

A Crisis of Social Democracy:
Organized Labour and the NDP in
an Era of Neoliberalism

by

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Abstract

The NDP was founded out of the ashes of the Co-Operative Commonwealth Federation to cooperate with the Canadian Labour Congress to become the 'political arm of organized labour' in Canada. The NDP has long claimed they are the party which represents the policy goals of organized labour in Canada: that the NDP alone will fight for trade union rights, and will fight for Canadian workers. *Divergent Paths* is an examination of the links between the labour movement and the NDP in an era of neo-liberalism. Provincial NDP governments have become increasingly neoliberal in their ideological orientation, and have often proved to be no friend to the labour movement when they hold office. The Federal party has never held power, nor have they ever formed the Official Opposition. This thesis charts the progress of the federal NDP as they become more neoliberal from 1988 to 2006, and shows how this trend effects the links between the NDP and labour.

Divergent Paths studies each federal election from 1988 to 2006, looking at the interactions between Labour and the NDP during these elections. Elections provide critical junctions to study discourse - party platforms, speeches, and other official documents can be used to examine discourse. Extensive newspaper searches were used to follow campaign events and policy speeches. Studying the party's discourse can be used to determine the ideological orientation of the party itself: the fact that the party's discourse has become neoliberal is a sure sign that the party itself is neoliberal.

The NDP continues to drive towards the centre of the political spectrum in an attempt to gain multi-class support. The NDP seems more interested in gaining seats at any cost, rather than promoting the agenda of Labour. As the party attempts to open up to more multi-class support, Labour becomes increasingly marginalised in the party. A rift which arguably started well before the 1988 election was exacerbated during that election; labour encouraged the NDP to campaign solely on the issue of Free Trade, and the NDP did not. The 1993 election saw the rift between the two grow even further as the Federal NDP suffered major blowbacks from the actions of the Ontario NDP. The 1997 and 2000 elections saw the NDP make a deliberate move to the centre of the political spectrum which increasingly marginalised labour. In the 2004 election, Jack Layton made no attempt to move the party back to the left; and in 2006 the link between labour and the NDP was perhaps irreparably damaged when the CAW endorsed the Liberal party in a strategic voting strategy, and the CLC did not endorse the NDP.

The NDP is no longer a reliable ally of organized labour. The Canadian labour movement must decide whether the NDP can be 'salvaged' or if the labour movement should end their alliance with the NDP and engage in a new political project.

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Any factual errors in this thesis are mine and mine alone.

Abbreviations

ACN	The Action Canada Network
ACTRA	Alliance of Canadian, Cinema, Television, and Radio Artists
AFL	Alberta Federation of Labour
AUPE	Alberta Union of Provincial Employees
BC	British Columbia
BCFL	British Columbia Federation of Labour
BCGEU	British Columbia Government Employees Union
CAW	The Canadian Autoworkers. (More formally National the Automobile, Aerospace, Transportation and General Workers Union of Canada)
CCF	Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (Farmer-Labour-Socialist)
CEIU	Canadian Employment and Immigration Union
CEP	Communications, Energy, and Paperworkers Union of Canada
CLC	Canadian Labour Congress
CUPE	Canadian Union of Public Employees
CUPW	Canadian Union of Postal Workers
EI	Employment Insurance
EPC	Election Planning Committee
GCIU	Graphic Communications International Union
GST	Goods and Services Tax
IBEW	International Brotherhood of Electric Workers
ILWU	International Longshore and Warehouse Union
IAMAW	International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers
IWA	Industrial, Wood and Allied Workers of Canada
MP	Member of Parliament
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NUPGE	National Union of Public and General Employees
NDP	New Democratic Party
NPI	New Politics Initiative
OFL	Ontario Federation of Labour
OPSEU	Ontario Public Service Employees Union
PSAC	Public Service Alliance of Canada
QFL	The Quebec Federation of Labour
SEIU	Service Employees International Union
SFL	Saskatchewan Federation of Labour
UAW	United Autoworkers. Predecessor to the CAW.
UFCW	United Food and Commercial Workers
UI	Unemployment Insurance
USWA	United Steelworkers of America

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Introduction

While Canada has had independent labour MPs, labour parties and labour progressives, the most electorally viable force for the labour movement has been the New Democratic Party (NDP). The NDP was the successor to the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), Canada's first electorally viable socialist party. While the CCF was openly socialist, it was not a labour party *per se*. Instead the CCF, and the NDP which followed, was a party which attempted to appeal to a broader electoral base: all left-leaning Canadians. In 1961 the CCF joined with the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) to form the NDP. The mandate of this new party was to act as the 'political arm of organized labour', and yet, the party was not an exclusive labour party. The NDP reached out to farmers, left wing academics, and others of the socialist stripe to form an electoral coalition on the left. The NDP has long claimed it is the party which represents the policy goals of organized labour in Canada: that the NDP alone will fight for trade union rights, and will fight for Canadian workers. While the institutional links between labour and the NDP were initially very strong, these links have weakened in an era of neoliberalism.

This thesis examines the relationship between labour and the NDP in an era of neoliberalism, particularly the federal wing of the party. Certain provincial wings of the party have been studied at length: there have been numerous books and articles written about the Ontario NDP¹, and there

¹See, for example, George Ehring & Wayne Roberts, *Giving Away A Miracle: Lost Dreams, Broken Promises and the Ontario NDP*; Stephen McBride, "If you don't know where you're going, you'll end up somewhere else" in William Carroll & R.S. Ratner, *Challenges and Perils*; chapter 8 in Leo Panitch & Donald Swartz, *From Consent To Coercion*, and Thomas Walkom, *Rae Days: The Rise and Follies of the NDP*.

has been some academic work published on the Manitoba NDP², and there has been limited work done on the Federal party³. A general consensus found in recent works on the NDP suggests that the party has become increasingly neoliberal.

In *Rae Days: The Rise and Follies of the NDP* Thomas Walkom details the Rae regime in Ontario, and describes how the party shifted to the right almost immediately after being elected. While the Rae government introduced some limited reforms to the Ontario Labour Relations Act which benefitted labour, the *Social Contract* overshadowed these changes and managed to irrevocably damage the relations between the party and labour (See Chapter 3). Strains between organized labour and the NDP were not limited to Ontario. Perhaps the biggest indicator that Rae was taking the party in a rightward direction was his attempt to reach out to the business community in Ontario to assure them that the NDP would not be the heralds of socialism in Ontario.⁴ Under the leadership of Romanow the Saskatchewan NDP made a strong move to the right, ignoring the SFL's lobbying to remain attached to social democratic policies.⁵ The Saskatchewan NDP became increasingly neoliberal in both policy orientation and in practice. In Manitoba the NDP embraced policies and political priorities that were very similar to those of the Gary Filmon Conservatives.⁶

²See, for example, Joan Grace, "Challenges and Opportunities in Manitoba" in Carroll & Ratner; and Nelson Wiseman, *Social Democracy in Manitoba: A History of the CCF/NDP*.

³Desmond Morton, *The New Democrats 1961 - 1986: The Politics of Change*; Ian McLeod, *Under Siege. The Federal NDP in the Nineties*; Carroll & Ratner, *Challenges and Perils: Social Democracy in Neoliberal Times*.

⁴James Laxer, *In Search of A New Left: Canadian Politics After the Neoconservative Assault*, (Toronto: Penguin Books, 1997), 135.

⁵John W. Warnock, "The CCF-NDP in Saskatchewan" in William K. Carroll and R. S. Ratner, eds. *Challenges and Perils: Social Democracy in Neoliberal Times*, (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 2005), 87.

⁶Joan Grace, "Challenges and Opportunities in Manitoba" in William K. Carroll and R. S. Ratner, eds. *Challenges and Perils: Social Democracy in Neoliberal Times*, (Halifax: Fernwood

In British Columbia the NDP under Mike Harcourt, which was plagued with scandals, adopted a very neoliberal governing style, and reduced “social democracy in B.C. to an unprincipled local-boosterism....Mike Harris with a heart.”⁷ In their book *From Consent to Coercion: The Assault on Trade Union Freedoms* Panitch and Swartz note that the NDP has become increasingly neoliberal both in power and out of power, and has been complicit in eroding union rights in Canada. In English-speaking Canada, social democracy is somewhere between crisis and full-blown retreat.⁸ The provincial wings of the NDP have adopted neoliberalism in both discourse and in practice. The NDP in the provinces has treated unions just like any bourgeois party would, and in some cases have been responsible for some of the worst assaults on union rights.

There are various explanations for the formations and ideologies of political parties, and by extension the reasons for links between labour and the NDP. In the landmark book *Canadian Labour in Politics*, Horowitz argues that “fragments” of European political cultures played a formative role in Canadian political culture. Horowitz suggests that influence of socialism in Canada led organized labour to become affiliated with the CCF (and later the NDP). Horowitz relies heavily on a Hartzian, society-centred, interpretation of Canadian political culture to explain the linkages between labour and the CCF/NDP. In *Crisis, Challenge and Change* Brodie and Jensen take a state-centred approach to party formation. They argue that the party system is largely a facade in which class politics is played out - that the Liberal and Progressive Conservative parties have imposed non-class divisions on the electorate, and that the NDP has failed in defining politics in

Publishing, 2005), 68.

⁷Laxer, *op. cit.*, 142.

⁸Ibid, 144

class terms, mainly for want of trying. Brodie and Jensen suggest that there is no ideological difference between the Liberals and the Progressive Conservatives, and there is not much difference between those parties and the NDP.⁹ In their efforts to maximize votes (as a brokerage party), the NDP seeks to gain the support of organized labour. Alan Whitehorn, who has written extensively on the NDP, has taken a party-centred approach to the NDP. Whitehorn suggests that shifts in NDP policy and ideology is effected by internal party forces such as internal party factions, leadership and rank-and-file members personal politics¹⁰. This thesis takes a political economy approach to the study of political parties, combining elements of the state-centred approach and party-centred approach. The thesis argues that the changing political economy has contributed to shifts in party ideology, which in turn has changed the NDP's approach to organized labour.

Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism is both an ideology and a specific set of policies. As an ideology neoliberalism is built on the ideas of the neoclassical economists, especially those which hold that markets are preferable to states in organizing economic and other matters. Neoliberalism champions the unrestrained economic power of private property.¹¹ Neoliberalism holds that the unfettered free market is the best way to organize an economy, and champions the primacy of the interests of

⁹Keith Archer, "On the Study of Political Parties in Canada" in *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, XXII:2, June 1989.

¹⁰See Keith Archer & Alan Whitehorn, *Political Activists: The NDP in Convention*; Whitehorn *Alexa McDonough and the NDP Gains in Atlantic Canada*; and Whitehorn, *Social Democracy and the New Democratic Party*.

¹¹Stephen McBride, *Paradigm Shift. 2nd Edition*, (Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing, 2005), 11 and Gary Teeple, *Globalization and the Decline of Social Reform*, (Aurora: Garamond Press, 2000), 1

business as the interests of the nation-state.¹²

Programmatically, neoliberalism has a number of policies which modify the political and economic structures of a nation-state in order to better conform to the neoliberal ideology. While each of these policy goals are distinct, they all have a common strand: the principle of corporate private property, and its defence and advancement.¹³ Many of these policies have direct implications for trade unions and the labour movement. Neoliberalism promotes the primacy of private property rights, sees the market as panacea, encourages deregulation of the economy, dismantles the welfare state and circumscribes trade union rights.¹⁴ Neoliberalism constitutes a full frontal assault on trade unions. Fundamentally, neoliberalism seeks to redefine labour-Capital relations to terms more favourable to Capital.¹⁵ This redefinition sees legislative measures designed to weaken trade union freedoms, making it easier to decertify unions and more difficult to organize them. Neoliberal trade union legislation also undermines union rights and union security, recognition, and rules governing union financing. Restrictions banning strikes and expanding the definition of “essential” workers are also part of the neoliberal agenda.¹⁶

Neoliberalism is more, however, than a set of policies and an ideology. Neoliberalism constitutes a full class rule from above, the strengthening of bourgeois control over the political and economic systems. The first step in this class rule is the dismantling of a Keynesian ideology and

¹²McBride, *op. cit.*, 97. Of course, this definition avoids the debate if nation-states are still relevant under neoliberalism and a globalized economy. See Teeple and McBride for more on the relevancy of nation-states under neoliberalism.

¹³Teeple, *op. cit.*, 81.

¹⁴Ibid, 82 - 126.

¹⁵McBride, *op. cit.*, 24.

¹⁶Teeple, *op. cit.*, 118.

ideological hegemony of neoliberalism.¹⁷ Keynesian policy has been abandoned by virtually all industrialized nations, and neoliberalism is now the dominant political ideology in said nations. Indeed, abandoning Keynesian logic is one of the first steps a party takes in transition from social democracy to neoliberalism. Teeple suggests that “neoliberal policies and programs are no mere ideological impositions, able to be reversed with the election of different political parties; they are, rather, the political reflection of the present transformation in the mode of production and the decline of nationally based economic development.”¹⁸ Thus, neoliberalism seeks to become hegemonic, to become the only ideology represented in political discourse in order to solidify itself as the only ‘logical’ way to structure political and economic systems. Neoliberalism, as class rule, is a project to permanently install the capitalist mode of production and to erase all other alternatives. In order for a political party to be electorally viable under neoliberalism this party must, by necessity, begin to adopt neoliberal policies and rhetoric. As political parties conform to this ideology, neoliberalism becomes more and more hegemonic.

Social Democracy and The Labour Movement: Theoretical Considerations

Labour’s influence in the social democratic left, in virtually all western industrialized nations, is in decline. Many social democratic parties in western industrialized nations had links with the labour movement in those countries, but in recent years the labour movements have become increasingly marginalized within social democracy. There are a number of contributing factors to the decline of labour’s influence. The shift towards a service sector economy from a manufacturing economy has hurt labour - the service sector is much harder to organize than manufacturing. This

¹⁷McBride, *op. cit.*, 19

¹⁸Teeple, *op. cit.*, 5

has led to a wide scale decrease in union density in industrialized nations since the late 1970s. The success of the post-war Keynesian compromise has damaged labour. The rising affluence of the working class, made possible by collective bargaining under Keynesianism, has seen the working class shift away from social democratic parties, who have historically supported materialist policies aimed at helping the working poor. Lastly, the onset of neoliberalism has seen a 'material consensus' in modern political discourse; this has caused post-material issues, like identity politics and the environmental movement, to become dominant on the left. As the labour movement is primarily concerned with questions of materialism, the shift towards post-materialism has hurt Labour.¹⁹

While these are all explanation of the symptomatic decline of labour's influence in social democracy, none of them explain the root-cause of the decline; nor can they explain why social democratic parties are in retreat in many western nations. It must be understood that social democracy exists within capitalism, and seeks to moderate capitalism, not replace it with some other form of social order. Capitalism has transformed social democracy more than social democracy has transformed capitalism. Social democracy has abandoned its founding project of socialism and has become an essential component of the capitalist universe.²⁰ Social democracy is then reformist, not revolutionary. Of course, as capitalism changes, so must social democracy as it exists within the capitalist framework.

¹⁹An excellent overview of these variables and how they play into the tension between labour and social democracy can be found in James Piazza, "De-Linking Labor: Labor Unions and Social Democratic Parties under Globalization", *Party Politics* Vol 7, No 4, pp 413 - 435, 2001.

²⁰Gerassimos Moschonas, *In The Name of Social Democracy. The Great Transformation: 1945 to Present*. Trans. Gregory Elliot. (New York: Verso, 2002), 3

After the second world war, social democratic parties successively embarked on a process of doctrinal and programmatic de-radicalization, constituting themselves as parties of ‘all the people’. If there was an anti-capitalist message in social democracy, it was “mere nostalgia.”²¹ Anecdotally this de-radicalization can be seen in the CCF/NDP over time. In 1933 the CCF published the Regina Manifesto²² which called for the nationalization of the commanding heights of the economy and the eradication of capitalism. In 1956, the CCF replaced the Regina Manifesto with the Winnipeg Declaration²³ which called for the CCF to create a mixed economy, rather than the complete abolition of capitalism. Adam Przeworski suggests that socialist movements must ask if the movement “seeks reforms, partial improvements, or if it will dedicate all efforts and energies to the complete abolition of capitalism.”²⁴ Because social democracy *exists within* the capitalist framework, it must not, by definition, seek the abolition of capitalism. Instead, the path that social democracy follows is an attempt to impose a ‘long term compromise on the ruling classes’ of society, which has become embodied in the Welfare State.²⁵ The process of de-radicalization and accommodation of the capitalist mode of production has another profound effect on social democracy - it radically alters the electoral base of social democracy.

By de-radicalizing, social democratic parties seek to address the ‘centrist’ segment of the electorate, to extend their audience well beyond the working class, and to operate as a ‘legitimate’

²¹Ibid, 21.

²²Full text can be found at http://www.economics.uwaterloo.ca/needhdata/Regina_Manifesto.html

²³Full text can be found at <http://www.nwtndp.ca/principles.html>

²⁴Adam Przeworski, *Capitalism and Social Democracy*, (Paris: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 3

²⁵Moschonas, *op. cit.*, 16.

political force within electoral politics.²⁶ Social democratic parties seek support beyond the working class as the prospect of electoral victory became real and ever since then they continued to go back and forth between a search for allies and the emphasis on the working class.²⁷ Przeworski notes that the prediction that the “displaced members of the old middle classes would either become proletarians or join the army of the unemployed did not materialize. Their sons and daughters were more likely to find employment in an office or a store than in a factory.”²⁸ As social democracy sees itself as the only legitimate vehicle for *working class* politics it takes the support of the working class for granted, and campaigns for the votes of *the new middle class*.

By turning to the new middle class social democratic parties must disconnect themselves from the working class. Socialist parties must choose between a party homogeneous in its class appeal but sentenced to perpetual electoral defeats or a party that struggles for electoral success at the cost of diluting its class character.²⁹ Social democratic parties in industrialized nations have chosen the latter path. This has reduced parties of the working class to ‘multi-class oriented, economically reformist electoral parties.’³⁰ As social democratic parties open up their ranks and their policies to the middle classes, a process of class dealignment occurs in the working class - the working class becomes more fragmented, ideologically more undecided and electorally more

²⁶Ibid, 218.

²⁷Przeworski, *op. cit.*, 25

²⁸Ibid, 23

²⁹Ibid, 24

³⁰Ibid, 4

unstable than in the past.³¹ This, in turn, leads to a de-proletarianization of the membership of social democratic parties³²: the class base of social democracy becomes diluted and weakened, and begins to drift away from social democracy itself. This encourages a centrist drift in parties of social democracy. As the working class supports social democracy less and less, parties must open themselves up to other classes more and more. Social democracy itself contributes to the decline of class formation and class identification: Rather than exercising a *positive formative influence* on the construction of working class identity, social democracy exerts an adverse influence through the ‘catch all’ strategy - the working class becomes disorganized.³³

As class identification by the working class becomes less salient, social democratic parties lose their unique appeal to workers. Workers begin to see society as *composed of individuals*; they view themselves as members of collectivities other than class and begin to behave politically on the basis of religious, ethnic, regional, or some other affinity.³⁴ As the working class becomes less involved in social democracy, a second grouping - the salaried middle class - has asserted itself as a pole of support of social democracy. This new pole has two subsets: salaried employees in the public and para-public sector, and intellectual professions that increasingly occupy a privileged position in the social base of the left.³⁵ Social democracy becomes de-linked from the working class: working class ideas and policies are no longer the exclusive interest of social democracy. Social democracy becomes gradually transformed from mass parties into broad based coalition, catch-all

³¹Moschonas, *op. cit.*, 90

³²Ibid, 221

³³Ibid, 306, emphasis original.

