Carroll, Miss Mary. Cayuga, Ontario. Interview, August  
23, 1974.
- Corrigan, Monsignor John. Toronto, Ontario. Interview,  
February 28, 1973.
- Cullinane, Father Eugene. Combermere, Ontario. Interview,  
April 28, 1976.
- de Manche, Alfred. Toronto, Ontario. Interview, January  
23, 1973.

- Doherty, Catherine de Hueck. Combermere, Ontario. Interview, April 28, 1976.
- Duffy, Gordon. Torremolinos, Spain. Interview, November 22, 1973.
- Hanley, Monsignor J. G. Kingston, Ontario. Interview and correspondence, October 5, 1974, etc.
- Kehoe, Monsignor Francis. Dundas, Ontario. Interview, August 2, 1973.
- Kelly, Eileen and Joseph. Hamilton, Ontario. Interview, June 1, 1976.
- Kennelly, Margaret and Joseph. Dundas, Ontario. Interview, August 25, 1974.
- Kerans, Father Patrick. Toronto, Ontario. Interview, January 27, 1973.
- Malone, John. Hamilton, Ontario. Interview, April 3, 1974.
- Maloney, Dr. Peter. Toronto, Ontario. Interview, June 17, 1976.
- McGivern, Father James, S.J. Toronto, Ontario. Interviews, February, March and April, 1973.
- McGoey, Father F. J. Toronto, Ontario. Interview, April 7, 1973 (deceased).
- McGuire, Father Charles, S.J. Toronto, Ontario. Interview, April 7, 1973.
- Nearing, Father Peter. Combermere, Ontario. Interview, July 19, 1974.
- Reding, His Excellency Bishop Paul F. Hamilton, Ontario. Interview, July 31, 1973.
- Rope, William. Hamilton, Ontario. Interview, June 19, 1974.
- Ryan, Father Michael T. London, Ontario. Interview, August 3, 1973.
- Schneider, Jacqueline. Hamilton, Ontario. Interview, May 15, 1973.

- Scollard, Father Robert J., c.s.b. Toronto, Ontario.  
Interview, October 11, 1972.
- Sherlock, Father John. Hamilton, Ontario. Interview,  
January 16, 1974. (Now Bishop of London.)
- Somerville, Mrs. Henry (Margaret). Toronto, Ontario.  
Interview, February 19, 1973.
- Somerville, Miss Janet. Toronto, Ontario. Interviews,  
June 27, 1973; January 9, 1975.
- Somerville, Father Peter. Toronto, Ontario. Interview,  
February 19, 1973.
- Kirwan, Joseph. Plater College, Oxford, England.  
Correspondence, March 24, 1975.
- Somerville, Father Frank, S.J. Leeds, England.  
Correspondence, November 15, 1974; December 23, 1974.
- Waterhouse, Father Henry, S.J. Bristol, England.  
Correspondence, November 2, 1974. March 13, 1975.
- Winsborough, Canon Alfred. Porthcawl, South Wales.  
Correspondence, November 11, 1974; March 13, 1975.

## SECONDARY SOURCES

### 1. Books

- Abell, Aaron I. American Catholic Thought on Social Questions. New York and Indianapolis: Bobbs Merrill, Ltd., 1968.
- Abell, Aaron I. American Catholicism and Social Action: A Search for Social Justice, 1865-1950. Garden City, N.H.: Hanover House, 1960.
- Adams, Wm. Forbes. Ireland and Irish Emigration to the New World from 1815 to the Famine. New Haven: Yale University Press. London: Oxford University Press, 1932.
- Ahlstrom, Sydney E. A Religious History of the American People. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972.

- \_\_\_\_\_, ed. Theology in America. New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1967.
- Alfred, Rev. Brother, F.S.C. Catholic Pioneers in Upper Canada. Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada Ltd., 1947.
- Allen, A. Richard. The Social Passion. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971.
- Aretin, Karl Otmar Von. The Papacy and the Modern World. Translated by Roland Hill. New York: McGraw Hill, 1970.
- Beck, George A., ed. The English Catholics 1850-1950. London: Burns and Oates, 1950.
- Berger, Peter. The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion. New York: Doubleday, 1967.
- Boyle, George. Father Tompkins of Nova Scotia. New York: P. J. Kenedy, 1953.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Pioneer in Purple. Montreal: Palm Publishers, 1951.
- Broderick, Francis L. Right Reverend New Dealer, John A. Ryan. New York: Macmillan, 1963.
- Brown, Robert Craig and Cook, Ramsay. Canada 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974.
- Browne, Henry J. The Catholic Church and the Knights of Labor. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1949.
- Burr, Nelson, R. A Critical Bibliography of Religion in America. 2 vols. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1961.
- Calvez, Jean Yves and Perrin, Jacques. The Church and Social Justice: The Social Teaching of the Popes from Leo XII to Pius XII. Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1961.
- Camp, Richard L. The Papal Ideology of Social Reform 1878-1967. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1969. ○