³⁴Przeworski, *op. cit.*, 28

³⁵Moschonas, *op. cit.*, 113

parties,³⁶ with emphasis on the new middle classes.

The strategy of opening up to the middle classes has been a constant of social democracy since 1945, but it became much more pronounced under neoliberalism. This strategy has seen the growing influence of the middle classes, and a declining influence of the working class, in social democracy.³⁷ This has a very deep effect on the programs of social democratic parties. The well-educated middle strata, who have become the *de facto* supporters of social democracy, have a strong adhesion to *post-materialist values* and cultural liberalism.³⁸ This leads to an abandonment of specific policies tailored to specific groups and causes across-the-board appeals to ‘consensual values of the whole electorate’. This, in turn, allows for the substitution of electoral criteria for ideological criteria in social-democratic policy making. Moschonas notes that the new social democracy is ‘a more moderate force programmatically and ideologically, moderately neoliberal, moderately non-liberal, moderately ecological and post-materialist, and sometimes moderately law-and-order.’³⁹ This shift to post-materialism has been observed, in particular, in the Scandinavian, Dutch, German, Austrian, Italian, and British social democratic parties.

The appeal to the broader middle class, and the programmatic change, causes a divide between social democracy and organized labour. While the base of unions is confined to people who are (more or less) permanently employed wage earners, political parties must mobilize people who are not members of unions. This causes a tension between organized labour and social democracy, as a social democratic party must appeal to a broader base than the narrower interest of trade

³⁶Ibid, 35

³⁷Ibid, 61

³⁸Ibid, 113, emphasis mine.

³⁹Ibid, 231

unions.⁴⁰ The movement towards a broader, all appealing party, creates distance between unions and social democratic parties; and this distance continues to expand. As the ties between socialist parties and unions become weaker, the margin of freedom the party has to design policy without the input of unions, widens.⁴¹ Perhaps one of the best examples of this ‘loosening’ of ties is the British Labour party in the 1990s. As Tony Blair ‘modernized’ the party, there was an increase in individual membership, as well as in the rights of *individual* members. Individual members now had a stronger impact on policy and direction in the new Labour Party than affiliated trade unions did. This sharply reduced the importance of both activists on the left and of affiliated unions.⁴² While this weakening of links is present in the British Labour party, it has also occurred in European social democracy. An erosion of trade union power, both inside social-democratic parties, and in the broader political economy sense, has reduced union influence in these parties. Further, debates on ‘programmatic renewal’ have seen the last bits of a social democratic ideology abandoned by social democracy itself, leaving unions as the last vestige of social democracy in electoral politics.⁴³ What is more insidious is the targeting of trade unions by revisionists in social democratic parties; trade unions are often targeted as they are symbolically seen as ‘traditional party orthodoxy’.⁴⁴ In a self-defeatist way, the slackening of ties between unions and social democracy has hurt social democratic parties. Parties of a social democratic stripe see their electoral anchorage in the working class. Parties’ activist strength and a significant proportion of their financial means have been directly, though

⁴⁰Przeworski, *op. cit.*, 14

⁴¹Moschonas, *op. cit.*, 125.

⁴²Ibid, 127

⁴³Ibid, 132.

⁴⁴Ibid.

certainly not exclusively, attributed to the synergy of the party and trade unions.⁴⁵

There are a numerous explanations for the linking of organized labour to social democratic parties.⁴⁶ The first suggests that both trade unions and political parties are rational actors who seek to maximize their own utility. Trade unions bring financial contributions and votes to social democratic parties and social democratic parties offer policy commitments to unions. A second model suggests that there is ideological congruity between trade unions and social democracy. This suggests that unions support social democratic parties not only to further their own goals, but to further the goals of social democracy as an ideology. This model also suggests that social democratic parties see trade unions at the forefront of social democracy, and would advance union-friendly policies as part of an overall ideological platform. A political economy model of union-party relations suggests that as the political economy of the time shifts, so will the relationship between social democratic parties and trade unions. As the relative affluence of union members rises, trade unions might de-link themselves from social democratic parties if they feel as if the parties are no longer serve a useful purpose to the union movement. This model suggests that in times of economic downturn and recession, the link will between unions and social democratic parties will be stronger than at times of economic prosperity.

Canadian Labour and the NDP

As noted above, the NDP has shifted rightwards across the political spectrum, becoming

⁴⁵Ibid, 216

⁴⁶Harold Jansen & Lisa Young. "Solidarity Forever? The NDP, Organized Labour, and the Changing Face of Party Finance in Canada." Paper presented to the 2005 Annual Meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, London, Ontario

increasingly neoliberal. This has resulted in the NDP often behaving as “just another party” while in power - treating their supposed union allies as any other political party would. NDP governments in British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario have all introduced back-to-work legislation, bringing a legislative end to legal strikes. Saskatchewan and Manitoba, both have seen successive NDP governments with a legislative majority (most recently from 1991 to 2007 and from 1999 to present, respectively) and neither province has had anti-scab legislation. In Ontario, the *Social Contract Act* was seen as one of the most coercive pieces of labour legislation ever passed by a provincial government. These are all examples, and they are by no means exhaustive, which show that the NDP behaves like any other neoliberal party when in power.

The Federal party has never held power. The party seems trapped as a perpetual third party, never coming close to achieving the level of popular support needed to win enough seats to form a government. Hence, the Federal NDP does not feel the constraints of governing that the provincial wings of the party do, yet, the Federal party is becoming increasingly neoliberal. Indeed, even the discourse of the NDP has become neoliberal. If the party does not have to worry about forming government, as it has been trapped perpetually in third party status, the fact that the party's discourse has become neoliberal is a sign that the party itself is on a neoliberal path.

Elections provide critical junctures to study discourse - party platforms, speeches, and other official documents can be used to examine discourse. Beginning with the 1988 election and continuing with every subsequent election until 2006, the campaigns of both the NDP and organized labour were studied to see how they interact. Most of my research comes from newspaper articles; searches of Canadian Newsstand, a comprehensive database which searches virtually all major daily newspapers in Canada, were conducted for the date range of the campaign period, searching for

newspaper articles dealing with “NDP” and “labour” or “union”. At times it proved difficult to distill facts from the newspaper articles; Many papers in Canada, especially the major daily *National Post*, are exceptionally biased against *both* the NDP and the labour movement.

Content analysis of newspapers articles allows one to see the public face of the NDP. Content analysis, does not, however, account for decisions and policies that the NDP does not choose to make public. The NDP may choose to make promises to organized labour out of the public eye - promises for anti-scab legislation, for example. Clearly, content analysis does not allow for promises made in private. The question must be asked, however, why would the NDP choose to make these promises in private? As a party perpetually trapped in third party (or worse) status, the party should be able make their promises in public.

Interviews were *not* used for a variety of reasons. First and foremost, the NDP was reluctant to assist me in researching for this project. Any attempts to contact party officials or sitting MPs met with passive resistance, and no member of the party would agree to be interviewed. Pat Kerwin, the political action committee director of the CLC during the time period studied for this thesis, was contacted for an interview, but he declined the request. Questions were also raised about the breadth and depth of interviews that would have to be used for this project. There are numerous unions that it would be useful to talk to: CAW, USWA, CUPE, and CEP would be a good starting place. However, there are a great deal of other unions and union centrals that would have to be included in order to give an overall picture of the views of Canadian labour during the period covered. Including interviews with representatives from all unions involved in this study would prove a task too arduous for this project.

Organization of the Thesis

I shall use “NDP” to mean the Federal party, unless I specifically note one of the provincial wings of the party in this paper. I use the terms ‘organized labour’ and ‘the labour movement’ interchangeably in this work, and I operationalize ‘organized labour’ as the CLC and all of its affiliate members. At certain times during the course of my study, the Canadian Autoworkers (CAW) were either suspended or expelled from the CLC. As the CAW has made major impacts in the arena of electoral politics, I include the CAW as part of ‘organized labour’. I define “the era of Neoliberalism” as the time after the Canadian General Election of 1988 to the present. While neoliberalism was certainly present in Canadian politics before the 1988 election, the implementation of free trade subsequent to the 1988 election cemented neoliberalism as the dominant ideology of Canadian political discourse.

The first chapter of the thesis is a historical look at the NDP before 1988. It is not an in-depth analysis, it simply provides an historical background which ‘sets the stage’ for the 1988 election. It deals mostly with the formation of the NDP, and labour’s input into the formation of the party. The second chapter details the 1988 election, an election which saw the best electoral results for the NDP to date. The 1988 election was virtually all about the proposed Free Trade deal with the United States. The Conservatives won the election, and Free Trade became fact. Organized labour was quite critical of the NDP’s performance during that election. The third chapter deals with the 1993 election. The NDP suffered a massive electoral defeat in 1993, and a major contributing factor was labour-NDP relations in the province of Ontario. The NDP had formed provincial government during the early 1990s in Ontario, and had introduced one of the most coercive pieces of labour legislation in Canadian history. The struggle between labour and the NDP largely played out in the 1993 election. The 1997 election, the focus of the fourth chapter, saw a new leader, Alexa

McDonough, lead the party. McDonough had made a concerted effort to 'modernize' the NDP and make a party very similar to the new Labour party of Tony Blair. McDonough was very consciously trying to embrace The Third Way, much to the lament of the labour movement. The fifth chapter details the 2000 general election, which saw the NDP rebound in the polls. Also detailed in the fifth chapter is a pre-election struggle between the CAW and the NDP: Buzz Hargrove, president of the CAW was a vocal critic of the party, arguing it had shifted too far to the centre and needed to re-embrace its working class roots. The sixth chapter deals with the 2004 general election. In the period leading up to the 2004 election the NDP underwent renewal, getting a new leader in Jack Layton who paid lip service to the idea of shifting the party back to the left. Before the 2004 election an internal NDP group, the New Politics Initiative, attempted to re-embrace the labour movement as well as other left wing social coalitions. The New Politics Initiative eventually failed. The last chapter deals with the 2006 election - an election which was a major turning point in labour - party relations. During the campaign for the 2006 election Buzz Hargrove openly endorsed the Liberal Party of Canada, breaking from past tradition of supporting the NDP.

Chapter One: Historical Background

Historical Background

In June of 1961, the Co-Operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) and the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) joined together to form the New Democratic Party (NDP). Essentially, the “new party” was to act as the political arm of organized labour in Canada. Before the formation of the NDP, the CCF had a number of labour-friendly policies, and was essentially seen as the party which supported organized labour in Canada. While the links between labour and the CCF set the framework for the links between labour and the NDP, a discussion of the CCF is outside the scope of this paper. Those interested should read *Canadian Labour in Politics* by Gad Horowitz for a background on CCF - Labour relations. The primary focus of this chapter will be to provide a historical background of Labour - NDP relations from the formation of the NDP to the 1988 federal election. However, this chapter will begin with a brief history of the events and policies surrounding the formation of the NDP.

At the 1958 convention of the Canadian Labour Congress the first steps were taken towards the formation of the NDP. The CLC called for a political realignment.¹ The decisive defeat of the Federal Liberals in the 1958 election seemed to provide an opportunity for this realignment. A committee for a New Party was formed and various groups began contributing to formation of this new party including trade unions, members of the CCF, and ‘New Party clubs’ - groups of citizens interested in supporting the New Party. Many members of the CCF, especially in Saskatchewan, put up great resistance to allowing trade unions to have a role in the creation of the New Party. For the

¹Stanley Knowles, *The New Party*, (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1961), 9.

CCF, trade unions were a way of financial and organizational support; there was a feeling that the CCF wanted labour support, but not labour's participation in the party.² Many members of the CCF felt that the New Party would be completely dominated by labour, and as a result the party would not be able to draw support from farmers and the middle class - two other groups that the New Party was appealing to. Indeed, some CCFers went as far as saying they were "losing the CCF to the Hoffa types".³

Stanley Knowles argues that "the history of the trade union movement in Canada made it inevitable that sooner or later organized Labour would play its part in the legislative life of this country"⁴, hence the linking of the CCF and organized labour was inevitable and good for both parts of the new whole. Indeed, industrial unions wholeheartedly supported the new party; however, there was a great deal of resistance from the more conservative craft unions and building trades.⁵ It is easy to see why industrial unions would support the new party. Besides the promise of having an active political arm to voice Labour issues in parliament, many of the policies of the New Party dealt directly with Labour concerns, or some of the social goals of the labour movement. For example, the importance of the right to strike was discussed, and promises were made that the New Party would support this right.⁶ To see a clear picture of what the NDP would promise organized labour, one needs to look no further than the Study Paper on Program, from 1960. Section Eight, entitled "Security for the Urban Worker", outlines the potential policies of the New Party for organized

²Gad Horowitz, *Canadian Labour in Politics*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968), 203.

³Ibid, 212

⁴Knowles, *op. cit.*, 48

⁵Horowitz, *op. cit.*, 228

⁶Knowles, *op. cit.*, 111

labour:

VIII. Security for the Urban Worker

- a) an adequate national minimum wage
- b) a forty-hour, five day work week
- c) two weeks annual vacation with pay
- d) at least eight paid statutory holidays
- e) union security and the check-off
- f) protection of Labour's basic rights to organize and to bargain collectively
 - Amendment of Canada's constitution to enable the establishment of a national labour code.
 - Increase in benefits and extension of Unemployment Insurance
 - Participation by Labour, as well as by agriculture and the consumers, in government agencies established to plan and guide the economy.⁷

The transformation of the CCF into the NDP was an attempt both to strengthen the labour base of the party and to broaden its appeal to the "liberally minded" elements of the middle class.⁸ This was the first sign that the NDP would become a "big tent" party - a party designed to decimate the Liberals and fill a void on the Canadian Left. However, this also signified one of the first compromises of the NDP: the socialism of the CCF was watered down to the social democracy of the NDP in an attempt to win votes from the centre-Left Liberals. 1641 delegates attended the convention that formed the NDP: 318 from New Party Clubs (19.4%), 613 from trade unions (37.4%), and 710 from the CCF (43.3%).⁹ At the founding convention, Tommy Douglas and Hazen Argue ran for the leadership of the NDP. Argue ran against Douglas charging that Labour had

⁷Knowles, *op. cit.*, 89 - 90.

⁸Horowitz, *op. cit.*, 202.

⁹Desmond Morton, *The New Democrats 1961 - 1986: The Politics of Change*, (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman Ltd., 1986), 23.

dominated the new party, and that this domination was to the detriment of the NDP.¹⁰

Skepticism, however, was not limited to members of the CCF like Argue. Trade unions became reluctant almost immediately to participate in the NDP, arguing that “Political involvement gave business leaders and editorial writers a fresh stick to attack unions.”¹¹ Internal union politics also initially frustrated the link between the NDP and trade unions. Many unions were controlled by communists who refused to affiliate with the NDP. This communist problem was encountered in UAW locals in St. Catharines and Windsor, United Electrical Workers locals in Hamilton, Toronto and Peterborough, and the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers in Sudbury, Trail and Kitimat.¹²

On January 18th, 1962 Argue quit the NDP, claiming that the party had been “captured by a clique of trade unionists”¹³. On June 18th, 1962 the 25th General Election was held, and the Progressive Conservatives were returned to power as a minority government. The outcome of this first election for the NDP saw a definite seat gain over the CCF’s previous showing (the NDP won 19 seats, more than doubling the CCF’s 8 seats of 1958)¹⁴. However, it is difficult to establish whether this was due to the ties with Labour, or was a part of the slow process of the evolution of social democracy in Canada.¹⁵ After the 1962 election, a Gallup poll reported that voters from trade

¹⁰Ibid, 25. Argue subsequently became a Liberal and was appointed to the senate by Lester Pearson.

¹¹Ibid, 29.

¹²Ibid, 31.

¹³Ibid, 32.

¹⁴Elections Canada, History of Federal Ridings since 1867, retrieved from <http://www.parl.gc.ca/information/about/process/house/hfer/hfer.asp?Language=E>, accessed 10 July 2007. 10 of the 19 seats were in British Columbia where the NDP won more seats than any other party.

¹⁵Norman Penner, *From Protest to Power: Social Democracy in Canada 1900 - Present*, (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1992), 95.

union homes had supported the Liberals more than the NDP. 38% of trade union homes voted Liberal, as opposed to 23% for the NDP and 25% for the Progressive Conservatives.¹⁶ Indeed, the NDP placed third in trade union support. This would be indicative of things to come for the NDP: union leadership may support the NDP, but the rank-and-file tend to vote for the traditional parties.

On April 8th, 1963, the 26th General Election was held - this time the Liberals came to power. The NDP won 17 seats, losing two seats and a proportion of the popular vote.¹⁷ After two elections it had become clear that the NDP would not be replacing the Liberals; instead the NDP had been trapped in third party status. It was also apparent that the linking with organized labour had not brought about the electoral breakthrough that was hoped for. The 27th General Election, held November 8th, 1965 saw the NDP grow to 21 seats in the House of Commons. Desmond Morton claimed this was because “in heavily unionized and industrial constituencies the NDP had finally become a force”¹⁸. The 28th General Election of June 25th 1968 saw the NDP win 22 seats. In 1969, one of the most important developments in the history of the NDP occurred: the Waffle Movement was formed.

The Waffle Movement, amongst other things, supported “an Independent Socialist Canada” and were in full support of “industrial democracy”.¹⁹ The Waffle attacked trade union leaders of international unions - these unions, in their mind, stood in the way of an independent socialist Canada. The Waffle discovered, and exploited, a great deal of anti-union sentiment amongst many

¹⁶Morton, *op. cit.*, 38

¹⁷Elections Canada.

¹⁸Morton, *op. cit.*, 67

¹⁹Ibid, 93

of the 'old guard' CCF and some younger members of the party.²⁰ At the same time, the Waffle supported Canadian labour battles, and would participate in them but did so under its own flag, *not* the flag of the NDP.²¹ The Waffle drew support from some of the more radical left wing elements of the labour movement who had rejected the politics of the mainstream labour movement. While dual strategy - oppose international unions and support domestic unions - may seem counterproductive, it did fit in with the Waffle's manifesto for an independent Canada. In January of 1972 the Waffle held its own convention in Windsor in an attempt to gain support amongst trade unions, and many "malcontents" of the trade union movement did show up to this convention.²² Mainstream labour leaders, on the other hand, saw this convention as a distinct threat to democratic socialism in Canada. This is another indicator of certain trade union elements acting as a conservative force within the NDP. Stephen Lewis, the provincial NDP leader in Ontario, attacked the Waffle, claiming that it was a party within a party, and should not exist. While the Waffle fought for its survival, it eventually lost and was purged from the party in 1972.²³ The Waffle affair provided insight into the link between labour and the NDP. First, it showed that there were still lingering feelings of resentment from old CCF members to organized labour's involvement in the NDP. Second, it indicated that organized labour was acting as a conservative element within the party itself.

On October 30th 1972 the 29th General Election was held. The NDP initially made an election issue out of "Corporate Welfare Bums", but this strategy failed and the NDP fell back to traditional

²⁰Ibid, 97

²¹Ibid, 131

²²Ibid

²³Ibid, 134

rhetoric.²⁴ However, the NDP did have its strongest showing up to that point, winning 31 seats overall. For the 30th General Election, in 1974, the NDP campaigned on a party platform centred around “Who Controls Canada”, which attacked corporations. This strategy did not play well to either the media or the public - the party seemed to be simply reusing the Corporate Welfare Bums campaign. During this election, the NDP also introduced an alternative strategy of fighting the Conservative plan for wage and price controls. This strategy was used to try to gain trade union votes.²⁵ This would mark one of the few times the NDP specifically campaigned directly to the interests of organized labour. After the election on July 8th, it became apparent that the new strategies had not worked - only 16 New Democrats were sent to Ottawa. Many of losses were in British Columbia where Barrett’s NDP government had become unpopular; and one of the losses was the seat held by party leader David Lewis. After the election of 1974, Ed Broadbent became the interim party leader. Broadbent, the son of an autoworker in the Oshawa-Whitby riding, had a strong union background although he himself was not a ‘union candidate’ for party leadership.

The relations between trade unions and the NDP, leading up to the 1979 general election, were turbulent at best. In 1974, 9.3 million workdays were lost to strikes. Provincial NDP governments started ordering striking workers back to work.²⁶ There was considerable backlash against this. Trade union support for the NDP dropped off. Formal links between the CLC and the NDP were characterized as ‘frail’ at best.²⁷ The NDP noticed this decline in union support and set out to rebuild grassroots support from the labour movement. This initiative did not have much

²⁴Ibid, 142

²⁵Ibid, 165

²⁶Ibid, 174

²⁷Ibid, 185

success - in 1976 the CLC started an aggressive campaign to fight wage and price controls, and did so without the participation or help of the NDP.²⁸ This rift between organized labour and the NDP during the 1970s culminated in the campaign for the 1979 General Election when organized labour ran a “parallel campaign” disconnected from the NDP campaign to promote Labour’s agenda.²⁹ On May 22nd, 1979, 26 New Democrats (9% of the seats in the House) were sent to Ottawa. The relative success of the NDP in the 1979 election can be attributed to general backlash against the Liberals amongst the Canadian public, as well as the popularity of Ed Broadbent, the new party leader.

During the campaign for the 32nd General Election, held February 18th 1980, the CLC did not run a “parallel campaign”, instead supporting the NDP campaign. The NDP once again increased their seat count, winning 32 ridings, their best showing to date. The 1984 election saw a wave of blue in Canada. Mulroney led the Progressive Conservatives to the largest majority government in Canadian history. The campaign was fought almost exclusively between the Liberals and the Progressive Conservatives, with the NDP being almost totally marginalised. Hence, the 30 seats the NDP won were considered a significant victory for the party. Further, the Liberals only won 40 seats, and it was widely speculated that the NDP could finally reduce the Liberals to insignificance.

At the time of the formation of the NDP, various policy documents suggested that organized labour would play a large role in the New Party, and that the New Party would be fully supportive of the goals of organized labour. However, many of the old CCF members were suspicious of organized labour, and Labour was only a cautious participant in the NDP. The 1970s were a very stressful time for Labour-NDP relations, with organized labour distancing itself from the party. The

²⁸Ibid, 189 - 190

²⁹Ibid, 194

1980s saw a relative surge in support for the NDP. However, there were no indications that the NDP was attempting to rebuild bridges with organized labour.

Institutional Links between Labour and the NDP

The relationship between the NDP and organized labour was theoretically based on the British Labour party. There are some differences in institutional ties that must be highlighted. Union federations, or the national union, affiliates with the British Labour party; but individual unions at the *local* level affiliate with the NDP.³⁰ This suggests that British unions can bring more members, and thus money, to the British Labour party than Canadian unions can bring to the NDP. This also has a bearing on voting during conventions. In the British Labour party affiliated trade unions get one vote per member of the affiliated union. In the NDP trade unions get one delegate per 1000 members affiliated to the union, or major fraction thereof.³¹ Further, the leaders of unions affiliated with the British Labour Party would often vote in “blocks” - casting all the votes for all their members. No such block voting exists in the NDP - trade unionists cast individual votes, and may only cast votes if they are present at the convention. Of course, once the structure of NDP conventions was changed to a modified One-Member-One-Vote system the relative power of unions in the NDP changed as well (See Chapter six).

Another important institutional link to be examined is the process of ‘union book off’ during election campaigns. Before changes in electoral finance laws in 2003 (See Chapter six) trade unions would often book off members during election campaigns to work for the NDP. The trade union

³⁰Keith Allan Archer, *Canadian Unions and the NDP: The Failure of Collective Action*, (Duke University, PhD Dissertation, 1985), 112.

³¹Ibid, 138.

would pay the wages of the member, and this was treated as a donation 'in kind' to the party. A number of workers on NDP campaigns were provided to the party from union book off.

Chapter Two. The 1988 Election

Ed Broadbent was elected leader of the NDP in 1975. The 1988 election would be Broadbent's fourth and last election as leader of the party. Broadbent had a union background - his father was a member of UAW. Broadbent represented the Oshawa riding - a working-class riding with strong ties to the CAW. When Broadbent was elected leader of the NDP, he had the support of the union movement. Union delegates voted in favour of Broadbent at the 1975 convention after "considering the alternatives".¹ During Broadbent's tenure as party leader, the NDP moved towards the centre of the political spectrum. Part of this can be attributed to the neoliberal shift in world politics that occurred during the 1980s, but some of the shift to the political centre can be attributed to decisions made by the party. Polls dictated that in order to gain electoral support, the party needed to avoid economic issues. Because of this, the NDP began to speak primarily on medicare, social programs and environment. The NDP stopped using "us and them" rhetoric and instead pledged to "stand up for ordinary Canadians".²

The NDP held a national convention in 1987 and as was usual, organized labour participated. At this convention union delegates accounted for 17.3% of all the delegates present, up from 12.4% at the 1983 convention.³ A survey of 1987 convention delegates showed that 70% of union delegates thought that union-NDP relations needed to be strengthened, while only 40% of non-union delegates

¹James Laxer. *In Search of a New Left: Canadian Politics After the Neoconservative Assault*, (Toronto: Penguin Books. 1997), 125

²Ian McLeod. *Under Siege. The Federal NDP in the Nineties*, (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1994), 22.

³Keith Archer and Alan Whitehorn, *Political Activists: The NDP in Convention*, (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 1997), 15

agreed.⁴ At the 1987 convention, constituency delegates (ie, not those from the labour movement) retained control of the party - Labour delegates were outnumbered by constituency delegates by a ratio of 10:1.⁵ These figures from the 1987 convention themselves can help explain the events of the 1988 election, and the divide that would occur between labour and the NDP. At the convention preceding the 1988 election, Labour was a marginalised group within the NDP; and many of the non-Labour delegates at the convention thought that the link between the party and organized labour did not need improving. It should be noted, however, that constituent delegates always outnumbered union delegates at NDP conventions. This unto itself could help explain the relationship between labour and the NDP.

Organized labour had the foresight to realize that the Free Trade deal would be an election issue, and had created a labour-nationalist coalition against Free Trade. In 1988, an economist from the coalition sent a letter to NDP leader Ed Broadbent urging the NDP to join the movement against Free Trade. Study sessions for party activists in every region and public forums with party leaders were proposed. None of these suggestions was ever put into effect. The result was a field of New Democrat candidates who were not ready to address the complex issue of Free Trade come election time.⁶ Free Trade would, of course, become the central issue of the 1988 election. Free Trade passed the House of Commons by way of the Conservative legislative majority, but John Turner, leader of the Liberal Party, had the Senate block passage of the bill until after an election was called. This allowed Turner to seize the initiative in opposing Free Trade from the NDP even before the

⁴Ibid, 60.

⁵Ibid, 49 - 50

⁶McLeod. *op. cit*, 92.

campaign period had started.⁷ Thus, from the very start of the election, the NDP had to not only campaign against Free Trade; but also show that they were the party who would be most effective in opposing Free Trade.

With Free Trade clearly shaping up to be the main election issue, the NDP created a pamphlet, which doubled as the NDP platform, entitled “A Fair Deal For Canadians: New Democrats Speaking for Average Canadians”. The main focus of ‘A Fair Deal’ was not opposition to Free Trade, but simply making life better for the ‘Average Canadian’, without ever clearly defining what an ‘Average Canadian’ was. The NDP did commit to some issues that Labour has traditionally supported: a policy of full employment and “better deal” on pensions and old age benefits were featured prominently in the pamphlet.⁸ Explicit promises to the labour movement, however, were not contained within the pamphlet: there was no mention of anti-scab legislation, the labour code was not discussed, nor were there promises to strengthen union rights. The platform did, however, make promises for a “fair deal” for small businesses.⁹ It is indicative of the direction that the NDP was heading for the platform to contain promises to business but not to labour. By omission, perhaps, one can see the image the NDP hoped to present to the electorate: neither the terms socialism nor social democracy were present in the election pamphlet.¹⁰

To supplement the party platform, the NDP released a series of ‘fact sheets’, 26 in all,

⁷Anthony Westell “Setting The Stage” in Alan Frizzel, Jon H. Pammett & Anthony Westell, eds., *The Canadian General Election of 1988*, (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1989), 9.

⁸New Democratic Party, *A Fair Deal for Canadians: New Democrats Speaking for Average Canadians*, 1988 election platform, 2 - 5.

⁹Ibid, 9.

¹⁰Alan Whitehorn, “The NDP Election Campaign: Dashed Hopes” in Frizzell et al., *op cit*, 46.

highlighting specific election promises. The first fact sheet addressed Free Trade. This was the only fact sheet that had any mention of Labour, pointing out that the Free Trade deal “means weakened labour laws and lower wages”.¹¹ While the NDP did not dedicate a fact sheet to Labour, and Labour was not mentioned in more than one of the fact sheets, virtually all of the fact sheets attempted to tie their issue to Free Trade in some way.¹² In another sign of the direction the NDP was heading in the 1988 election, small business did have its own fact sheet, and Labour did not.

The NDP was ill prepared for the 1988 election. The election would be fought almost completely over Free Trade, and the NDP did not anticipate this. Labour, for its part, did. While the NDP did include some talk of Free Trade in its platform, the party did not ready its candidates to campaign on Free Trade. Labour did not receive any explicit promises in campaign material. However, with the inclusion of Free Trade in the NDP’s platform, a key issue for the labour movement was being addressed by the NDP.

Pre-Election and Candidate Selection

The NDP had a strategy of a ‘dream team’ of candidates and targeted ridings to prepare for the 1988 election. The NDP selected 144 ridings, out of 295, for attention. 59 of them were in the west - where the party has been traditionally strong; 39 in Quebec; 35 in Ontario - where the largest

¹¹New Democratic Party, *Mulroney Trade Deal Fact Sheet*, 1988 election material.

¹²The complete list of 26 fact sheets was: The Mulroney Trade Deal, Women and the Mulroney Trade Deal, Women and Reproductive Choice, Women in Rural Areas, Women and Violence, Women and Pay Equity, Women and Taxes, Women and Pensions, Health Care, Canadian Youth, Post-Secondary Education, Immigration, Privatization and Deregulation, Housing, Postal Service, Transportation, Human Rights, The Arts and Culture, Forestry, Canada’s Fisheries, Small Business, Who is Going to Stand Up For You and Your Family’s Interests in This Trade Deal?, Atlantic Canada, Literacy, Seniors and Their Pensions, Energy.

section of the affiliated trade union movement was located; and the rest were from Atlantic Canada.¹³

The NDP approached a number of star candidates to run in 1988: Dave Barrett, Allan Blakeney, Ed Schreyer, Howard Pawley and Stephen Lewis. These stars were past NDP provincial leaders and prominent members of the party. The party seemed to make no attempt to emphasise important members of the labour movement as potential star candidates in the election. The NDP also created a team of key advisors and decision makers to steer during the election - George Nakitsas, Bill Knight, Robin Sears and Arlene Wortsman. None of these advisors had a labour background.

The Election Campaign

The main issue of the 1988 election campaign was the proposed Free Trade deal with the US. Labour was staunchly against the deal, and had spent considerable effort and money before the election campaign publicly criticising the deal. Labour would continue to publicly oppose the Free Trade deal throughout the election - it was the predominant issue for Labour. The NDP, on the other hand, approached Free Trade with ambivalence. When the NDP addressed Free Trade publicly, it linked it to areas on which the party was already seen as strong, such as social programs.¹⁴ Labour was preparing for a single issue campaign; on a single issue which had the labour movement very concerned. The CLC had already spent a great deal of money before the election campaign, and would continue to spend a great deal of money during the campaign to oppose the deal. The NDP, the CLC's 'political arm', provided a lackluster performance in opposing the Free Trade deal. Rather than waging war on an issue of political economy, the NDP was preparing to run a populist

¹³Whitehorn, *op cit*, 47

¹⁴Ibid, 48

campaign: “fairness for the average Canadian”, fairness in taxation, pensions and child care.¹⁵

Very early in the campaign the Quebec Federation of Labour endorsed the NDP. This was especially important considering that the leader of the QFL, Louis Laberge, was considered a close ally of Brian Mulroney.¹⁶ Laberge and the QFL declared that the NDP was the only party who was clearly in opposition to Free Trade. This was a very early boon for the NDP. To be supported openly by a labour organization that had not supported the party before; in a province where the party had almost no support and had never won a seat, was a great step forward for the NDP. Further, to be supported by Labour so early in the campaign indicated that Labour felt the NDP was ‘on message’ on issues important to the labour movement. The NDP would, however, begin slowly to move away from Labour as the campaign went on. Besides the decision to link Free Trade to issues that the NDP was comfortable with (social policy, health care, etc.), the party strategists advised candidates to keep references to controversial matters to a minimum.¹⁷ While these ‘controversial matters’ were primarily NATO, the nationalization of industry and abortion, it also meant that many candidates were unwilling to speak about Free Trade.

In the second week of the campaign, Ed Broadbent took his tour to the CAW stronghold of Windsor. Broadbent told CAW members that the election was “about stopping Brian Mulroney from making Canadians second-class citizens in their own country”, warning that workers will “pay with their jobs” should Mulroney be elected.¹⁸ Broadbent did not stick to attacking Free Trade from a

¹⁵Ibid, 47

¹⁶Hugh Windsor, “NDP wins endorsement of Quebec labour leader”, *The Globe and Mail*, 4 October 1988, A9

¹⁷Whitehorn, *op cit.*, 46

¹⁸Don Lajoie, “Broadbent Skewers Free Trade”, *The Windsor Star*, 13 Oct 1988, A3.

labour perspective, however. The NDP leader highlighted how Free Trade would weaken environmental standards, that social programs would be seen as 'unfair trade advantages', and that regional developmental initiatives would be stopped.¹⁹ Broadbent then went on to promise child care credits and baby bonuses. This campaign stop is indicative of the strategy the NDP would employ throughout the campaign. While the NDP may have been arguing against Free Trade, the message was not limited to 'stop Free Trade, vote for the NDP'. Instead, other issues were discussed - issues which never caught on as election issues. Further, the NDP attempted to link Free Trade to almost everything the federal government had jurisdiction over. Rather than staying concise, this strategy clouded the Free Trade issue, and would ultimately distract the NDP more than it would help the party. Early on in the election, however, the NDP was conveying a message that was analogous to the message Labour was conveying.

In the third week of the campaign the NDP continued its strategy of opposing Free Trade, while linking Free Trade to the demise of social programs. On the strength of this campaign the NDP received endorsement from the Graphic Communications International Union (GCIU). The GCIU had historically been silent on political matters, indeed, this would mark the first time the GCIU endorsed a candidate or political party in an election. Duncan Brown, the Canadian coordinator for GCIU, told the CLC that his union would federally back the NDP.²⁰ The endorsement came exclusively out of the NDP's opposition to Free Trade. In the same week the CLC, with 2.2 million members, the CAW, with 160 000 members and the OFL, with 650 000 members (including

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Peter Edwards, "trade pact battle puts labor [sic] solidly behind NDP", *Toronto Star*, 20 Oct 1988, A30.

most of the same 160 000 of the CAW) all endorsed the NDP on the basis that the party was in opposition to Free Trade.²¹ By the third week of the election campaign, the NDP had the endorsement of the CLC, the OFL, the QFL, the CAW. The vast majority of Canadian organized labour had publicly endorsed the NDP all because the NDP was in opposition to Free Trade.

The fourth week of the campaign saw the leaders' debate. This would be the point in the campaign where the NDP began to veer away from the message that Labour was promoting. In the debate, Mulroney and Turner argued almost exclusively about Free Trade, with Turner opposing the deal. Broadbent, however, spoke on many different issues (while trying to link them in some fashion to Free Trade). Indeed, when Broadbent was addressing Free Trade he chose to address it in terms of potential damage to social programs, not in regards to the potential damage to manufacturing and industry.²² It appeared as if Turner was doing a better job of opposing Free Trade than Broadbent was. While Broadbent did spend some time arguing against Free Trade, he was not focussed exclusively on the trade deal. His defence of social programs, while familiar and safe territory for the NDP, did little to address why Labour was so concerned with Free Trade. After the debate individual candidates began to take Broadbent's lead - opposition to Free Trade was linked to a number of other issues - mostly social programs. Individual candidates now spent more time campaigning on the environment, child care, social issues and NATO, rather than campaigning on the evils of Free Trade.²³ Labour's message was now being diluted or ignored by the individual candidates of the NDP.

²¹Ibid

²²Terrance Wills and Jennifer Robinson, "Debate turns into shouting match; PM, turner clash over patriotism in nasty exchange over trade deal", *Montreal Gazette*, 26 Oct 1988, A1.

²³Don Lajoie, "Three sides claim debate win", *The Windsor Star*, 26 Oct 1988, A3

The fifth week of the campaign saw the Canadian Union of Postal Workers endorse the NDP. Jean-Claude Parrot urged his 23 000 members to vote for the NDP. Not because of Free Trade, though; the NDP had promised to fight a Conservative plan to close 5221 post offices and to privatize other post office operations.²⁴ This was an interesting development. First, it shows that the NDP was continuing to drift away from Free Trade as an election issue. However, it shows that the NDP was responsive to another issue that a particular union was concerned with. Opposing privatization has always been a strong point for NDP policy - it is something the party has always done. Courting votes from the labour movement by opposing privatization is natural for the NDP. It must be noted, however, that this endorsement by CUPW was the only significant development for the NDP in the fifth week of the campaign; and while it was an endorsement from a trade union, the NDP was ignoring the main issue of the election campaign.