- Carr, Father, Henry, c.s.b. Life or Death. Toronto: Institute of Medieval Studies, St. Michael's College, 1933.
- Choquette, Robert. Language and Religion: A History of the English French Conflict in Ontario. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1975.
- Civardi, Msgr. Luigi. A Manual of Catholic Action. Translated by C. C. Martindale, S.J. London: Sheed & Ward, 1935.
- Clark, S. D. Church and Sect in Canada. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1948.
- \_\_\_\_\_. The Social Development of Canada. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1942.
- Cleary, J. M. Catholic Social Action in Britain 1909-1959: A History of the Catholic Social Guild. Oxford: Catholic Social Guild, 1961.
- Coady, M. M. E. Masters of Their Own Destiny. New York and London: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1939.
- Cowan, Helen I. British Emigration to British North America. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967.
- Craig, Gerald M. Upper Canada: The Formative Years, 1784-1841. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1963.
- Crawford, Virginia Mary. Catholic Social Doctrine, 1891-1931: Catholic Social Year Book for 1933. Oxford: Catholic Social Guild, 1933.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Ideals of Charity. London, Sands & Co., 1908.
- Cronin, Rev. John F. Catholic Social Principles: The Social Teaching of the Catholic Church Applied to American Economic Life. Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1950.
- Crysdale, Stewart. The Industrial Struggle and Protestant Ethics in Canada. Toronto: Ryerson, 1961.
- Daly, George Thomas, C.S.S.R. Catholic Action. Toronto: Macmillan, 1927.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Catholic Problems in Western Canada. Toronto: Macmillan, 1921.

- Davin, Nicholas Flood. The Irishman in Canada. Toronto: Maclear and Company, 1887.
- Edinborough, Arnold and Le Blanc, Philip, O.P. One Church, Two Nations? Toronto: Longmans Canada Ltd., 1968.
- Elgee, W. H. The Social Teachings of the Canadian Churches. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1964.
- Ellis, John Tracy. American Catholicism. Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1955.
- \_\_\_\_\_. A Guide to American Catholic History. Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1959.
- Fanfani, Amintore. Catholicism, Protestantism and Capitalism. London: Sheed & Ward, 1939.
- Fisher, Claude Laing. James Cardinal McGuigan, Archbishop of Toronto. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1948.
- Freeman, T. W. Pre-Famine Ireland. Manchester: University Press, 1957.
- French, Goldwin S. Parsons and Politics: The Role of the Wesleyan Methodists in Upper Canada and the Maritimes from 1780-1855. Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1962.
- Gaudreau, Marie Agnes of Rome. The Social Thought of French Canada as Reflected in the Semaine Sociale. Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1946.
- Gaustad, Edwin S. A Religious History of America. New York: Harper and Row, 1966.
- Glazebrook, G. de T. The Story of Toronto. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971.
- Gleason, Philip. Catholicism in America. New York: Harper and Row, 1970.
- \_\_\_\_\_. The Conservative Reformers: German-American Catholics and the Social Order. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1968.

- Goheen, Peter. Victorian Toronto 1850-1900. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1970.
- Grant, John Webster. The Church in the Canadian Era. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1972.
- \_\_\_\_\_, ed. The Churches and the Canadian Experience. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1963.
- Gray, James H. The Winter Years. Toronto: Macmillan, 1966.
- Grayson, L. M., ed. The Wretched of Canada: Letters to R. B. Bennett, 1930-35. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971.
- Greeley, Andrew M. The American Catholic, a Social Portrait. New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publ., 1977.
- \_\_\_\_\_. The Catholic Experience. Garden City: Doubleday & Co. Inc., 1967.
- Guittou, Georges. 1891 Une Date dans l'Histoire des travailleurs. Paris: Aux Editions Spes, 1931.
- Hales, E. E. Y. The Catholic Church in the Modern World. Garden City: Image Books, 1960.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Pio Nono. New York: Kenedy, 1954.
- Harkness, Ross. J. E. Atkinson of the Star. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963.
- Harris, W. R. The Catholic Church in the Niagara Peninsula 1626-1895. Toronto: Wm. Briggs, 1895.
- Hickey, John. Urban Catholics. London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1967.
- Hoar, Victor. The Great Depression: Essays and Memoirs from Canada and the United States. Toronto: Copp Clark, 1969.
- Horn, Michiel, ed. The Dirty Thirties. Toronto: Copp Clark, 1972.
- Hughes, Philip. The Popes' New Order. London: Burns and Oates, 1943.

- Hulliger, Jean. L'Enseignement social des évêques canadiens à 1891-1950. Montreal: Bibliothèque Economique et Sociale Fides, 1958.
- Husslein, Joseph Casper, S.J. The Pastor and Socialism. New York: America Press, n.d. [c. 1912].
- Hynes, Samuel. The Edwardian Turn of Mind. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968.
- Inglis, K. S. Churches and the Working Class in Victorian England. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1963.
- Jenkins, Roy. Sir Charles Dilke. London: Collins, 1968.
- Jones, Peter D'A. The Christian Socialist Revival 1877-1914: Religion Class and Social Conscience in Late Victorian England. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1968.
- Kalbach, Warren E. and McVey, Wayne W. Demographic Bases of Canadian Society. Toronto: McGraw Hill, 1971.
- King, W. L. M. Industry and Humanity. Toronto: Macmillan, 1918.
- Laidlaw, Alexander F. The Man from Margaree: Writings and Speeches of Moses M. Coady. Toronto and Montreal: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1971.
- Latham, Allan. The Catholic and National Unions of Canada. Toronto: MacMillan, 1930.
- Latourette, Kenneth. Christianity in a Revolutionary Age. Vols. 1 and 4. Exeter, Devon: Paternoster Press, 1958.
- Leckie, Robert. American and Catholic. Garden City: Doubleday & Co. Inc., 1970.
- Lipset, S. M. Agrarian Socialism: The Cooperative Commonwealth in Saskatchewan. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967.
- Lipton, Charles. The Trade Union Movement of Canada 1827-1959. Montreal: Canadian Social Publications, 1966.
- Lowe, John. Population, Immigration and Pauperism in the Dominion of Canada. Montreal: Dawson Brass [c. 1884].



- Martindale, C. C., S.J. Charles Dominic Plater, S.J.  
London: Harding & More Ltd., 1922.
- McAvoy, Thomas T., C. S. C., ed. Roman Catholicism and the American Way of Life. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1960.
- McCorkell, E. J. Henry Carr -- Revolutionary. Toronto: Griffen House, 1969.
- McEntee, Georgiana Putnam. The Social Catholic Movement in Great Britain. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1927.
- McKeown, H. C. The Life and Labors of the Most Rev. John Joseph Lynch, D.D., Cong. Miss., First Archbishop of Toronto. Montreal and Toronto: James A. Sadlier, 1886.
- McNaught, Kenneth. A Prophet in Politics: A Biography of J. S. Woodsworth. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959.
- Moir, John S. Church and State in Canada West: Three Studies in the Relation of Denominationalism and Nationalism, 1841-1867. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959.
- \_\_\_\_\_, ed. Church and State in Canada 1627-1867.  
Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1967.
- \_\_\_\_\_. The Cross in Canada. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1966.
- Mol, Hans. Identity and the Sacred: A Sketch for a New Social-Scientific Theory of Religion. Agincourt: The Book Society of Canada Limited, 1976.
- Moody, Joseph N., ed. Church and Society (1789-1950).  
New York: Arts Inc., 1953.
- Nearing, Peter. He Loved the Church. Antigonish, Nova Scotia: Casket Printing & Publ. Co., Ltd., 1975.
- Neatby, Blair. The Politics of Chaos: Canada in the Thirties. Toronto: Macmillan, 1972.