The sixth week of the campaign saw the NDP make promises to the public sector, and by extension, public sector unions. A group of local candidates in the Ottawa area pledged that the NDP would 'never lay off public servants'.²⁵ Ottawa Centre candidate Michael Cassidy made the promise, and said the promise was backed by the national party. Cassidy stated the "public service should not be used as a whipping boy by a federal government intent on importing American practices such as privatization, deregulation and contracting out".²⁶ This is a continuation of the trend to make promises to individual unions in order to secure votes. While the promise was not explicitly made to a public sector union the message was undoubtedly targeted towards these unions.

²⁴The Globe and Mail Staff, "Election Briefs", *The Globe and Mail*, 4 Nov 1988, A10

²⁵Nicole Baer, "NDP hopefuls vow to protect all public service jobs", *The Ottawa Citizen*, 9 Nov 1988, E1.

²⁶Ibid

Instead of a cohesive attack on Free Trade, the NDP had changed tactics; using messages specifically tailored towards one union or a specific type of union. The NDP cannot be faulted for attempting to garner votes from the labour movement; however, the strategy must be questioned. In the sixth week of the campaign, the NDP was ignoring the major issue of the campaign, an issue that was of paramount importance to the labour movement, and instead was making small, scattered promises to different unions.

The sixth week of the campaign also saw the NDP change strategy towards Free Trade. Ed Broadbent began campaigning against Turner. Broadbent had always said that Mulroney and Free Trade would bring the values of Wall Street to Ottawa, and now Broadbent was claiming that Turner would simply replace the values of Wall Street with the values of Bay Street.²⁷ This, however, was in direct contradiction to Labour's strategy. Turner and the Liberals were ostensibly in opposition to Free Trade, just as the labour movement was. At a public address the same day Broadbent made his comments about Turner bringing Bay Street values to Ottawa, Bob White of the CAW said "there's no point in me hammering John Turner".²⁸ While Broadbent was attacking Turner, White was attacking Mulroney. Earlier in the week, many businesses had begun a campaign of scare tactics by having employers send letters to workers warning of dangers if the Free Trade deal was defeated in the election.²⁹ White was responding to this publicly, attacking both Mulroney and Free Trade. Even when Broadbent and the NDP were attacking Free Trade they were also attacking the Liberals.

²⁷Martin Cohn, "Turner's values under attack as Broadbent alters strategy", *Toronto Star*, 8 Nov 1988, A3.

²⁸Lorne Slotnick, "PC tactic 'despicable', auto union chief says", *Globe and Mail*, 8 Nov 1988, A21.

²⁹Ibid.

At a rally where Broadbent decried Free Trade because it would threaten ‘jobs, social programs and farmers’, he also said that “Turner attacking business was like hearing Wayne Gretzky denounce hockey”.³⁰ Near the end of the election campaign Labour and the NDP had very divergent strategies. Labour was keeping to its original message: oppose Free Trade and do not vote for Mulroney. The NDP had gradually switched tactics away from opposition of Free Trade to linking Free Trade and social programs, to finally ‘don’t vote Liberal’. While the NDP would never *encourage* anybody to vote Liberal, both the Liberals and the NDP opposed Free Trade: if the NDP was truly in opposition to Free Trade, the party should have concentrated its energy in campaigning against the Conservatives. Of course, this would mark a strategic difference between labour and the NDP. Broadbent was right about the Liberals - the Liberals are simply another bourgeois party looking out for the interests of business. If the NDP was interested in promoting labour’s agenda and defeating Free Trade, the party should have ignored the Liberals, but, if the party was attempting to replace the Liberals, Broadbent’s strategy made sense.

In the seventh and final week of the campaign the NDP had fallen to third place in the polls, and was still searching for an election strategy. The NDP was still not paying much attention to Free Trade in the final days of the campaign, while the Free Trade issue was virtually all the Liberals and Conservatives were campaigning on. By the final week of the campaign many anti-Free Trade voters were planning to bypass the NDP and turning to the Liberals.³¹ Even though the NDP was in third place and losing popular support Broadbent continued with the strategy he had been using for the

³⁰Terrance Wills, “Laberge delivers as 1700 turn out for Broadbent”, *Montreal Gazette*, 15 Nov 1988, A1

³¹Martin Cohn, “Broadbent clings to outdated strategy”, *Toronto Star*, 13 Nov 1988, A16.

latter half of the campaign.

In the final few days of the campaign, Broadbent began to portray himself as the defender of ‘Main Street’ and ‘Ordinary People’. Early in the final speech of his campaign Broadbent conceded he probably would not form a government and said the party was “doing our best to win the hearts and minds of ordinary people”.³² Broadbent also made a campaign speech saying that in the remaining week of the campaign the party had “the intention of showing it is Main Street that ought to set the priorities”³³. This almost totally ignored the issue of Free Trade. Broadbent was using a form of implicit economic nationalism in an attempt to win votes, but he did not explicitly speak out against Free Trade. Further, Broadbent was setting himself up as the defender of small business. In the final weeks of the campaign, the NDP had turned its back on labour twofold. First, the party was ignoring Free Trade, the issue Labour had identified as its main concern. While the Liberals and the Conservatives were making campaign speeches about Free Trade the NDP was ignoring the issue. Second, by supporting small business, the party was ignoring the interests of the labour movement. “Main Street” does not see high union densities; nor does it often see manufacturing or the public service: areas which have high rates of union density.

At a PSAC rally during the last week of the campaign, members of PSAC attacked Conservative MP Claudy Mailly, MP for Gatineau. The PSAC members were upset with the Conservatives for previous attempts to de-index pensions, lagging contract negotiations, and Free

³²Ottawa Citizen Staff, “Broadbent no longer talking of victory”, *The Ottawa Citizen*, 14 Nov 1988, A4

³³Terrance Wills, “Only NDP can represent ‘Main Street:’ Braodbent”, *Montreal Gazette*, 14 Nov 1988, A6.

Trade.³⁴ PSAC had a national strategy to defeat 25 Conservatives in swing ridings. At this same rally the NDP Candidate, Marius Tremblay, spent most of his time attacking the Liberals, *not* the Conservatives. Tremblay argued that the Liberals could not be trusted as the party had instituted wage and price controls.³⁵ While PSAC was running an anti-Conservative campaign, the NDP was still campaigning against the Liberal party. Further, the thrust of the argument against the Liberals was what the party had done in the past - wage and price controls³⁶ - not what the issue of the current election - Free Trade.

In the Nova Scotia riding of South Shore the local campaign was turning to issues of importance to the labour movement. Free Trade was not the talk of South Shore, but manufacturing was. The state of manufacturing in Canada has always been of interest to organized labour. The manufacturing sector has one of the highest union densities and the trickle down effects of manufacturing create additional jobs. In South Shore the Liberal and Conservative candidates were campaigning on the extension of manufacturing in the region; while the NDP candidate was stressing the importance of environmental protection and good transport infrastructure.³⁷ Certainly, the NDP candidate could have mentioned that Free Trade seriously threatened manufacturing. This would have caused the NDP candidate not only to be “on message” about Free Trade, but also be

³⁴George Kalogerakis, “Candidates grilled by PSAC”, *The Ottawa Citizen*, 16 Nov 1988, B1

³⁵Ibid

³⁶It should be noted that Labour was antipathetical to wage and price controls; and that these controls constituted a direct assault on collective bargaining rights. While attacking the Liberals over wage and price controls makes a certain degree of sense, this election was clearly not the time to do it; especially as the control had ended about ten years previously.

³⁷Peter Kuitenbrouwer, “Development, transit are top election issues”, *Montreal Gazette*, 17 Nov 1988, G1.

contributing to the debate on local issues in a meaningful way.

By the very end of the campaign organized labour had distanced itself from the NDP, quite possibly because of the failure of the NDP adequately to address Free Trade. Labour was still attempting to persuade workers to vote for the NDP, but the efforts were described as “no-pressure, soft-sell”.³⁸ Both Labour and the NDP were playing down the relationship between the two. Ron Johnson, the BC organizer for the NDP, said that Labour’s support for the NDP was “a pretty low-key sort of thing. They’re not an integrated part of our campaign”.³⁹ Gordon Larkin, of the CLC, said “we don’t try to tell our members how to vote. That wouldn’t work,” and speaking of Labour’s campaign during the 1988 election, “It’s separate and distinct from the NDP campaign. We have our own issues, our own agenda, our own program.”⁴⁰ “Separate and distinct” is possibly the best way to describe the relationship between Labour and the NDP during the 1988 election. Labour was concentrating on opposition to Free Trade. From very early in the campaign the NDP retreated to the traditional safe ground of defending social programs.

Election Outcome and Fallout

In the general election of 1988 produced the best results the NDP had ever seen. 43 NDP MPs were elected, an record setting high for the party. The NDP’s campaign had focussed on social justice, an area where the NDP has always been comfortable campaigning. Conversely, the NDP avoided in-depth campaigns on the economy and an industrial strategy.⁴¹ The high seat count for the

³⁸Tom Barrett, “Labor soft-sells New Democrats: Low-key campaign sensitive to ‘special interests’ charges”, *The Vancouver Sun*, 19 Nov 1988, A17

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Harvey Schachter, “A Difficult Choice for Canada’s Future”, *Kingston The Whig-Standard*, 19 Nov 1988, 1

party can partially be attributed to Ed Broadbent's personal appeal as Broadbent had always been more popular than the party. Further, by simply situating themselves on the "no Free Trade" side of the election, the NDP secured votes from voters opposed to Free Trade. It was, however, the Free Trade issue which caused the most problems for the NDP.

The 1988 election has always been called "The Free Trade Election" by scholars of Canadian political science. Free Trade was the dominant issue of the 1988 election, to the point where almost nothing else was campaigned upon by either the Conservatives or the Liberals. While the NDP was opposed to Free Trade, the party spent a great deal of time and energy campaigning on a variety of other issues (social policy, health care, women in politics, etc.) While these are important issues to consider, and are generally safe policies for the NDP, they did not capture the attention of the Canadian population during the election campaign. Ultimately, this cost the NDP votes as voters opposed to Free Trade drifted to the Liberal party. Had the NDP concentrated solely on Free Trade, it is quite possible they could have gained more seats, possibly surpassing the Liberals. Defeating the Liberals was a goal of the party from the start of the campaign, especially given that the NDP was polling *higher* than the Liberals at the start of the campaign.⁴²

Organized labour had been concerned about Free Trade since before the election writ was dropped. Labour had identified Free Trade as a major election issue, and was prepared to campaign against it. During the course of the election campaign, Labour ran an anti-Free Trade campaign, and never deviated from that message. Labour leaders, in both the public and private sector, voiced their opposition to Free Trade and condemned the Conservative party as the heralds of Free Trade. Labour publicly supported the NDP as it was also ostensibly against Free Trade, and while it did not

⁴²Westell, *op cit*, 43

endorse the Liberals, Labour did not publicly speak out against the Liberals. Labour's strategy was quite divergent from the NDP's.

The result of the election, a Conservative legislative majority, was the exact opposite of what labour had hoped for. Because of this, and because of the NDP's strategy during the election, labour was infuriated with the party. Bob White, of the CAW, and Gerard Docquier, of The Steelworkers, both complained that Broadbent had avoided labour issues and labour events during the campaign, in an attempt to grab votes from the political centre.⁴³ White described the NDP campaign as "disastrous" and said that "labour's financial and people support is accepted gratefully, but its ideas and leadership are completely ignored".⁴⁴ Many rank-and-file CAW members also felt that the NDP had let down the labour movement. White claimed "I've never seen such a level of disappointment and anger among our activists. There is a common thread in the frustration, and that is the NDP, our party, never really came to grips with the importance of Free Trade".⁴⁵ For his part, Docquier condemned the party for a betrayal of principles and for allowing polls to dominate the party's strategy.⁴⁶ Docquier's conclusion about the 1988 election campaign is perhaps the most concise and correct explanation of what happened during the campaign: "the link between the trade union movement and the party at the strategic level has failed completely".⁴⁷

The NDP and labour were almost at cross purposes during the 1988 election. Organized labour was looking to defeat the Free Trade agreement at any costs; as it was feared that Free Trade

⁴³McLeod, *op cit*, 24.

⁴⁴Whitehorn, *op cit.*, 51

⁴⁵McLeod, *op cit*, 25

⁴⁶Whitehorn, *op cit*, 52

⁴⁷*Ibid.*

would damage the job market, especially in the relatively heavily unionized manufacturing sector. While the NDP opposed the Free Trade agreement, the party was more interested in replacing the Liberal party than it was defeating Free Trade. At the start of the campaign, this looked as if it would be possible for the party to do, but in the end the NDP was still stuck as the third party. In order to replace the Liberals, the NDP shifted towards the centre. The party campaigned on a multitude of issues, most of which were traditional safe areas for the NDP: social programs and health care, for example. The party was also making an attempt to become an even bigger 'umbrella party' - something that would be critical to replace the Liberals. In this endeavour, the party reached out to small business, whilst sidelining labour.

The party platform contained no explicit promises to labour, but it did contain a number of promises to small business. In the 26 fact sheets released about the election, one was dedicated to business, but none were dedicated to labour. Finally, the rhetoric of both official party documents and of Broadbent himself took a more neoliberal bent. Both the party and the leader began speaking of 'average Canadians' and 'ordinary Canadians'; a clear sign that the party had no interest in campaigning to even 'working families' let alone the working class.

Chapter Three: The 1993 Election

The NDP had high hopes for the 1993 federal election. In 1988, the previous election, the party won an all time high of forty-three seats. With the NDP holding power in Ontario, BC and Saskatchewan, the NDP had big expectations for 1993. The election would, however, end in disaster for the party. The NDP would drop from forty-three seats to nine, suffering one of its worst losses ever. This election also saw the rift between organized labour and the NDP greatly expand. With labour perceiving that the NDP had not done enough to fight free trade in 1988, and the massive betrayal of Labour by the NDP in Ontario (see below), segments of labour began to remove its support from the party. Many of the major unions, both in the public and private sector, were hesitant to help the NDP. During the election period, labour and the NDP started with a similar campaign, opposition to NAFTA, but soon the NDP would diverge from this message, becoming bogged down in a myriad of other issues. Near the end of the campaign, labour and the NDP would both focus their sights on the Reform Party. The election would, however, be a disaster for the NDP electorally, seriously straining the relationship between the party and Labour.

The Ontario Effect

Before a proper analysis of the 1993 federal election can be undertaken, the Ontario NDP and its Social Contract legislation must first be examined. Ontario has the most number of seats in the House of Commons; success in Ontario often translates as success across Canada during a federal election. In the Ontario provincial election of 1990, Bob Rae and his New Democrats won a somewhat surprising majority government. Within a year, the Ontario NDP ushered in a sweeping set of changes to the province's labour laws. Bill 40 extended the right to organize to agricultural workers, extended picketing rights to property of third parties, created massive restrictions on the

use of replacement workers, and strengthened the powers of the Ontario Labour Relations Board.¹ The labour movement in Ontario finally thought that they had an ally in Queen's Park. However, the honeymoon between labour and the Ontario NDP was short lived.

The Ontario NDP faced dire economic circumstances when it was elected: the province was in the middle of a major recession coupled with very high unemployment. To be sure, these conditions were not limited to Ontario - every single capitalist economy was facing the largest economic depression since The Great Depression of the 1930s.² The economic forecast for 1993 - 1994 projected a provincial deficit between \$5 billion and \$17 billion.³ The Ontario NDP soon fell into the neoliberal logic of balancing the budget. Reducing the deficit - at any cost - soon became the primary economic goal of the Rae government. The *Social Contract Act* (Bill 48) was Rae's answer to the deficit. It was also one of the most coercive pieces of labour legislation ever introduced in Ontario. The Social Contract instituted a three year wage freeze on 900 000 public employees and a wage rollback of 5%, an initiative designed to cut \$2 billion from the government payroll. This 5% cut was to be taken in the form of twelve days of unpaid leave, dubbed "Rae Days". The Social Contract enacted these 'reforms' on previously negotiated collective agreements. The NDP had opened up collective agreements during the term of the agreement, unilaterally changing their terms.

The Social Contract constituted nothing less than a full frontal attack on trade union rights. Trade unions were dually outraged - not only had the government assaulted unions, it was an NDP

¹Leo Panitch & Donald Swartz, *From Consent To Coercion: The Assault on Trade Union Freedoms*, (Aurora: Garamond Press, 2003), 168 - 169.

²Ibid, 165.

³Ibid, 172.

government - it was labour's supposed *friends* that were instituting *The Social Contract*. Perhaps the largest insult was not the coercive measures contained within the Social Contract, but that the NDP was opening up previously negotiated collective agreements. CUPE, OPSEU, and CAW, as well as many other unions in both the private and public sector, were outraged. Many unions moved away from the NDP; unions cut back financial support, attacked the NDP in the media, and many key Labour officials resigned from their posts in the NDP. The Social Contract was introduced on July 7th, 1993, and the fallout was felt by the Federal NDP throughout the 1993 election campaign.

Leading Up To The 1993 Campaign

The 1988 federal election had produced the best results the NDP had ever seen. However, in the five years between the two federal elections, there was a worldwide loss in the confidence of social democracy.⁴ Perhaps this is most evident when looking at the attempts of the academic vanguard of the Canadian left to “renew” social democracy in Canada. These renewal efforts often contained an explicit call for the NDP to move away from the labour movement. Various academics were calling on the NDP to create “a new manifesto with no CLC bureaucrats to reconcile, no feminist, ecological or other progressive interest groups to appease”.⁵ While the NDP was created as the explicit political arm of organized labour, some were calling labour a “special interest group” within the NDP, and calling on the NDP to move away from special interests within the party.⁶

⁴Ian McLeod, *Under Siege. The Federal NDP in the Nineties*, (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1994), vi.

⁵Henry Milner, “What Canadian Social Democrats need To Know about Sweden and Why” in John Richards, Robert D. Cairns & Larry Pratt, eds., *Social Democracy Without Illusions: Renewal of the Canadian Left*, (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Inc, 1991), 59.

⁶John McCallum, “Economics and the New Democratic Party: Confessions of a One-Time NDPer” in in John Richards, Robert D. Cairns & Larry Pratt, eds., *Social Democracy Without Illusions: Renewal of the Canadian Left*, (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Inc, 1991),

The NDP did undergo a renewal of sorts. The party had a new leader in Audrey McLaughlin, a social worker and business consultant from the Yukon. However, labour had an uneasy relationship with McLaughlin. In the race to succeed Broadbent, none of the candidates had a labour background. Bob White, of the CLC, was deeply troubled by this. After McLaughlin entered the race, White told a union conference that “A strong leader doesn’t guarantee success, but a weak leader guarantees failure”.⁷ The Steelworkers were critical of McLaughlin during the leadership race: “she didn’t deliver. There was no substance. She was vacuous.”⁸ Even the rank-and-file trade unionists were hesitant to support McLaughlin. At the leadership convention, a trade unionist criticized her from the floor: “Can you imagine *her* addressing a bunch of miners in Temiskaming? Can you imagine them getting up and cheering for her? Who does Audrey have on her side, anyway? A bunch of yuppie white wine drinkers!”⁹ McLaughlin would not only be the party’s first female leader, she would also be the first female leader of a major federal party. The election of McLaughlin as leader of the party also made an implicit statement of the direction the party was heading: from 1971 to 1989 the party was led by a leader with a strong union background, first in Lewis then in Broadbent. McLaughlin would be the first NDP leader in eighteen years who had no ties to the labour movement.