- Nell-Breuning, Oswald Von, S.J. The Social Encyclicals Explained: Reorganization of the Social Economy. Translated by Bernard W. Dempsey. Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1936.
- Newman, Jeremiah. Change and the Catholic Church: An Essay in Sociological Ecclesiology. Baltimore, Dublin: Hellicon, 1965.
- Niebuhr, Richard. The Social Sources of Denominationalism. New York: H. Holt and Co., 1929.
- Norman, E. R. Anti-Catholicism in Victorian England. New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1968.
- Nowell-Smith, Simon. Edwardian England, 1901-1914. London: Oxford University Press, 1964.
- O'Brien, David J. American Catholics and Social Reform: The New Deal Years. New York: Oxford Press, 1968.
- Parkinson, Henry. A Primer of Social Science. London: P. S. King & Son, 1913.
- Pegis, Anton C. Basic Writings of St. Thomas Aquinas. 2 vols. Edited and annotated by Anton E. Pegis. New York: Random House, 1944.
- Pelling, Henry. Popular Politics and Society in Late Victorian Britain. London: Macmillan, 1968.
- Perkins Bull, William. From Macdonell to McGuigan: The History of the Growth of the Roman Catholic Church in Upper Canada. Toronto: The Perkins Bull Foundation, 1939.
- Peters, Walter H. The Life of Benedict XV. Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1959.
- Plater, Charles D. The Priest and Social Action. London: Longmans Green, 1914.
- Porter, John. The Vertical Mosaic. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968.
- Prentice, Alison. The School Promoters: Education and Social Class in Mid-Nineteenth Century Upper Canada. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1977.

- Rea, James Edgar. Bishop Alexander Macdonell and the Politics of Upper Canada. Toronto: Ontario Historical Society Research Publication, 1974.
- Read, Donald. Edwardian England 1901-1915. Society and Politics. London: George G. Harrap & Co. Ltd., 1972.
- Ryan, John A. Distributive Justice: The Right and Wrong of Our Present Distribution of Wealth. New York: MacMillan, 1912.
- \_\_\_\_\_. A Living Wage. New York: MacMillan, 1912.
- Safarian, A. E. The Canadian Economy in the Great Depression. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959 and McClelland & Stewart, 1970.
- Senior, Hereward. Orangeism: the Canadian Phase. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1972.
- Shook, Laurence K. Catholic Post-Secondary Education in English-Speaking Canada. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971.
- Spetz, Theobald. The Catholic Church in Waterloo County. Toronto: Catholic Register, 1916.
- Tawney, R. H. Religion and the Rise of Capitalism. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1926.
- Teefy, John, ed. The Archdiocese of Toronto, Jubilee Volume 1842-1892: The Archdiocese of Toronto and Archbishop Walsh. Toronto: George Dixon Publ., 1892.
- Thompson, E. P. The Making of the English Working Class. New York: Pantheon Books, 1964.
- Trevor, Meriol. Prophets and Guardians: Renewal and Tradition in the Church. London: Hollis and Carter Ltd., 1969.
- Troeltsch, Ernst. The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches. New York: Macmillan, 1931.
- Vidler, Alexander R. A Century of Social Catholicism, 1820-1920. London: S.P.C.K., 1964.
- \_\_\_\_\_. The Development of Modern Catholicism. London: P. Allan, 1933.

- \_\_\_\_\_. The Modernist Movement in the Roman Church; Its Origins and Outcome. Cambridge, England: The University Press, 1934.
- Walker, Franklin A. Catholic Education and Politics in Ontario. Toronto: Thos. Nelson and Sons, Canada Ltd., 1964.
- Walsh, H. H. The Christian Church in Canada. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1956.
- Williams, Melvin J., Catholic Social Thought. New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1950.
- Wilson, Bryan. Religion in Secular Society. London: Penguin, 1966.
- Wilson, Edmund. O Canada. New York: Noonday Press, 1962.
- Winsborough, Alfred Canon. Lessons From Life. Bridgend: Pulin Publishing Co., 1974.
- Woodham-Smith, Cecil. The Great Hunger. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1962.
- Young, Walter. The Anatomy of a Party: The National CCF 1932-1961. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969.

## 2. Articles and Pamphlets

- Abell, Aaron I. "The Catholic Factor in the Social Justice Movement", in T. T. McAvoy, Roman Catholicism and the American Way of Life. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1960, 70-98.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Monsignor John A. Ryan: An Historical Appreciation", Review of Politics 8 (January 1946):128-34.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Reception of Leo XIII's Labor Encyclical in America, 1891-1919", The Review of Politics 8 (October 1945):464-495.

- Abella, Irving M. "American Unionism, Communism and the Canadian Labour Movement: Some Myths and Realities", edited by R. A. Preston, in The Influence of the United States on Canadian Development: Eleven Case Studies. Durham: Duke University Press, 1972, 205-225.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The C.I.O., the Communist Party and the Formation of the Canadian Congress of Labour, 1936-1941", Canadian Historical Association Papers (1969):112-128.
- Allen, A. R. "The Social Gospel and the Reform Tradition in Canada, 1890-1928", Canadian Historical Review 49 (December 1968).
- Anonymous editorial. "Are War Debts Usurious?", The Commonwealth (December 1932):197-198.
- Anonymous. "The Catholic Charities of New York", Catholic World, 8 (November 1868):279-285. Reprinted in Aaron Abell, American Catholic Thought on Social Questions. New York: Bobbs Merrill, 1968.
- Appel, John J. "From Shanties to Lace Curtains", Journal of Comparative Studies in Sociology and History 13 (October 1941):365-375.
- Attwater, Donald. "The American Church Today", Dublin Review 3, no. 405 (April 1938):321-335.
- Ballantyne, Murray G. "The Catholic Church and the C.C.F.", Canadian Catholic Historical Association, Report 30 (1963):33-45.
- Barber, Marilyn. "The Ontario Bilingual Schools Issue: Sources of Conflict", Canadian Historical Review 47, no. 3 (September 1966):227-248.
- Baum, Gregory. "Joe Burton: Catholic and Saskatchewan Socialist", The Ecumenist 14, no. 5 (July-August 1976):70-77.
- Belloc, Hilaire. "An Alternative to Capitalism", Studies (December 1925):532-534.
- Berger, Peter. "Sociology and Theology", Theology Today 24 (1967-68):329-336.

- Browne, Henry J. "Peter Dietz, Pioneer Planner of Catholic Social Action", Catholic Historical Review 33 (January 1948):448-456.
- Caplan, G. R. "The Failure of Canadian Socialism, the Ontario Experience 1932-1945", Canadian Historical Review 44 (June 1963):93-121.
- Cappadocia, Ezio. "The Nature of French Liberalism during the Restoration", Canadian Historical Association Report (1961):132-141.
- Choquette, Robert. "Linguistic and Ethnic Factors in the French-Irish Catholic Relations in Ontario", Canadian Catholic Historical Association, Study Sessions 39 (1972):35-43.
- Clifford, N. K. "Religion and the Development of Canadian Society: An Historiographical Analysis", Church History 38, no. 4 (December 1969):506-523.
- Connolly, John J. "Contemporary Recovery Policies Against the Historical Background of Catholic Economic and Social Theory", Canadian Catholic Historical Association Report (1933-34):80-86.
- Cooper, John Irwin. "Irish Immigration and the Canadian Church Before the Middle of the Nineteenth Century", Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Society 2, no. 3 (May 1955):1-19.
- Cross, Michael S. "The Shiners War, Social Violence in the Ottawa Valley in the 1830's", Canadian Historical Review 54 (March 1973):1-26.
- Cullinane, Eugene. "The Simple Truth", offprint originally appeared as "The Catholic Church and Socialism", The Peoples Weekly (1946).
- Downing, Francis. "Catholic Contributions to the American Labor Movement", in Joseph Moody, ed. Church and Society. New York: Arts Inc., 1953, 845-884.
- Dumont, Fernand and Guy Rocher. "An Introduction to the Sociology of French Canada", Marcel Rioux and Yves Martin, eds., French-Canadian Society. Vol. I. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1964, 178-200.
- Duncan, Kenneth. "Irish Famine Immigration and the Social Structure of Canada West", W. E. Mann, Canadian

- Sociological Profile. Toronto: Copp Clark, 1968, 1-16.
- Edwards, Wm. "The MacPherson-Tompkins Era of St. Francis Xavier University", Canadian Catholic Historical Association Study Sessions 20 (1953):49-66.
- Falardeau, Jean-Charles. "The Role and Importance of the Church in French Canada", in French Canadian Society, edited by Marcel Rioux and Yves Martin. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1964.
- French, Goldwin S. "The Evangelical Creed in Canada", W. L. Morton, The Shield of Achilles. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1968, 15-35.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Impact of Christianity on Canadian Culture and Society to 1867", Theological Bulletin 3 (1968): 15-38. Ker Lecture 1967.
- Galbraith, John Kenneth. "The Mandarin Revolution", in The Age of Uncertainty. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1977, 197-226.
- de Grandpré, Rev. Marcel. "Traditions of the Catholic Church in French Canada", in J. W. Grant, The Churches and the Canadian Experience. Toronto: Ryerson, 1963, 1-13.
- Grant, John W. "Asking Questions of the Canadian Past", Canadian Journal of Theology 1 (1955):88-104.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Impact of Christianity on Canadian Culture from 1867 to the Present", Theological Bulletin 3 (1968):39-50. Ker Lecture 1967.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Reaction of Wasp Churches to Non-Wasp Immigrants, 1900-1914", Canadian Society of Church History (1968):1-15.
- Guitton, Georges, S.J. "The Background of 'Rerum Novarum'", America (April 25, 1931):56-57.
- Gwynne-Timothy, John. "The Evolution of Protestant Nationalism", in A. Edinborough and P. Le Blanc, eds., One Church: Two Nations. Toronto: Longmans Green, 1968, 20-53.
- Handy, Robert T. "The American Religious Depression 1925-1935", Church History 29 (March 1960):3-16.