McLaughlin was key in authoring the NDP’s platform for the 1993 election: *Canada Works When Canadians Work*. Subtitled “A Strategy for Full Employment”, the fifteen page document highlighted the NDP’s commitment to jobs and job creation. The platform was co-authored by the

192.

⁷McLeod, *op. cit.*, 29.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid, 30. Emphasis original.

Policy and Issues Group - an internal NDP committee - and Labour was invited to help write the platform. Dave Mackenzie, from the Steelworkers, was part of the Group and helped to write the platform. Mackenzie asked numerous trade union officials for ideas, although he later noted that he “didn’t always get a lot of useful stuff”.¹⁰

Jobs and the job market comprised the first ten pages of the platform. While job creation was familiar territory to the NDP, the party’s economic credibility was severely damaged by the debt, deficit, and unemployment in Rae’s Ontario.¹¹ The platform contained a number of commitments to small business and independent commodity producers, but notably *did not mention* the labour movement at all. The platform did, however, contain promises to small business. The NDP promised to scrap the GST as it “hurt ordinary Canadians and small businesses.”¹² The NDP had implicitly ‘blamed’ the unemployed for the bad economic conditions in Canada. Further, the party was buying into the neoliberal logic of deficit reduction and tax cuts.

The Pre-Election Period

Even before the campaign began, the NDP faced a great deal of opposition from Labour. The first instance of this was the Langdon affair, which occurred during the spring of 1993. On April 28th, 1993, Windsor MP Steven Langdon announced to the Federal NDP caucus that he would publically criticize the Rae government. The caucus asked him to wait: other members did not want to face public pressure as to why they did not speak out against Rae (or Romanow or Harcourt, for

¹⁰Ibid, 95

¹¹Alan Whitehorn, “The NDP’s Quest for Survival” in Alan Frizzell, Jon H. Pammett & Anthony Westell, eds., *The Canadian General Election of 1993*, (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1994), 48.

¹²New Democratic Party, *Canada Works when Canadians work: A Strategy for Full Employment*. 1993 election platform, 7

that matter). Langdon went ahead and issued his public statements against Rae. In response, the caucus moved to fire him as finance critic. However, the caucus was divided - some members supported the firing, and some agreed with what Rae was doing. In the end, McLaughlin decided to fire Langdon. In response, Bob White, the president of the CLC, said McLaughlin was trying to “put a blanket” over internal disagreement.¹³ The Langdon affair points to two general trends that were occurring within the Federal NDP. First, there was an implicit statement that somebody who criticizes Rae should not hold power in the caucus. This indicates that on some level, the Federal party supported what Rae was doing to Labour in Ontario; and that the Federal party approved of the way Rae was handling Ontario’s finances. The unwillingness of the Federal party to speak out over Rae shows that there was an acceptance and even tacit approval of Rae’s policies. Second, the labour movement came to the defence of Langdon, but it was ignored by the party establishment. This shows that the party had little or no interest in Labour’s input regarding important decisions.

The pre-campaign in Ontario was marked by constant heckling of McLaughlin by enemies of Rae. By this point, Rae had tabled the Social Contract, and was facing intense opposition from public sector unions in Ontario. McLaughlin faced constant attacks from unionists for what Rae was doing. McLaughlin responded that she saw “no need to distance herself” from Rae.¹⁴ McLaughlin also faced severe opposition in the prairie provinces. Many of the Western elements in the NDP felt that the Federal party was selling itself out to Ontario Labour.¹⁵ This was exacerbated by the fact that much of the Western protest vote was flocking to the Reform Party.¹⁶ The party was caught

¹³McLeod, *op. cit.*, 63 - 64

¹⁴Ibid, 104

¹⁵Ibid, 106

¹⁶Whitehorn, *op. cit.*, 43

between a rock and a hard place. In Ontario, the Federal party was criticized for not supporting the labour movement. The party had implicitly supported the Social Contract, which in turn showed that the Federal party was moving away from organized labour. For its part, labour was still unhappy with the party for not speaking out against Rae. Out west, the Federal party was facing internal opposition for being *too closely* tied to labour, and was losing votes to the right because of this.

Perhaps the biggest pre-election indication of degenerating link between labour and the NDP came during an event called “Reclaiming Our Future”, a CLC hosted demonstration on Parliament Hill. The CLC budgeted \$120 000 for the event, and many unions spent a great deal of money bringing buses and trains of delegates to the event. In the end, more than 60 000 people were told by Bob White that politicians were not on the side of working people. White made no exceptions to this statement. McLaughlin was on the stage, but White had promised a non-partisan event, so the NDP leader was not invited to speak.¹⁷

The Election Campaign

Unlike the 1988 General Election, labour did not have a specific campaign issue they were promoting during the 1993 campaign. Besides the usual policies that labour looks for in an election campaign - anti-scab legislation, stronger certification laws, etc. - labour was campaigning heavily on opposition to NAFTA. Labour opposed NAFTA for a number of reasons, but the ‘race to the bottom’ of wages and workplace standards were the main grievances the labour movement was citing. Labour was looking to the NDP to campaign on an “anti-NAFTA” stance. Very early on in the campaign, it was apparent that NAFTA had not caught the public’s attention. Because of this,

¹⁷McLeod, *op. cit.*, 124.

NAFTA was reduced to marginal comments in McLaughlin's speeches.¹⁸ The decision to shelve NAFTA was made very early in the campaign - thus sidelining one of Labour's key issues in the election campaign. One must ask though, if it was the initial shelving of the NAFTA issue that caused it to escape the imagination of the public. Late in the campaign, one NDP candidate mused, "NAFTA does not make it as an issue"¹⁹, and at the same time, the director for Centre for Policy Alternatives suggested that NAFTA was not the make-or-break issue for the NDP that the party once thought it would be.²⁰

In concurrence with the NDP decision that they could not campaign on NAFTA, the campaign on jobs fell apart. Early in the campaign, Jean Chretien unveiled the Red Book on Job Creation, and the NDP's job policy was totally eclipsed. Almost instantly, the NDP had lost all the ground they had gained on job creation.²¹ Without NAFTA and job creation, the NDP campaign fell back on the old rhetoric of attacking the rich and the powerful, and "corporate lobbyists".²² Of course, this was not the direction Labour wanted to see the election campaign to head.

From very early in the campaign, Labour had some voice in the day-to-day operations of the campaign. Each Saturday the Strategy and Election Planning Committee's Steering Committee met to discuss progress on the campaign, and to direct the next week of campaigning. Several labour representatives were present for these meetings.²³ There is little evidence, however, to suggest that

¹⁸Ibid, 110

¹⁹Peter Morton, "Despondent NDP fights just to stay alive", *Financial Post*, 23 Oct 1993,

²⁰Ibid.

²¹McLeod, *op. cit.*, 110

²²Ibid, 111.

²³Whitehorn, *op. cit.*, 45

labour issues were brought up on the campaign trail. During the first week of the campaign, the NDP issues were the job losses threatened by NAFTA and the NDP Job Plan.²⁴ Very early in the campaign, the Federal NDP began to feel the backlash against Bob Rae. On September 17th, Sid Ryan, president of CUPE Ontario, announced that instead of donating money and workers directly to the Federal NDP, CUPE would have provincial leadership select a few candidates for direct support.²⁵ This is a definite signal that labour, or at least CUPE, was moving away from the NDP. No longer would the NDP receive unwavering support from CUPE; only those candidates who were openly labour-friendly could count on labour money. In Ontario, CUPE was only willing to donate money to candidates who “openly criticized Rae’s cuts and who had a chance of winning”²⁶ - only five or six candidates received CUPE’s support in Ontario. In Windsor, a CAW town, NDP candidate Howard McCurdy had Wayne Samuelson, a staffer with and future president of the Ontario Federation of Labour, as his campaign manager. Samuelson did his best to distance McCurdy from Rae saying “ultimately, the election is about Howard and the kinds of federal issues he represents”.²⁷

Early in the campaign, Bob White, president of the CLC, spoke to the Manitoba Federation of Labour. He urged union members in Manitoba to maintain support for the NDP, saying it was the best choice to push labour issues such as job creation, fair taxation and opposition to NAFTA. White did note, however, that the NDP was a ‘tough sell’ to unionists after the Social Contract, but

²⁴Ibid, 51

²⁵Leslie Papp, “Election 1993: Anti-Rae backlash taking its toll”, *The Windsor Star*, 17 sept 1993, A1FRO

²⁶Ibid

²⁷Chris Vander Doelen, “Election 1993: The changing face of the NDP: Rae Factor keeps ‘em guessing”, *The Windsor Star*, 22 Sept 1993, A1FRO

he urged union members not to “take out their frustrations with the Ontario New Democrats on the Federal party”.²⁸ Thus, from the very early stages of the campaign, the NDP was dogged by Bob Rae, and his attacks on the labour movement. The fallout from *The Social Contract* seems not to have been confined to just Ontario - trade unionists across Canada were hesitant to support the NDP.

For week two, the NDP switched focus to attacking ‘excessive corporate profits’ and the need to defend social programs²⁹ - safe and familiar territory for the NDP. By the start of the second week of the campaign, labour and the NDP had drifted even farther apart. While some union leaders were still endorsing the NDP, the rank-and-file members of trade unions that normally supported the NDP were expressing reservations. After McLaughlin addressed the Manitoba Federation of Labour, many trade unionists expressed their concerns about her: “we’re just concerned at this point that Audrey maybe isn’t getting the media attention that she deserves”; “She’s doing a good job on issues like health care, but in her opposition to free trade I think her policies might result in just as much unemployment as there is now”.³⁰ The usual safe ground for the NDP, health care, was resonating well with NDP supporters, but the NDP was not doing well with labour issues. It appears that very early on in the campaign, the NDP had stopped campaigning on the issues the labour movement had deemed “important”. This resulted in some movement by trade unionists away from the NDP: “most delegates will probably stay with the NDP, but there is also growing support for the Liberals. People in labour here have been getting more involved with the Liberal party”.³¹ By the end of the first

²⁸Star News Services, “Election 1993: White solidly backs Federal NDP”, *The Windsor Star*, 24 Sept 1993, D10

²⁹Whitehorn, *op. cit.*, 51

³⁰William Walker, “Manitoba unionists applaud NDP with worried frowns” *Toronto Star*, 27 Sept 1993, A14

³¹*Ibid.*

week of the campaign, it was apparent that NAFTA and the jobs plan were not resonating with the public.

In the second week of the campaign, the NDP suffered a major blow when the Action Canada Network endorsed strategic voting. ACN was an organization, comprised of over fifty affiliates including the large and powerful CLC, who opposed NAFTA. ACN was campaigning for a Liberal minority with the NDP holding the balance of power. In order to achieve this goal, the ACN was endorsing Liberals and members of the Bloc Québécois.³² Having the CLC openly endorse non-NDP candidates was a very strong indication that the labour movement had totally lost confidence in the NDP to promote labour issues. It is significant to note that this movement away from the NDP by the CLC had nothing to do with the Social Contract.

At the start of the third week of the election campaign, the NDP once again switched tactics. They now concentrated on the Senate, the GST, tax loopholes for the rich, and unemployment.³³ While the NDP had stopped campaigning on NAFTA, the labour movement was still trying to make it an issue. Bob White, in a special editorial to the *Toronto Star*, said that “Canadians are paying the price for ‘the corporate agenda’,” and are “reeling from the effects of free trade, deregulation and privatization”.³⁴ It is obvious that very early in the election campaign, organized labour and the NDP were on divergent paths. Labour, for its part, began campaigning on saving social programs, which the NDP was attempting to make an issue. The CLC’s chief economist, Andrew Jackson, released a report which openly worried about the future of social programs, no matter who won the election.

³²Gord McIntosh, “Free trade foes hope for Liberals in power with help from NDP”, *Victoria Times*, 23 Sept 1993

³³Whitehorn, *op. cit.*, 51

³⁴Bob White, “Canadians reeling over free trade”, *Toronto Star*, 27 Sept 1993, A1

The report suggested that both the Conservatives and the Liberals would slash spending on social programs in order to get to a zero deficit.³⁵ Labour's campaign on social issues was short lived. Just as social issues totally eclipsed the NDP's campaign, Labour moved away from the issue.

The NDP had shifted to the familiar ground of defending social programs. Tied in with this, the NDP went on the offensive, attacking the Reform party. Attacking Reform is an interesting strategic move for the NDP. On the prairies, the NDP could have conceivably lost protest votes to the Reform party, but as was previously highlighted above, the NDP was in danger of bleeding votes to the Liberals. Much later in the election campaign, Labour would also campaign against Reform, at which point the campaigns of labour and of the NDP would begin to converge. Considering that some trade unionists were considering voting Liberal, the NDP's attacks on Reform could be considered misguided. Even when speaking to trade unionists about the dangers of Reform, McLaughlin did so in the context of social programs: "if you want to destroy medicare, vote Reform".³⁶ It was popular consensus that Reform would slash social programs, and could even open the door for private hospitals and private health insurance. This was certainly a threat to the Left, but more threatening was the fact that Reform was also ruthlessly anti-union. While McLaughlin's attacks on Reform were warranted, she might have had more success with a two-tiered approach. Many Canadians both inside and outside the labour movement were concerned about the potential damage Reform could do to medicare, while one can surmise that it would be mostly trade unionists who were concerned about what Reform would do to union rights. McLaughlin could have attacked

³⁵Alan Freeman, "Social programs face radical cuts in order to eliminate the deficit, 'a lot of former sacred cows will no longer be sacred'", *The Globe and Mail*, 27 Sept 1993, B1

³⁶David Roberts, "Election '93: NDP leaks 'secret' document McLaughlin says she has proof of Tory plan to slash social programs", *The Globe and Mail*, 27 Sept 1993, A1

Reform's position on medicare in public, while when talking to members of the labour movement she could have highlighted the potential damage Reform would do to unions.

While the NDP was attacking Reform on social spending, Bob White was giving a ruthless critique of the political economy of the Canadian state: "for over a decade, a peculiar and damaging ideological strain has infected the political leadership in the U.S., Great Britain, and Canada. Its cornerstone has been that government must relegate itself to the role of bystander and facilitator of market forces".³⁷ This is yet another indicator of the different campaigns that Labour and the NDP were running. White was concerned about the future direction of the economy as a whole, afraid of "unemployment, personal and small-business bankruptcies, poverty, inequality and insecurity"³⁸ while McLaughlin and the NDP were focussed on social programs and social spending.

The end of the third week of campaigning saw a series of blows that damaged the relationship between Labour and the NDP. First, The Quebec Federation of Labour, which was once sympathetic to the NDP, endorsed the Bloc Quebecois and abandoned the NDP.³⁹ The Bloc had done a better job of tapping into the issues that were important to the Quebec labour movement than the NDP had. While the NDP has historically had problems winning in Quebec, seeing a provincial Labour Federation endorse another party is a major symbolic blow to Labour-NDP ties. Next, NDP candidates in Ontario once again faced backlash from the Social Contract. In Oshawa the CAW formally withdrew all support from NDP candidate Mike Breaugh. Oshawa is a heavily unionized

³⁷John Davidson, "Labor chief White decries 'rule by multinationals'", *The Montreal Gazette*, 28 Sept 1993, A7

³⁸Ibid

³⁹Jean-Claude Leclerc, "Marginalization of NDP supporters", *The Windsor Star*, 29 Sept 1993, A10. Of course, this was the first election that the Bloc had existed.

riding with over 22 000 CAW members. The CAW refused to give any support, either money or workers, to Breaugh.⁴⁰ This was indicative of the general feeling of unionists towards the NDP.

In Windsor, another CAW town, both McLaughlin and White gave speeches to CAW members. After the speeches, White expressed to the press that it was becoming increasingly difficult to get union members to “forget their differences with the provincial party and back the McLaughlin team”.⁴¹ The NDP campaign was still being dogged by Rae’s government both inside and outside of Ontario, the criticisms being harshest from inside the province. The Federal party was also facing a massive backlash in BC, where the NDP held power provincially. The NDP was attacked in BC’s press: “The NDP have simply lost their credibility. They are no longer the effective voice for change in this country.”⁴² Besides dealing with past failings, the NDP’s campaign was divergent from the campaign of the labour movement. Labour was still focussing on free trade and job losses, while the NDP was campaigning strongly on social programs. This is not to suggest that the labour movement did not care about social programs - Labour simply felt that NAFTA was a more pressing and current issue.

At the start of the fourth week of the campaign, the NDP settled on social programs as their main issue for the campaign. The advertisements and general message of the campaign switched to ‘elect the NDP to preserve medicare’.⁴³ Again the NDP was campaigning on an issue that was

⁴⁰Mark Kennedy, “Oshawa set to give NDP bumpy ride”, *The Ottawa Citizen*, 2 Oct 1993, A3.

⁴¹Ian Timberlake, “White urges labor to stick to NDP”, *The Windsor Star*, 2 Oct 1993, A3.

⁴²Judith Lavoie, “Federal NDP taking rap for provincial troubles: MP Hunter asks UVic”, *Victoria Times*, 30 Sept 1993.

⁴³Whitehorn, *op. cit.*, 51.

divergent from labour's strategy. Early in the fourth week, Preston Manning began to attack the NDP. In the style of Reform's politics, his attacks cast himself as the populist heir to the NDP, rather than making overtly ideological statements. Manning stated that "[party co-founder Tommy] Douglas would never recognize today's NDP because it has been hijacked by big labour".⁴⁴ It appears that neither organized labour (perhaps in the form of the CLC or any of the 'big unions') nor the NDP responded to this comment. Labour should have taken this as an opportunity to promote their agenda in contrast to the agenda of Reform. The NDP, for its part, could very well have used this as a chance to publicly defend Labour and attempt to repair some of the damage that had been done to the Labour-NDP link during the 1993 election campaign.

Seeing members of trade unions vote for right wing populist parties is not a phenomenon unique to the Canadian experience. Gerassimos Moschonas notes that as social democratic parties start to see an erosion in working class penetration, and as the working class identifies less with social democracy, working class votes tend to slip to 'traditional bourgeois parties or new right-wing parties'.⁴⁵ In his study of European social democracy, Moschonas found that the working class has increasingly started to vote for the new extreme right.⁴⁶

The attacks by trade unionists on the NDP in Ontario were relentless. Clarence Williams, an NDP candidate in the Windsor area, was being criticized by rank-and-file union members in Windsor: "The first thing they say is 'I'm done with the NDP'. They figure Bob Rae is the cause

⁴⁴Brian Laghi, "Manning casts himself as heir to NDP; Taps into western discontent", *Edmonton Journal*, 2 Oct 1993, A3.