- Hoffman, George. "Saskatchewan Catholics and the Coming of a New Politics", in Richard Allen, ed., Religion and Society in the Prairie West. Canadian Plains Studies 3. Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 1974, 65-88.
- Hollis, Christopher. "Father Coughlin", Dublin Review no. 399 (October 1936):257-268.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Second Spring in English Catholicism", in J. N. Moody, Church and Society. New York: Arts Inc., 1953, 811-834.
- Horowitz, Gad. "Conservatism, Liberalism and Socialism", Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science 32 (1966):143-171.
- Houston, Susan E. "Politics, Schools and Social Changes in Upper Canada", Canadian Historical Review 53 (September 1972):249-271.
- Huel, Raymond. "French-Speaking Bishops and the Cultural Mosaic in Western Canada", in Richard Allen, ed., Religion and Society in the Prairie West. Canadian Plains Studies 3. Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 1974, 53-63.
- Karson, Marc. "The Catholic Church and the Political Development of American Trade Unions 1900-1918", Industrial and Labour Relations Review (July 1951): 527-542.
- Keynes, John Maynard. "The End of Laissez-Faire", in Essays in Persuasion. New York: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1932, 312-22.
- \_\_\_\_\_, et al. "Savings and Usury: A Symposium", The Economic Journal 32 (March 1932):123-137.
- La Pierre, Laurier. "The Clergy and the Quiet Revolution", in Arnold Edinborough and Philip Le Blanc, eds., One Church Two Nations. Toronto: Longmans Green, 1968, 76-81.
- Larkin, Emmet. "The Devotional Revolution in Ireland", American Historical Review 77 (June 1972):625-52.



- Lower, A. M. "Religion and Religious Institutions in Canada", in Canada, edited by G. W. Brown. Freeport, N.Y.: Books for Libraries Press, 1950, 457-486.
- Lucey, Robert E. "Economic Disorders and Quadragesimo Anno", Homiletic and Pastoral Review (May 1935): 858-866.
- Magney, William H. "The Methodist Church and the National Gospel, 1884-1914", The Bulletin, Committee on Archives of the United Church of Canada 20 (1968):3-95.
- Manning, Henry Edward, Cardinal Archbishop. "Leo XIII on 'The Condition of Labour'", Dublin Review (July 1891):153-167.
- May, Henry. "The Recovery of American Religious History", American Historical Review 70 (October 1964):79-92.
- McDougall, D. J. "Cardinal Manning and the Social Problem", Canadian Catholic Historical Association Study Sessions 24 (1957):53-61.
- McGowan, Raymond A. "The American Federation of Labour", Studies 42 (June 1922):296-306.
- McKillop, A. B. "Nationalism, Identity and Canadian Intellectual History", Queen's Quarterly 81, no. 4 (Winter 1974):533-556.
- Meacham, Standish. "The Sense of Impending Clash: English Working Class Unrest Before the First World War", American Historical Review 77, no. 5 (December 1972): 1343-1364.
- Monahan, Arthur P. "Bishop Farrell of Hamilton as a Participant in the Political Life of His Day", Canadian Catholic Historical Association Study Sessions 27 (1960):26-34.
- Morehouse, Frances. "Canadian Migration in the Forties 1840-45", Canadian Historical Review 9 (1928):309-329.
- Morton, W. L. "Victorian Canada", in W. L. Morton, ed., The Shield of Achilles. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1968, 311-333.