⁴⁵Gerassimos Moschonas, *In The Name of Social Democracy. The Great Transformation: 1945 to Present*. Trans. Gregory Elliot, (New York: Verso, 2002.), 99 - 100

⁴⁶Ibid, 225

of all their problems. They're just mad as hell and that's all there is to it".⁴⁷ Many voters in Windsor were unprepared to vote NDP, if they were going to vote at all. Williams, however, was unapologetic for Rae: "They should be damned glad they've got a job".⁴⁸ Williams described public servants, and other trade unionists, who were upset about the Social Contract as being engaged in 'endless whining'. It is shocking to see a New Democrat in a union town so vehemently in favour of the Social Contract. It is also, perhaps, an indicator of exactly what the NDP was expecting in Windsor: unwavering support for the party by trade unionists, regardless of what the NDP had done. Williams clearly did not understand the grievances that labour had with the Social Contract.

At the end of the campaign, the main battleground for the NDP became British Columbia. With ten days left in the campaign, the BC Federation of Labour officially endorsed the NDP.⁴⁹ It is perhaps telling that in a campaign as long as this one, it was not until the final days of the campaign that the official endorsement came from the BCFL. In BC, as well as the other provinces, the NDP was losing 'protest votes' to the Reform party. In the final few days of the election campaign, the BC Government Employees Union sent a letter to all members of that union urging them to support federal NDP candidate and former premier Dave Barrett⁵⁰. This was an especially interesting move for the BCGEU, given that Barrett had clashed with public sector unions while he was premier from 1972 to 1975. With three days left before the election, the BCFL released a leaflet 'urging union members thinking of voting Reform to closely scrutinize the party's policies and

⁴⁷Gord Henderson, "Trying to fan socialist embers", *Windsor Star*, 14 Oct 1993), A8

⁴⁸Ibid

⁴⁹Frances Bula, "Union attack on Manning comes on party's turf", *Vancouver Sun*, 15 Oct 1993, A6.

⁵⁰Les Leyne, "Federal Election '93", *Victoria Times*, 23 Oct 1993, 1

statements'.⁵¹ The leaflet focussed on Reform's policies that would affect unionized workers: increasing UI premiums, cutting UI benefits, eliminating UI maternity benefits, eliminating the minimum wage, and cutting old-age pensions.⁵² The pamphlet, while highlighting labour issues, called upon union members to *not* vote Reform without explicitly calling on these members to vote NDP. This can be seen as an implicit endorsement of strategic voting, which shows, on some level, a loss of faith in the NDP. If the BCFL felt that the NDP was truly the best party to defend these worker's issues, the Federation would have included an explicit statement of support for the NDP.

With two days left in the election campaign, BCFL president Ken Georgetti began speaking out against Reform. Georgetti was concerned that Preston Manning supported the "apparently racist and intolerant views" of some Reform candidates in BC.⁵³ This would mark the first time in the campaign since week one that Labour and the NDP were sending a similar message: "don't vote Reform". However, the reasons for this message were different. The NDP was concerned that Reform would destroy public health care and other social programs; Labour was concerned that Reform would do serious damage to worker's rights, and undo many of the statutory minimums in labour and employment law. At the same time, Labour was highlighting how some individual Reform candidates had views which were "un-Canadian": racist, or intolerant. Thus, while the message that Labour and the NDP were each sending was the same, the substance of the message was different. While the preservation of Health Care was certainly a pressing issue, preservation of worker's rights should certainly be a pressing issue for the NDP as well. It is difficult to say,

⁵¹Judith Lavoie, "Federal Election '93" in *Victoria Times*, 22 Oct 1993, 1

⁵²Ibid

⁵³Jeff Lee & Francis Bula, "You're responsible for your candidates, labor leader tells Manning", *Vancouver Sun*, 23 Oct 1993, A15.

however, whether the NDP was ignoring the message Labour in BC was sending, or if the NDP simply did not have enough time left in the campaign to echo the concerns of Georgetti. With a few days left before election day, another anti-Reform pamphlet created by Labour surfaced. The pamphlet, created by the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour and reproduced and distributed by the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation attempted to link Preston Manning to the KKK. The pamphlet included a drawing of a Canadian flag shaped into a Klan-style hood over a man's head beside a caption reading "Preston Manning's New Canada".⁵⁴ Labour seemed to be very concerned about the possibility of Reform being elected, or at the very least having a much louder voice in Ottawa. The strategy of linking Reform to racism would perhaps create a much more impassioned response from voters than a pamphlet outlining how Reform would attack unions. That said, the Labour movement did speak out against Reform's labour policies, while the NDP did not.

In the last two days before election day, a number of newspaper pieces appeared which did not help the NDP's chances in the election. The articles highlighted some of the real problems with the link between labour and the NDP. The *Toronto Star* ran an article saying that some New Democrats are "unhappy about union dominance in the party and some labour leaders are unhappy about propping up the NDP"⁵⁵. The same article noted that Bob White, of the CLC, had 'mused' about unions abandoning political parties and forming alliances with other social groups.⁵⁶ This certainly speaks volumes about the relationship that existed between Labour and the NDP, and perhaps showed exactly what Labour thought of the campaign that the NDP was running. Labour's

⁵⁴The Montreal Gazette, "Pamphlet linking Reform to KKK doesn't warrant charges: police", *Montreal Gazette*, 23 Oct 1993, A9.

⁵⁵Thomas Walkom, "NDP must find a new role", *Toronto Star*, 23 Oct 1993, B5.

⁵⁶Ibid.

musings about abandoning the NDP mere days before the election is a sign of a massive lack of confidence in the NDP's ability to support the labour movement. On the same day, the *Vancouver Sun* published an article by well known journalist and author Richard Gwyn claiming that the NDP had become "the chosen political instrument of all the country's special interest groups: environmentalists, feminists, gays and lesbians, racial minorities, and native peoples".⁵⁷ It is interesting to note that labour is *not* included in the list of special interests: instead, the list is comprised of mostly groups which would fall into the category of 'identity politics'. If, indeed, these groups had taken over the NDP, it is possible to see why Labour was such a marginalised voice within the party during the 1993 campaign. The article also claimed that a number of professionals and public servants had moved away from the NDP to the Liberals in order to defeat the Conservatives; and that a number of blue-collar workers in union towns had moved to Reform to vote a protest vote.⁵⁸

After The Vote: Election Outcome, Analysis and Conclusions

The NDP won nine seats in the 1993 election. Perhaps the only consolation to the party was the complete collapse of the Progressive Conservatives - reduced from a majority government to just two seats. The NDP was locked out of Ontario - where a large proportion of the affiliated trade unions were from. Indeed, the NDP captured only 6% of the popular vote in Ontario.⁵⁹ Steven Langdon, who openly criticized Bob Rae, was not elected; nor was Clarence Williams, who openly defended Rae. While Langdon would eventually blame his defeat on Bob Rae and the Social

⁵⁷Richard Gwyn, "Special interests ensure that little about the NDP interests voters", *The Vancouver Sun*, 23 Oct 1993, A16

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹McLeod, *op. cit.*, 113

Contract⁶⁰, it appears the Federal party did not do enough to distance itself from the Ontario wing. It is obvious that the Federal party's inaction towards condemning actions of NDP provincial governments helped lead to electoral defeat. If the NDP was serious about supporting Labour, or even serious about being a contender in the 1993 election, the party should have openly criticized Bob Rae from the first day of the election campaign.

The NDP had also lost its position as the 'protest party' of the viable parties at the Federal level. After the NDP's support of the Meech Lake Accord and the Charlottetown Accord there was a growing perception that the NDP had become part of the political establishment, and the protest vote was gravitating away from the party.⁶¹ These protest votes, in part, were moving to the Reform Party. This, in part, contributed to the loss of popular support for the NDP.

Labour, for its part, seemed to be almost completely shut out of the NDP campaign. While the NDP started out campaigning on NAFTA, an issue important to Labour, the party quickly abandoned NAFTA to paint itself as the defender of social programs. McLaughlin did, however, appear at a number of labour rallies and events organized by unions. The NDP was counting on the support of union workers during the campaign, as well as financial support from the labour movement. Perhaps Bob White summarized the NDP position towards labour during the 1993 election quite succinctly: "the NDP welcomed union money and organizers, but ignored labour issues when the TV crews arrived".⁶² During the campaign, Labour seemed very hesitant to support the NDP; possibly because of the Rae government, or possibly because the NDP was ignoring

⁶⁰Ibid, 63

⁶¹R. Kenneth Carty, William Cross and Lisa Young, *Rebuilding Canadian Party Politics*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2000), 68.

⁶²Ibid, 118

Labour. CUPE provided direct support to 'Labour friendly' candidates, not the NDP as a whole. CUPE was indicating, quite correctly, that the party itself was not friendly towards labour but that the party drew candidates who were. The CAW withdrew support from the NDP, even in heavily unionized cities like Oshawa and Windsor. With a strategy similar to strategic voting, the Public Service Alliance of Canada donated \$200 000 to candidates who could defeat the Conservatives; in Quebec that meant supporting the Bloc instead of the NDP.⁶³ In British Columbia, the BC Federation of Labour endorsed the NDP and the BCGEU endorsed NDP candidate Dave Barrett. The NDP did not fare well in BC, and Dave Barrett did not retain his seat.

Perhaps the reason the NDP was so reluctant to condemn the provincial wings of the party was due to the internal organization of the NDP. The Federal party has no organization of its own - it is merely a federation of provincial parties, and depends totally on their support at election time.

At the end of the 1993 election, Labour and the NDP were at a crossroads. For Labour, the relationship clearly was not working. Labour had been betrayed at the provincial level, and the Federal party was not willing to distance itself from the provincial wings. The NDP was still looking for Labour's manpower and financial support, but the party did not seem to be campaigning for Labour issues to any meaningful extent. Buzz Hargrove, of the CAW, began to muse about his union moving away from the NDP: "The vast majority of labour law changes in Ontario have come from Liberal or Tory governments. We can't be worse off with them than we are today. We've had less input with the NDP than with the Tories and Liberals"⁶⁴. At the same time, some other private sector unions were thinking the exact opposite. The Steelworkers and CEP, for example, were still

⁶³Greg Watson, "More grudge than strategy in union's anti-Tory votes", *The Ottawa Citizen*, 24 Oct 1993, A2

⁶⁴McLeod, *op. cit.*, 127

supportive of the NDP, pointing out ‘whatever the villainy of the Rae, Harcourt, or Romanow governments it is very clear that there are no other union- or worker-friendly parties waiting in the wings’.⁶⁵ The 1993 election was starting to show that the relationship between labour and the NDP was beginning to break down. Neither the NDP nor Labour was completely comfortable with the relationship between the two.

It is obvious that *The Social Contract* played a very important role in the defeat of the NDP. The party should have clearly addressed this issue early on in the campaign if they were expecting to win seats in Ontario. Besides the obvious problems of the *Social Contract* labour and the NDP shared a differing opinion on NAFTA. While NAFTA would not turn out to be as big as an election issue as the Free Trade agreement of 1988, it was still an issue of importance to labour. Labour started out campaigning on defeating NAFTA, as did the NDP. Early on in the campaign, the NDP abandoned NAFTA and chose to campaign on issues that were traditional safe ground for the party: namely the defence of social programs. Labour continued to campaign against NAFTA long after the NDP had abandoned it, thus showing yet another difference of opinion on important policy issues between labour and the NDP.

In terms of labour content the party platform of the NDP was similar to the platform of 1988: there was no mention, at all, of organized labour in the platform. The party did chose, however, to incorporate promises to small business in the platform. Labour was left out of the NDP’s platform, and left to the sidelines of the NDP’s campaign. The only meaningful convergence between labour and the NDP occurred near the end of the campaign when both set their sights on the Reform Party.

⁶⁵Ibid

Chapter Four: The 1997 Election

After the 1993 election both Labour and the NDP began a process of re-evaluation. The NDP saw Audrey McLaughlin resign as leader of the party and Alexa McDonough become the new leader. McDonough ran against Svend Robinson and Lorne Nystrom at the 1995 leadership convention, held in Ottawa. McDonough was a centrist candidate (in NDP terms) with Robinson running to her left, and Nystrom to her right. Nystrom had the support of a number of private-sector unions: United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW), CEP and IWA Canada all endorsed Nystrom before the leadership convention.¹ For his part, Robinson had the support of three of the four top CLC officers: Dick Martin, Nancy Riche, and Jean-Claude Parrot. Robinson also had the official endorsement of CAW president Buzz Hargrove; OFL Secretary-Treasurer Julie Davis and CUPE Secretary-Treasurer Geraldine McGuire.² While Nystrom had the support of major private-sector unions, the labour coalition which supported Robinson had high profile members from both public- and private-sector unions. Robinson also had the support of most of the rank-and-file union delegates who attended the leadership convention. While both Nystrom and Robinson had amassed a good deal of support from Labour, it was McDonough, the eventual winner of the leadership contest, who had the *least* support from labour delegates. McDonough entered the leadership race with the official endorsement of The Canadian wing of United Steelworkers of America (USWA) as well as the public endorsement of the National Presidents of the country's three largest public sector unions.³ While McDonough had some high profile endorsements she enjoyed almost no support from rank-

¹Geoff Bickerton, "Labour at the NDP convention" in *Canadian Dimension*, Dec/Jan 96. Vol. 29, Issue 6.

²Ibid

³Ibid.

and-file unionists, outside of the USWA, who attended the leadership convention.

Robinson finished first on the first ballot, with McDonough coming in second; however, Robinson realised he could not win a second ballot as most of Nystrom's supporters would move to McDonough. After the first ballot Robinson dropped out and McDonough became leader of the NDP. This left the NDP with a leader who had virtually no support from the labour community - just one union, The Steelworkers, had endorsed McDonough. Indeed, at this time, the CLC was engaged in a formal re-assessment of its relationship with the NDP.⁴ While the CLC would remain tied to the NDP, the fact that a formal evaluation of their relationship with the party was undertaken is a strong sign that the CLC was dissatisfied with the NDP after the 1993 election. Leading up to the 1997 general election the NDP drifted further towards the political centre, adopting Third-Way style politics. Throughout her leadership of the party, McDonough would never see Labour completely warm up to her.

The NDP's platform for the 1997 election was titled "A Framework for Canada's Future: Alexa McDonough and Canada's NDP". The Framework was heavy on materialist politics focussing on jobs and the economy. The Framework listed full employment as the primary goal of an NDP government and making the creation of "good jobs the top priority".⁵ The platform brought back the 'us and them' rhetoric which had been absent in the last two election platforms, accusing the Liberal government of "killing good jobs for women and pushing women into poverty" and

⁴Alan Whitehorn, "Alexa McDonough and Atlantic Breakthrough for the New Democratic Party" in Alan Frizzell & Jon H. Pammet, eds., *The Canadian General Election of 1997*, (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1997), 91.

⁵New Democratic Party, *A Framework for Canada's Future: Alexa McDonough and Canada's NDP*"; 1997 election platform. 3

suggesting that Canada could not “build unity when a privileged few are piling up immense profits and laying off thousands of workers”.⁶

The platform includes a number of promises on issues that have always been important to the labour movement. The platform includes a promise to “renegotiate NAFTA to include real, enforceable, progressive labour standards”⁷ and a promise to improve and protect public pensions.⁸ The platform also recognizes the challenges the labour movement faces in terms of organizing in the new service sector economy: “The world of work is changing in ways that make the organization of workers into unions by traditional means difficult. ... These changes create challenges for the trade union movement itself.”⁹ The platform then goes on to make explicit promises to the trade union movement - promises that were lacking in both the 1988 and 1993 election platforms. The NDP will “strongly support the right of working people to organize into unions and negotiate better working conditions. To facilitate effective bargaining, the use of replacement workers must be banned”.¹⁰ Banning scabs is sometimes considered the most basic promise a labour centric party can make, and the NDP included the promise for the first time in nine years. *A Framework for Canada's Future* was a very labour friendly election platform. Besides including explicit promises to the labour movement the platform made a number of promises on issues that have been very important to the labour movement. The NDP's platform included promises to ensure workers could refuse overtime, make overtime hours subject to UI premiums, using work-time reduction to create more jobs, and

⁶Ibid, 25, 31.

⁷Ibid, 10

⁸Ibid, 26

⁹Ibid, 8

¹⁰Ibid, 9

a promise to “fix” CPP. It is possible that in *A Framework for Canada's Future* the party was attempting to bridge the divide between Labour and the NDP. It was no secret that Labour was upset with the NDP's performance in both the 1988 and 1993 election, and it appears that, at least in the party's platform, a serious attempt was being made to re-include Labour in the NDP.

Given the high level of unemployment at the time, jobs were the most important issue for Canadians leading into the 1997 election.¹¹ As the NDP's platform was almost exclusively about jobs and job creation, the party had a strong starting position. Polling data leading into the 1997 election suggested that people from union households were more likely to vote for the NDP than those from non-union households by a margin of 8 percentage points.¹²

The Campaign

It was two days into the campaign when the NDP had their first event with organized Labour. McDonough met with trade unionists in Saskatoon to take part in a national day of mourning for workers who had died on the job. Out of respect, McDonough did not campaign during the event. After the event NDP MP Chris Axworthy and candidate Steven Bobiash stressed the need for ‘awareness of workplace hazards and for new measures to ensure occupational health and safety’.¹³

During the first week of the campaign organized labour was preparing a number of events highlighting the failures of the Liberal government to address the concerns of labour and ‘working people’. The events were designed to draw attention to the Liberals’ inaction in regards to the high

¹¹Whitehorn, *op cit.*, 98

¹²Neil Nevitte, Andre Blais, Elisabeth Gidengil & Richard Nadeau, *Unsteady State: The 1997 Canadian Federal Election*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2000), 107.

¹³Betty Ann Adam, “McDonough honours workers who died on job”, *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix*, 29 April 1997, A7

levels of unemployment in Canada. In Kingston, Ontario, the Kingston Labour Council had prepared a series of ads for the upcoming day of action featuring CLC president Bob White. These ads attacked the Liberals, but did not endorse a party - the NDP was not even mentioned in the ads.¹⁴ Charlie Stock, president of the Kingston Labour Council, played down the absence of the NDP in the ads, claiming the ads were created a week before the election was called: "Who would have thought that a government would go to the polls with a year and a half left in their mandate? ... Obviously, we support the NDP."¹⁵ It must be asked, however, why the Labour Council would chose to ignore the NDP in their ads even if the ads were not specifically prepared during an election campaign. It should be noted that before the election, which did come as a surprise, the CLC was in the process of evaluating their relationship with the NDP.

NDP candidates were invited to participate at a day of action event hosted by the CLC in Saskatoon. MP Axworthy attacked the Liberal's record on job creation: "We know that Jean Chretien's answer to the jobs problem . . . was really a two-pronged approach. One, he said, 'some people are lucky, some people are unlucky'. The other approach was, 'well, you can always move.' That's the vision the Liberals have of job creation".¹⁶ In what may have been a co-ordinated attack, a CLC official at the event also took the Liberals' approach to jobs to task: "We think the [Liberal government's] agenda has largely been driven by large corporations who for their own purposes want to keep unemployment high and inflation low . . . and cut back on the social safety net."¹⁷ Both the

¹⁴Sue Yanagisawa, "Saturday march not connected to NDP: Stock", *Kingston Whig-Standard*, 1 May 1997, 11.