- Neatby, Blair. "The Liberal Way: Fiscal and Monetary Policy in the 1930's", in Victor Hoar, The Great Depression. Toronto: Copp Clark, 1969, 84-114.
- Neatby, Hilda. "Religious Liberation -- A Canadian Bi-Centenary", The Chelsea Journal 1 (January-February 1975):41-47.
- O'Donaghue, John C. "Daniel John O'Donaghue, Father of the Canadian Labor Movement", Canadian Catholic Historical Association Report (1942-1943):87-96.
- Oliver, Peter. "Regulation 17: The Resolution of the Ontario Bilingual Schools Crisis, 1919-1929", in Peter Oliver, Public and Private Persons: Ontario Political Culture, 1914-1934. Toronto: Clarke Irwin, 1975, 92-125.
- O'Sullivan, D. A. "The Quebec Act and the Church in Canada", The American Catholic Quarterly Review (1885):601-615.
- Parkinson, Msgr. Henry. "Catholics and the Social Movement", Catholic Mind 6 (1908):175-186.
- Parr, G. J. "The Welcome and the Wake, Attitudes in Canada West Toward the Irish Famine Migration", Ontario History 66 (June 1974):101-113.
- Pelling, Henry. "Religion and the Nineteenth Century British Working Class", Past and Present 27 (April 1964):128-33.
- Pentland, H. C. "The Development of a Capitalistic Labour Market in Canada", Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science 25 (1959):450-461.
- Phelan, Gerald. "Social Reconstruction", The Pamphlet (1933):151-228.
- Plater, Charles, S.J. "A Great Social Experiment", Hibbert Journal 7 (1908):49-62.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Plea for Social Action", Month 3 (February 1908):113-119.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Catholics and Social Action", Catholic Mind (1912):227-254.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Retreats and Reconstruction", Hibbert Journal (July 1920):788-797.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "Retreats for the Working Man", Studies 10, no. 37 (March 1921):97-108.
- Porter, John. "The Economic Elite and the Social Structure in Canada", Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science 23 (1957):376-394.
- Prang, Margaret. "Clerics, Politicians and the Bilingual Schools Issue in Ontario 1910-1917", Canadian Historical Review 41 (December 1960):281-307.
- Purcell, Richard J. "John A. Ryan: 1869-1945", Studies 35, no. 138 (June 1946):153-174.
- Raftis, Ambrose J. "Changing Characteristics of the Catholic Church", in John W. Grant, The Churches and the Canadian Experience. Toronto: Ryerson, 1963, 82-93.
- Rockefeller, John D., Jr. "Labor and Capital-Partners", Atlantic Monthly (January 1916):12-21.
- Ryan, James H. "The National Catholic Welfare Council", Studies no. 45 (March 1923):120-131.
- Ryan, John A. "Anthracite and Ethics", Catholic World 122 (December 1925):297-306.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Bishops' Programme of Social Reconstruction", American Catholic Sociological Review 5 (March 1944):25-33.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Cardinal Mermillod and the Union of Fribourg", America 45 (June 6, 1931):200-201.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Declining Liberty in America", Studies 15 (1926):411-426.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "An Alternative to Capitalism", Studies 14 (December 1925):530-532.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Country Without Strikes", Catholic World 62 (November 1900):145-157.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Declining Liberty in America", Studies (1926):411-426.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Democratic Transformation of Industry", Studies 9, no. 35 (September 1920):383-396.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "High Wages and Unemployment", The Commonweal (January 7, 1931):259-261.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "High Wages vs. Excessive Capital", The Commonweal (February 25, 1931):460-461.
- \_\_\_\_\_. The Living Wage. London: Catholic Truth Society, 1914, 3-20.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "President Roosevelt's Recovery Programme", Studies 22 (June 1933):194-204.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Roosevelt Recovery Programme", Studies 23 (June 1934):219-230.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Senate Looks at Unemployment: Important Facts Which it Failed to See", The Commonweal (October 2, 1929):550-552 and (October 9, 1929):578-80.
- Ryan, William F. "The Church's Contribution to Progress, 1896-1914", in A. Edinborough and P. Le Blanc, eds., One Church: Two Nations. Toronto: Longmans Green, 1968, 82-95.
- Sandwell, B. K. "Saving and Usury: Mr. Keynes and the Canonists", in "Savings and Usury, a Symposium", The Economic Journal 32 (March 1932):131-35.
- Scott, H. A. "The Roman Catholic Church East of the Great Lakes", in Adam Shortt and Arthur Doughty, eds., Canada and its Provinces. Vol. 11. Toronto: Edinburgh University Press, 1913, 11-114.
- Senior, Hereward, "Ogle Gowan: Orangeism, and the Immigrant Question 1830-1833", Ontario History 66-67 (1974): 193-210.
- Shea, Rev. D. S. "The Irish Immigrant Adjustment to Toronto: 1840-1860", Canadian Catholic Historical Association Study Sessions 39 (1972):53-60.
- Smith, Neil G. "Nationalism in the Canadian Churches", Canadian Journal of Theology 9 (1963):112-125.