¹⁵Ibid

¹⁶James Wood, "Corporations rule Canada's political agenda: protesters", *The Saskatoon Star-Phoenix*, 5 May 1997, A5

¹⁷Ibid.

CLC and the NDP were campaigning on jobs and the economy. While it was early in the campaign, both Labour and the NDP were sending the same message.

At the end of the first week of the campaign the NDP received the endorsement of a major union and was “snubbed” by the QFL. Buzz Hargrove, of the CAW, gave his official endorsement to the NDP. “If the Liberals are running on their record, they should be defeated” Hargrove told 400 CAW members in Windsor.¹⁸ Hargrove cited Liberal promises to create jobs, claiming that when the Liberals took power in 1993 there were 1.5 million unemployed in Canada and that this number had not decreased during the Liberal tenure in Ottawa. Hargrove also pointed out that the Liberals did not follow through on promises to scrap the GST or renegotiate NAFTA - two issues of importance to the labour movement.

While the CAW was throwing its support behind the NDP, the Quebec Federation of Labour (QFL) announced it would not be providing any support to any of the parties running in the election. The QFL at one time had been a supporter of the NDP and had now made the choice to distance itself from the party. For her part, McDonough seemed totally unfazed by the QFL choosing not to endorse the party, only saying “Maybe we're going to make progress without it”.¹⁹

During the second week of the election campaign the CLC officially endorsed the NDP. Bob White took the Liberals to task, accusing them of failing to keep job creation promises made in 1993 - “The Liberals haven’t had a job strategy. They have had a job destruction strategy”²⁰. While White

¹⁸Gary Rennie, “Politics: Hargrove bashes Liberal record”, in *The Windsor Star*, 3 May 1997, A9.

¹⁹Hubert Bauch, “Caring is NDP unity solution: McDonough offers Plan C during rare Quebec foray”, *The Montreal Gazette*, 3 May 1997, A11

²⁰Jac MacDonald, “Job creation the priority, White Says” in *Edmonton Journal*, 8 May 1997, B3

did endorse the NDP, he acknowledged there was 'little chance' that the NDP would form government, but he urged trade unionists to vote NDP to give 'working people a stronger voice' in Parliament. At the end of the second week of the campaign, Alexa McDonough visited the CAW stronghold of Windsor to speak to over 1400 CAW members. Two candidates in the Windsor area, Joe Comartin and Gerry Bastien, were counting on CAW support to get elected. Bastien himself was a CAW organizer. The CAW had gone to great lengths to support the campaigns of Bastien and Comartin. The candidates had been given speaking time at area labour council meetings, and Buzz Hargrove had endorsed the candidates in speeches to CAW members. Local CAW leaders Ken Lewenza and Alex Keeney said the CAW as "going to do more than we've ever done in the history of this local" to get Comartin and Bastien elected.²¹ The Windsor campaign saw a strong joint campaign by Labour and the NDP to get two candidates elected, one of whom was a labour activist and the other a CAW lawyer.

During the third week of the campaign, the NDP was highlighted at only two labour events. Early in the third week McDonough spoke to the Alberta Federation of Labour (AFL) in Edmonton. McDonough spoke of the need to elect more New Democrats to prevent "[Alberta premier Ralph] Klein clones"²² from taking control of Ottawa. By the third week McDonough had started to campaign on saving social programs. Saving social programs has always been a strategy that is safe for New Democrats, as the NDP is perceived to be "Canada's Conscience" and the party most interested in social programs. While jobs were one of the major issues of the campaign, and the

²¹Gary Rennie, "CAW flexes election muscles: The union, with members seeking local seats, is throwing big resources into the federal election", *The Windsor Star*, 10 May 1997, A5

²²Allan Chambers, "NDP leader attacks 'Klein clones' in gov't", *Edmonton Journal*, 10 May 1997, A4

issue the NDP had started at the forefront of their campaign, the party had retreated to a safe strategy. At the time McDonough spoke to the AFL there was a province-wide Safeways strike in Alberta. To her credit, McDonough spoke to this issue, telling strikers that the NDP would stand “shoulder to shoulder” with the striking workers.²³ It is curious that McDonough chose an event at a Labour Federation to retreat to the position of saving social programs when she had started the campaign as the ‘champion’ for good jobs in Canada. While campaigning in northern Ontario McDonough did point out that a number of other federal leaders had started to make promises to fight unemployment, but she then chose to attack the Liberals on their poor record in regards to social programs.²⁴

At the end of the third week of the campaign, both the NDP and Labour were accused of “disrupting” a Liberal campaign event. On the Friday of the third week of the campaign, Jean Chretien made a campaign stop in Bull Arm, Newfoundland to ‘christen’ a new Hibernia oil platform. The event was protested by unemployed fishery workers.²⁵ While McDonough was in northern Ontario making an issue out of social programs, local NDP candidates and Labour leaders were working in tandem to highlight the crisis of unemployment in Newfoundland.

During the fourth, and second last, week of the campaign, McDonough did not have any events with Labour. She did, however, face protesters who suggested the NDP was not doing enough to fight Free Trade at a campaign stop in Saskatoon. McDonough was quick to respond to the protesters, telling them the NDP would “retool” NAFTA to include ‘cultural protection, labour,

²³Ibid.

²⁴Montreal Gazette Staff Writers, “NDP setting the pace on job issue: McDonough”, *Montreal Gazette*, 11 May 1997, A6.

²⁵Ibid.

environmental and human rights standards'. She also suggested that should Canada enter into any other free trade agreements in the future, there would be "protection for Canada".²⁶ While McDonough was promising to fight free-trade, and indeed these promises were also included in the NDP platform, the fight was coming ten years too late. Free trade was decided in the 1988 election, and it was thoroughly entrenched by 1997. McDonough's comments that she would include "protection for Canada" in "future" free trade agreements shows that she did not fully understand Labour's grievances with free trade. Labour has stood in opposition to free trade because it believes that free trade agreements see jobs leave Canada, and the jobs that remain are weakened as the Canadian labour market faces competition from external markets with weakened employment standards. In order to show that she completely understood the issues at hand, McDonough should have clearly outlined what her "protections" would be in future trade agreements.

During the final week of the campaign both Labour and the NDP made a big push. In Windsor the NDP was working very closely to with Labour to encourage union members to vote NDP on election day. At a rally a week before election day McDonough, Ontario NDP leader Howard Hampton, and CLC president Bob White encouraged CAW members in Windsor to vote NDP. The CLC created a special flyer to pass around CAW workplaces to 'encourage a good turnout'.²⁷ At the rally in Windsor White attacked the Liberals and encouraged CAW members to vote NDP so "workers' voices would be heard in Canada again."²⁸ McDonough told the crowd of

²⁶James Wood, "NDP leader heckled over free trade", *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix*, 20 May 1997, A5

²⁷Windsor Star Staff Writers, "Windsor In Brief: McDonough, NDP brass to visit Windsor on Friday", *Windsor Star*, 28 May 1997, A9.

²⁸Gary Rennie, "Election: McDonough boosts NDP hopes: Windsor provides the biggest rally of the campaign for the new NDP leader looking to win back area ridings for the party",

900 CAW members that “jobs are the number one priority” of the NDP, followed closely by education, health care, and poverty.²⁹ While campaigning on jobs, McDonough also used the speech to attack the Liberals, claiming that they had to be “watched like weasels”; as well as attacking the Reform party who had more “astroturf than grassroots”. This would be the first major campaign event for Labour at which the NDP attacked Reform. The rally also showed how important Windsor was to the NDP, and how important the job issue was to the Labour movement. At the very end of the election campaign, Labour and the NDP were still working very closely in Windsor.

While the NDP was working very hard in Windsor, the party was under attack from the right in the rest of Ontario. Reform and the NDP were fighting over a number of undecided voters in rural Ontario. Some of the voters who had abandoned the ‘establishment parties’ - the Liberals and the Progressive Conservatives - were moving to Reform or the NDP to park a protest vote. Some voters who rejected the establishment parties could not see themselves voting for the NDP because of the “labour unrest” caused by the Bob Rae government.³⁰ One voter went so far as to say “I like Alexa McDonough. If it weren’t for Bob Rae, she’d be my first choice”.³¹ Backlash to the Rae government was not something new for the NDP. The NDP faced fierce opposition in Ontario in 1993 because of the Rae government. Even though the Rae government had been defeated and a Federal election had taken place since the Social Contract had been enacted, the Federal party was still hurting from the actions of their provincial wing. Perhaps it did not help that McDonough was being supported

Windsor Star, 31 May 1997, A3

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Thomas Walkom, “Reform in flight Rural Ontario was supposed to be a walkover for Manning, but it hasn’t turned out that way”, *Toronto Star*, 31 May 1997, B1.

³¹Ibid.

by Ontario NDP leader Howard Hampton, who as Attorney General in the Rae government, voted in favour of the Social Contract. Hampton's sins to the labour movement were not limited to voting for the Social Contract. While the NDP held power in Ontario, Canada Post workers went on strike. During the strike three CUPW members, including Andre Kolompar, president of the Toronto local of CUPW, were arrested for violating a court order restricting picketing. While the police chose not to lay charges in the case Hampton chose instead to prosecute the men, and the case resulted in a conviction.³²

McDonough was being supported by Hampton, who had not only voted in favour of *The Social Contract* but had jailed trade union activists. Further, the only union that supported McDonough during her leadership bid were the Steelworkers, who did not oppose the Social Contract. McDonough could have done a service to herself and her party by distancing herself from the Ontario NDP. Clearly, there were still Ontarians who were upset about the Rae government and were willing to take out their anger on the Federal party.

In St. Catharines, Ontario, the NDP candidate, who was also the president of the St. Catharines Labour Council, made a final push in the final days of campaigning. Ed Gould told St. Catharines residents that the NDP would provide "jobs and more jobs" should he be elected.³³ Gould, following in kind with the NDP campaign in 1997, had been campaigning on jobs and on materialist issues - arguing that the Liberal government had a 'lax stance on corporate taxation'.³⁴

³²Leo Panitch & Donald Swartz, *From Consent To Coercion: The Assault on Trade Union Freedoms*, (Aurora: Garamond Press, 2003), 167.

³³Colleen Turner, "The uphill battle to unseat Lastewka: Reform's Hesp is running hard, Tory Crealock forecasts a rebirth, NDP's Gould pushing Jobs", *St. Catharines Standard*, 31 May 1997, B3

³⁴Ibid

During the final days of the campaign Jean Chretien campaigned aggressively in southern Ontario. Chretien was forced to cancel a speech he was to give at the office of Toronto Liberal Tony Ianno after Labour protesters blocked the street and prevented Chretien from getting to his event. Labour activists said they were protesting the lack of jobs in Canada, as well as the Liberal cuts to social programs. Ianno blamed the NDP for the cancelled event because of some election signs carried by protesters for NDP candidate Olivia Chow. Even up to the end of the campaign Labour and the NDP were working in tandem to promote the job agenda.³⁵

Election Outcome

On election night, 21 members of the NDP were elected to The House of Commons. Two of these MPs had come directly out of the labour movement - Pat Martin in Winnipeg Centre and Yvon Godin in Acadie-Bathurst. Besides the two union representatives that were now a part of the NDP caucuses, Whitehorn suggests that almost half of the elected NDP MPs had “some formal union background” which led to the highest ratio of unionists ever elected to the federal caucus.³⁶ The 1997 election saw Labour and the NDP working very closely together and while no causal relationship can be implied, certainly there is an association between the number of MPs elected with a background in the Labour movement and how close the campaigns of Labour and the NDP were.

Even with all the resources the CLC and the CAW poured into Windsor, none of the NDP candidates in Windsor was elected. Indeed, the NDP was completely shut out of Ontario for the second election in a row. The majority of the NDP seats came from the Maritimes, McDonough’s home region, where the message of fixing unemployment and job creation resonated with the

³⁵Edmonton Journal Staff, “Campaign Notebook”, *Edmonton Journal*, 31 May 1997, A6

³⁶Whitehorn, *op cit.*, 105

population; previous reforms of the UI system by the Liberals also contributed to the relatively high levels of support for the NDP in the Maritimes. The NDP also did well in Saskatchewan, a province with a history of supporting the NDP federally. The Federal NDP was still suffering electorally in Ontario from the actions of the Bob Rae government. Even though Rae and his government had left office in 1995, and even though the Federal party had fought against his legacy in 1993, the Federal party was still suffering from public backlash against the Bob Rae NDP government. Given how unpopular the Rae government was, both with the general public and the labour movement, McDonough should have publicly distanced herself and her party from Rae and his party.

While the Labour movement could claim a minor victory by electing two members from the movement, and numerous others with ties to trade unions, not everything came up rosy for Labour. On election night, Reform received more votes from union households than the NDP did.³⁷ The support for Reform partially came from protest votes being parked with Reform instead of the NDP. Perhaps what was even worse than Reform getting so many votes from union households was the growing perception that unions had become too powerful in Canadian politics. During the election campaign a poll found that one in two voters in Canada wanted to see unions having less power.³⁸ This clearly hurt the NDP electorally in 1997, as the party was working closely with Labour.

While the 1997 saw Labour and the NDP working closely together, and with positive outcomes for both parties involved, the campaign was not without gaffes. McDonough completely ignored the 'snub' by the QFL when it refused to endorse the NDP. It is surprising McDonough treated this event with total indifference. The NDP has *always* had a problem making inroads in

³⁷Nevitte et. al., *op. cit.*, 107

³⁸Ibid.

Quebec, and the party was publicly snubbed by its labour allies. Given that the NDP was working very closely with the CLC during the election campaign, and that the CLC had just undergone a renewal process to discuss its relationship with the party, McDonough should have treated the lack of an endorsement from the QFL much more seriously than she did.

The 1997 Federal Election was a mitigated success for the NDP - they had more than doubled their seat count from the 1993 election. The CLC had worked very closely with the NDP in 1997, and after two federal elections that were very disappointing for Labour, the 1997 election saw labour issues debated across Canada and an NDP caucus with a high percentage of MPs with a Labour background. The 1997 election platform contained a number of promises to labour, both implicit and explicit, that were excluded from both the 1988 and 1993 platforms: promises to make organizing easier and a promise to introduce anti-scab legislation.

While labour issues were on the agenda the party did spend a disproportionate amount of time campaigning on social issues and social programs. The NDP had redoubled its efforts to include labour in the party - perhaps because of the rift that had grown after the 1988 and 1993 elections. However, even with an attempt to be more inclusive to the labour movement, the party's discourse did not significantly change during the 1997 election.

Chapter Five: The 2000 Election

The CAW and the NDP between 1997 and 2000

Between the 1997 election and the 2000 election Buzz Hargrove, the leader of the CAW, would become one of the harshest critics of the NDP and of Alexa McDonough. The criticisms would strain the relationship between the CAW and the NDP, as well as the relationship between the NDP and organized labour as a whole; further, the events between 1997 and 2000 set the stage for the eventual falling out Hargrove had with the NDP in 2006. In 1998 Hargrove released the book *Labour of Love*. In his book, Hargrove attacked the NDP for becoming too conservative for the CAW to support. Hargrove suggested that the NDP was becoming too close to the business community and that it was time for the Canadian left to start a new political party.¹ Later in 1998 McDonough began the process of “modernizing” the NDP, shifting the party rightwards to the centre of the political spectrum and adopting the politics of the Third Way. Hargrove called for the resignation of McDonough, claiming that she had betrayed the principles of the NDP.² McDonough did not resign, and Hargrove ceased to be a vocal critic of the party until the summer of 1999 when he threatened to remove the CAW from the NDP because the NDP was not left wing enough to be a viable alternative for Labour.³

2000 saw the CAW publicly battling with both the CLC and the NDP. Early in 2000 the CAW was expelled from the CLC for violating the CLC constitution by raiding locals of the SEIU.⁴

¹Justine Hunter, “Hargrove back onside, but he says it may be too late”, *National Post*, 6 Nov 2000, A7

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Geoff Bickerton, “Labour Must Rethink Its Electoral Politics”, *Canadian Dimension*, Vol 35 Issues 1, Jan/Feb 2001.

This would not deter the CAW from remaining active in politics, and in the fall of 2000, prior to the election call, Hargrove engaged in a sustained attack against the NDP. In late September McDonough refused to rule out an NDP-Liberal alliance to stop The Canadian Alliance should the Liberals form a minority government. Hargrove criticized McDonough for refusing to rule out this coalition, claiming that the NDP needed to do everything it could to distinguish itself from the Liberals.⁵ In early October Hargrove criticised McDonough for moving too far to the right; and he claimed that she was nothing like former “party giants Tommy Douglas, David Lewis and Ed Broadbent”.⁶ Hargrove had also distanced the CAW from the NDP in the 1999 Ontario election when he encouraged CAW members to embrace strategic voting to defeat the Progressive Conservatives of Ernie Eves.

On October 15th Hargrove delivered a “body blow” to the NDP, saying that after the next election “there will be a serious discussion on the left about whether or not we can rebuild the NDP or we have to form a new party. My sense is the NDP is going to take a real beating in the election”⁷. Hargrove went on to accuse McDonough of making the NDP “the same as the other guys, the other parties, with a kinder, gentler face”.⁸ McDonough fired back at Hargrove, telling newspapers that Hargrove “lives in a different world of politics than the real world.”⁹ The day before Hargrove’s

⁵Hunter, *op. cit*

⁶Jim McNulty, “Alexa battling on as NDP suffers life threatening hits”, *The Vancouver Province*, 1 Oct 2000, A33. AND Susan Riley, “The NDP needs to be more radical”, *The Ottawa Citizen*, 12 Oct 2000, A27

⁷Justine Hunter, “Big labour braces for NDP ruin: Hargrove’s blow to party on eve of campaign”, *National Post*, 16 Oct 2000, A1

⁸Ibid.

⁹Justine Hunter, “McDonough plays down Hargrove’s dire predictions: Likes chances despite polls”, *National Post*, 17 Oct 2000, A6

attack on the NDP, McDonough had marched under the CLC's banner in the world Women's March, held in Ottawa. The CAW may have been attacking the NDP, but McDonough was still maintaining close ties with the CLC.