- Taylor, Arthur J. "The Economy", in Simon Noel-Smith, Edwardian England, 1901-1914. London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1964, 103-138.
- Tucker, Gilbert. "Famine Immigration to Canada, 1847", American Historical Review 36 (April 1931):533-549.
- Walsh, H. H. "The Christian Heritage in Canada", Canadian Journal of Theology (1961-62):271-285.
- Ward, Barbara. "Planned Economy in Catholic Social Thought", Dublin Review 408 (January 1939):85-99.
- Watt, James T. "The Protestant Protective Association: Anti-Catholic Nativism in Canada", Canadian Historical Review 48 (March 1967):45-58.
- Whyte, Donald R. "Religion and the Rural Church", in Rural Canada in Transition, edited by M. S. Tremblay and W. J. Anderson. Ottawa: Agricultural Research Council of Canada, 1970.
- Wilbur, J. R. H. "H. H. Stevens and R. B. Bennett, 1930-1934", Canadian Historical Review 43 (1962):1-16.
- Wright, Anthony W. "Guild Socialism Revisited", Journal of Contemporary History 9 (1974):165-180.

### 3. Dissertations

- Dyster, Desmond B. "Toronto, 1840-1860 -- Making It in a British Protestant Town". Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1970.
- Farrell, John K. A. "The History of the Roman Catholic Church in London". M.A. dissertation, University of Western Ontario, 1949.
- Freeman, James Morton. "Present Issues in Christian Ethics in the Major Protestant Churches with Reference to Changes and Their Cause, 1929-1938". M.Th. dissertation, Union Theological Seminary, 1940.

- Hoffman, George. "The Saskatchewan Election of 1934". M.A. dissertation, University of Saskatchewan, 1973.
- Horn, Michiel. "The League for Social Reconstruction: Socialism in Canada 1932-1945". Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1969.
- Hutchinson, Roger. "The Fellowship for a Christian Social Order: A Social Ethical Analysis of a Christian Socialist Movement". Th.D. dissertation, Victoria University, Toronto, 1975.
- Isbester, Frank. "A History of the National, Catholic Unions in Canada; 1901-1965". Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 1968.
- McCabe, Clarence J. "The Background of Rerum Novarum". M.A. dissertation, Catholic University of America, 1941.
- Prang, Margaret. "Some Opinions of Political Radicalism in Canada Between the Two World Wars". M.A. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1953.
- Skebo, Suzanne. "Liberty and Authority: Civil Liberties in Toronto, 1929-1935". M.A. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1967.

#### 4. Bibliographies, Directories and Statistical Sources

The Canadian Almanac. Toronto: Copp Clark, 1930-1950.

Canada Year Book. Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1912, 1929, 1948-49.

Census of Canada. Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1851-52, 1901, 1911, 1921, 1931.

Historical Statistics of Canada, edited by K. A. H. Buckley and M. C. Urquhart. Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada, 1965.

Battersby's Catholic Directory, Almanac and Registry.  
Dublin:: John Mullany, 1860.

Le Canada Ecclésiastique. Montréal: Librairie Beauchemin  
Limitée, 1901, 1911, 1913, 1916, 1929, 1933, 1935.

The Catholic Directory, Almanac. Milwaukee: M. H.  
Wiltzius & Co., 1901.

The Official Catholic Directory. New York: P. J. Kenedy  
& Sons, 1914, 1933, 1934, 1936.

Sadlier's Catholic Directory Almanac and Clergy List-  
Quarterly. New York: D. J. Sadlier & Co., 1896.

Hoehn, Matthew, ed. Catholic Authors 1930-47. Newark:  
St. Mary's Abbey, 1948.

Catholic Who's Who and Year Book. London: Burns Oates  
& Washbourne, 1924, 1932, 1938.

de Valk, Alphonse, c.s.b. History Collection Canadian  
Catholic Church. Saskatoon: University of  
Saskatchewan, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975.