While the election call had not formally been made, and even though Hargrove was attacking the NDP, he promised to help the NDP's election campaign. Hargrove led the CAW's federal executive to donate \$150 000 to the NDP's campaign and promised to provide staff for selected ridings. He did, however, make reservations about his donations, saying "we are not doing it enthusiastically, we don't have a great deal of confidence in the people who are leading the campaign".¹⁰

Setting The Stage

There was no denying that the NDP had shifted rightward since the 1997 election. McDonough had embraced the Third Way, attempting to remodel the NDP after the British Labour Party of Tony Blair. Many trade unions and groups on the left, besides the CAW, were openly critical of this new direction. The Socialist Caucus, an internal caucus of NDP members, stood in strong opposition to the shift to Third Way politics. Besides Hargrove's criticisms, the NDP was challenged by the Steelworkers over the party's support for Bill C-20, The Clarity Act.¹¹ In Ontario the NDP was *still* being hurt in its relations with the labour movement by lingering memories of Bob Rae and the Social Contract.¹² Clearly, the party needed to do something quite badly about its ties

¹⁰Ibid

¹¹Alan Whitehorn, "The 2000 NDP Campaign: Social Democracy at the Crossroads" in *The Canadian General Election of 2000*, eds. Jon H. Pammett and Christopher Dornan, (Toronto: The Dundurn Group, 2001), 114

¹²Ibid.

with Rae. The 2000 election would be the third election in a row that the party was hurt in Ontario for being tied to Rae. Labour leaders were still upset with the party for not denouncing Bob Rae and the Social Contract.

While party-Labour relations were at a very low point leading into the 2000 campaign, Labour was still integral in pre-election planning. The NDP's Election Planning Committee (EPC) included Pat Kerwin, from the CLC, as a member.¹³ This would ensure that Labour had a voice at the table during the pre-election period. The EPC, including Kerwin, would meet in person or via telephone at the end of every day during the campaign. In preparation for the campaign, the NDP received a \$2 million loan from the CLC, as the party did not want to borrow money from banks.¹⁴ Organized labour played a key role in the authoring of the NDP's election platform. The platform was authored with the help of Ross McClellan from the OFL and Hugh Mackenzie of The Steelworkers.¹⁵ The platform itself, entitled *Think How Much Better Canada Could Be*, was focussed mainly on the protection of health care and social programs in Canada. Indeed, under the Chretien government billions of dollars had been cut from health care and social spending in an attempt to defeat the deficit.¹⁶

The NDP's platform did not contain any explicit promises to organized labour. The majority of the platform made promises about protecting health care and social security - which set the theme for the NDP's election campaign. To be sure, the protection of social security and health care are

¹³Ibid, 116

¹⁴Ibid, 117

¹⁵Ibid, 121

¹⁶For a detailed assessment of what was cut by Chretien and Martin and the implications of these cuts see Todd Scarth, ed. *Hell and High Water: An Assessment of Paul Martin's Record and Implications for the Future*, (Ottawa: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2004)

important issues to the union movement. However, it is shocking that an NDP platform did not include any promises to implement anti-scab legislation or to make organizing the workplace easier. The absence of promises to the labour movement could be closely linked to the party's shift to the Third Way; it is also possible that the party was aware that social security could become a major issue in the election campaign and designed its platform to get as many votes as it could on the social security issue. A more cynical explanation could be that the party was aware that 50% of Canadians wanted to see unions have *less* power¹⁷ and that the NDP was playing to this part of the electorate in an attempt to maximize its votes.

Think how Much Better Canada Could Be did contain some economic promises. The platform said that the NDP “wants a new approach to global trade that puts the well being of working families, the environment and democracy before the interests of global corporations,”¹⁸ and later said that the NDP's approach to international trade would “ensure that, before Canada negotiates any new trade and investment rules at the WTO, the FTAA, or any other applicable trade forum, binding and enforceable rules are in place to protect human rights and core labour standards”¹⁹. Unto itself, these promises are nothing new for the NDP, but a major policy shift is included in this language. In 1993 and 1997 the NDP had promised to either abandon or renegotiate NAFTA, and a promise to do either was left out of the 2000 platform. In the section on jobs and employment, there is no mention of any of the traditional union-friendly policy planks: no card-based certification, nor anti-scab legislation.

¹⁷Nevitte, Neil Andre Blais, Elisabeth Gidengil & Richard Nadeau, *Unsteady State: The 1997 Canadian Federal Election*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2000), 107

¹⁸New Democratic Party, *Think How Much Better Canada Could Be*. 2000 election platform, 3

¹⁹Ibid, 13

Unions are only mentioned twice in the jobs section; first, the platform says that any jobs created by an NDP government would have the right to organize.²⁰ The section on Employment Insurance (EI) promises that the NDP would make training a priority for EI recipients, and that this training would come from “public training institutions and union-run apprenticeships.”²¹ The almost total absence of commitments to the labour movement in the 2000 platform are indicative of the direction the NDP was heading. The platform is not surprising, given that McDonough was intentionally moving the party towards the political centre.

Pre-Election Period

While 301 ridings were contested in the 2000 election, the NDP nominated only 298 candidates. Of the 298 candidates, 87 of the candidates (29%) had a ‘union background’.²² The NDP adopted a by-election like strategy for the election. The party designated 32 ridings as “must win” or “potential win”; these ridings would have extra resources and effort put into them during the campaign. The party was prepared to make health care the main focus of its campaign in 2000. Of the scheduled tour events at least half were to be events promoting the NDP health care agenda.²³ This would be a safe strategy for the NDP - social programmes were the main national issue and the NDP has always been closely identified as the party that will preserve and strengthen social programs.²⁴

²⁰Ibid, 8

²¹Ibid, 9

²²Whitehorn, *op. cit.*, 121

²³Ibid, 129

²⁴Jon H. Pammett and Christopher Dornan “Introduction” in *The Canadian General Election of 2000*, eds. Jon H. Pammett and Christopher Dornan, (Toronto: The Dundurn Group, 2001), 9

The Campaign

During the first week of the campaign the NDP did not have any events with Labour. The NDP was concentrating on launching its health care campaign and did not have any scheduled campaign stops which included Labour. During the first week of the campaign Buzz Hargrove continued his attacks on the NDP. Hargrove lashed out against the NDP and its rightward shift, admonishing the party for trying to appeal to business: “Business doesn’t need another party. Business has got every goddamned party in the country locked up. Why would we all of a sudden decide that we have to appeal to business.”²⁵ Hargrove also criticized the party for refusing to oppose tax cuts, suggesting that the NDP could create a public debate about economic policy by opposing tax cuts, “but I don’t think Alexa and the others have the courage to do that; it’s not consistent with where they want to take the party.”²⁶ Hargrove had a number of legitimate complaints with the NDP and the election campaign. The election platform had virtually ignored Labour, and during the first week of the campaign the NDP did not have any campaign events with Labour. Hargrove was also still upset with the party for refusing to denounce Bob Rae and the *Social Contract*.

The start of the second week of the campaign was marked by McDonough visiting Windsor, a CAW stronghold. The NDP had tried, and failed, to win seats in Windsor in both 1993 and 1997, and was now making a third attempt to win back the city. McDonough turned down an invitation to tour the Daimler-Chrysler plant, and instead held an outdoor news conference. The event was

²⁵John Gray, “Buzz girds to play fly in ointment again”, *The Globe and Mail*, 24 Oct 2000, A8.

²⁶Ibid

very poorly attended - only sixty people showed up.²⁷ Ken Lewenza, the head of the CAW national council, repeatedly called McDonough by the wrong name, referring to her as “Alexis”. One autoworker in the crowd confused McDonough with previous NDP Leader McLaughlin, and called out for “Audrey to fight the good fight”.²⁸ Clearly, the NDP had a lot of work to do in Windsor should the party hope to win the city. McDonough completely ignored the rift between herself and Hargrove, telling the small crowd that she had the “unqualified, unequivocal, and unreserved” support of key CAW leaders in Windsor.²⁹ The low turnout at the event can be attributed to, in part, the spat between Hargrove and the NDP. McDonough appeared to be unwilling, or unable, to respond to Hargrove’s attacks. Given the importance the NDP placed on winning Windsor, it is surprising the party did not have a strategy for countering Hargrove. For his part, Hargrove did not seem to have a plan for the 2000 election. Given that Hargrove’s complaint with the NDP was that the party was drifting to the right, clearly he would not be supporting any other political party in the 2000 election. He had not, however, come out and said that the CAW would not support the NDP in the election; up to this point Hargrove was totally silent on which party, if any, the CAW would support.

While the NDP was spinning its wheels in Windsor, Chretien and the Liberal Party were attempting to win over the union vote. In Windsor the Liberal candidate for Windsor-St. Clair gave a speech to potential voters, and spent part of his time discussing labour issues. Rick Limoges, the candidate, appealed to potential voters to vote Liberal in the election, fearing what the Canadian

²⁷Jeff Sallot, “Union turnout thin for McDonough”, *The Globe and Mail*, 2 Nov 2000, A7.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Kate Jaimet, “NDP leader keeps low profile”, *The Ottawa Citizen*, 2 Nov 2000, A13

Alliance would do to labour legislation in Canada. “Can you imagine the tag team between [Canadian Alliance leader] Stockwell Day and [Ontario’s Conservative Premier] Mike Harris? It would set labour relations back 100 years!”³⁰ Limoges was attempting to tap into fears that the Canadian Alliance was the most ideological right wing party that Canada had ever seen. While Limoges could have been sincere, it is also possible he was attempting to capitalize on the rift between the CAW and the NDP. In either case, the NDP did not officially respond to Limoges. While Limoges was trying to appeal to the NDP support base in Windsor, Chretien was trying to get the support of unionized workers in Ottawa. The Prime Minister appealed to unionized construction workers, telling them that the NDP was irrelevant and that the Canadian Alliance had a “hidden agenda” to ruin health care.³¹ Many construction union leaders agreed that the NDP was irrelevant and had endorsed the Liberals.³² Traditionally construction unions have supported the Liberal party, so the endorsement of the Liberal party came as no surprise. The event was, however, a signal that the NDP was being threatened by the Liberal party. The Liberals were campaigning on traditional NDP grounds - defending health care and social programs - and they were conveying this message to unions. By the end of the second week of the campaign the Liberals had been endorsed by various construction unions, while the NDP had not yet been endorsed by any unions at all.

In the third week of the campaign the NDP finally received endorsements from unions. At

³⁰Mary Agnes, “Unite to beat CA: Martin; Finance minister asks Tories, NDPers to help”, *The Windsor Star*, 4 Nov 2000, A1.

³¹Peter O’Neil, “Chretien courts labour vote”, *The Ottawa Citizen*, 3 Nov 2000, A1.

³²Ibid. This was, of course, nothing new. The construction unions have never supported the NDP and have often supported the Liberals.

an Ottawa women's breakfast Judy Darcy³³, president of CUPE, endorsed McDonough and the NDP. Darcy told the crowd at the breakfast that "Choosing between Jean Chretien and Stockwell Day is a little bit like choosing between death by electrocution and death by lethal poisoning. It may feel different, but the result is exactly the same".³⁴ At the same breakfast McDonough was also endorsed by the OFL, PSAC and the Canadian Federation of Nurses. It may have taken three weeks, but Labour was finally starting to endorse the NDP. The women's breakfast was the only Labour-NDP campaign event in the third week of the election campaign. McDonough was concentrating on promoting her health care plan across Canada, and while doing this was not campaigning with Labour. By the halfway point of the campaign, McDonough had not put much effort into courting the union vote, while, on the other hand, Labour was very slow to endorse the NDP. This campaign was starting to show that a real wedge had been driven between Labour and the NDP under McDonough's leadership.

At the start of the fourth week of the campaign McDonough was still crossing the country pitching her health care platform. At the same time, the NDP candidate in Sudbury was in the headlines for advocating a general strike in Sudbury. At an OFL rally against proposed changes to the Ontario Labour Relations Act, NDP candidate Paul Chislett told the crowd that Sudbury was "in a war. We need to lead up to a general strike in the Sudbury area".³⁵ Chislett was heavily criticised

³³Darcy's story is of particularly noteworthy when discussing Labour-NDP relations. Darcy was the president of CUPE until 2003. After retiring from that position Darcy moved to British Columbia and subsequently ran for NDP nomination in the provincial riding of Vancouver-Fairview. The local riding association chose to nominate a businessman in the riding instead Darcy - the former president of Canada's largest public sector union.

³⁴Justine Hunter, "CUPE head warns workers not to vote for Liberals", *National Post*, 7 Nov 2000, A14

³⁵Sudbury Star, "Casualties of Labour war", *Sudbury Star*, 12 Nov 2000, A6

by the press for this position. Chislett was told that a general strike was more likely to injure the community than to derail the legislation, and that a candidate who desires to represent Sudbury should not display willingness to “suck Sudbury into a massive, divisive labour dispute”.³⁶ Chislett was unwilling to back down and change his position.

The fourth week of the campaign also saw more Labour endorsements for the NDP. At a labour rally in Toronto Ken Georgetti, who was now president of the CLC, called on “every working family in Canada to vote NDP.”³⁷ While Georgetti had endorsed the NDP, he recognized the growing rift between Labour and the NDP. Georgetti was quite frank about the relationship between Labour and the party saying “we need to have more of a debate on that.”³⁸ Georgetti also recognized that a vast majority of union members do not vote for the NDP because they are “seduced” by promises of tax cuts from other parties. While Hargrove was absent from the rally, the CAW did donate \$150 000 to the NDP campaign, as Hargrove promised the union would.³⁹ At this point in the campaign the NDP was expecting to collect over \$1 million from unions and labour federations.

After the CLC had endorsed McDonough, the leader finally made a public response to Buzz Hargrove and his criticisms of the party. McDonough told the press that “The Canadian Labour Congress is working solidly with the New Democratic Party in this election. It’s one of the most

³⁶Ibid

³⁷Valerie Lawton, “McDonough seeks show of solidarity from workers”, *Toronto Star*, 15 Nov 2000, A8

³⁸Heather Scoffield, “McDonough asks rowdy union group for support”, *Globe and Mail*, 15 Nov 2000, A10

³⁹Valerie Lawton, “Labour’s feud with the NDP dogs Alexa McDonough”, *Toronto Star*, 14 Nov 2000, A7

important partnerships ever established in the country”.⁴⁰ Thus far in the campaign there seemed to be little evidence to support McDonough’s statement that the CLC and the NDP were working closely. While the CLC was involved in authoring the NDP’s platform, it did take the Congress four weeks to endorse the NDP publicly. The NDP, for their part, had drastically reduced the number of labour campaign stops in comparison to previous elections. Speaking directly in response to Hargrove’s criticisms of the party McDonough said that it was simply “Buzz being Buzz.”⁴¹ McDonough had nothing more to say on the issue. She did not deny the party had moved to the centre, nor did she make any direct appeal to the CAW or to Hargrove. McDonough later went on to defend her position about the NDP’s shift to the centre saying the move had been the result of a study of social democratic parties in Europe.⁴²

McDonough spent a great deal of time in the fourth week of the campaign trying to win back the support of the labour movement that had been lackluster, at best, during the campaign. McDonough told a labour rally the NDP was trying to make a “strong partnership with the working people of Canada.”⁴³ McDonough seemed unwilling to win back the labour vote by promising a leftwards shift in the future, telling her critics the NDP was still holding true to the social democratic pillars of “universal health care and tax fairness”.⁴⁴ McDonough’s rhetoric left out any commitment to organized labour or unions. Although she had previously said that the NDP and the CLC were

⁴⁰Rick Mofina, “McDonough willing to pay price”, *Kingston Whig-Standard*, 15 Nov 2000, pg18

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Rick Mofina, “McDonough says she’ll face music on NDP’s shift to right: Says her party has close ties to Canada’s labour movement”, *Edmonton Journal*, 15 Nov 2000, A10

⁴⁴Rick Mofina, “McDonough defends NDP shift to centre”, *Calgary Herald*, 15 Nov 2000, A21

working closely in the election, she had now shifted her speeches to leave out organized labour altogether. It is especially telling that McDonough did not include Labour as one of the “social democratic pillars” she was holding true to. The election campaign seemed very focussed on promoting the NDP health care plan, which was, in turn, designed to attract undecided votes.

For his part, Hargrove spoke up again in the fourth week of the campaign. Once again he condemned McDonough for her righthward shift, but then extended his criticism to the party as a whole. Hargrove speculated on what the link between Labour and the NDP would be like after the election, saying “It’s much broader than the leader. It’s what do we stand for, what are the values, what are we saying to the Canadian people. Then let’s talk about who is going to be the best person to market it.”⁴⁵ Hargrove’s criticisms of the party and the leader were being echoed by many rank-and-file trade unionists. Barb Astbury, a member of CUPE, noted that the NDP was *still* being dogged by Bob Rae’s legacy: “When the NDP were in government in Ontario, they did a really bad thing to the labour movement and I believe the average member, that’s all they can see. That is reflecting on Alexa McDonough’s federal party.”⁴⁶ While CUPE members were still upset over the Social Contract, some rank-and-file CAW members felt that the CAW had been totally abandoned by the NDP. Barb Morrison of the CAW very succinctly voiced her concerns over the NDP: “People have stopped fighting for some of the struggles. Maybe we’ll rise again.”⁴⁷ McDonough seemed totally oblivious to the fact that Labour had real grievances with the party, publicly stating that the partnership between Labour and the NDP was a “long, proud tradition” that was “alive and well for

⁴⁵Justine Hunter, “Traditional NDP votes in Limbo: Labour allies being lured away with promises of tax cuts”, *National Post*, 16 Nov 2000, A11.

⁴⁶Ibid

⁴⁷Ibid

all to see.”⁴⁸ It is stunning that McDonough would claim that the link between Labour and the NDP was ‘alive and well’, given the sustained criticisms her party was receiving from organized labour.

In the final ten days of the campaign the NDP announced their tax plan. McDonough made it clear that Canadians earning over \$60 000 a year would not need a tax break, as they were “high income earners”. This marked a shift in NDP policy as in the election in 1997, the NDP had decided that high-income earners were those who made more than \$100 000 a year. As Ken Georgetti had noted, the NDP was losing votes to both the Liberals and the Canadian Alliance because of these parties’ tax plans. Many unionized workers earn over \$60 000 a year after overtime⁴⁹, and the tax plans of the Liberals and the Alliance had a greater appeal to unionized workers than the NDP’s plan did. McDonough defended her plan by promising to put money into health care and social services instead of putting them into tax cuts. While many on the left would agree with McDonough’s logic, neither the NDP nor the CLC was doing enough to convince rank-and-file unionized workers to embrace the NDP’s tax plan - by this point in the campaign period the NDP was polling in fifth place nationally.⁵⁰

In the final days of the election campaign McDonough returned to Windsor. At this rally 600 CAW workers showed up to hear Joe Comartin and McDonough - a tenfold increase on the attendance from the first NDP campaign event in Windsor. McDonough spent most of the campaign stop pitching the NDP’s health care platform, telling the CAW members that the Canadian Alliance

⁴⁸Ibid

⁴⁹Valerie Lawton, “NDP scrambles to defend the ‘rich’; Alexa McDonough implies that earning \$60 000 makes you wealthy”, *Toronto Star*, 22 Nov 2000, A7

⁵⁰Leader Post, “Party Leaders: Strategies and Appeal: McDonough: NDP”, *Regina Leader Post*, 25 Nov 2000, D1

and the Liberals were both planning on introducing a two-tier health system.⁵¹ McDonough also railed against the Liberal incumbent MP in Windsor - St. Claire, Rick Limoges, telling the crowd that Limoges had been “missing in action during the current health care crisis” and that “The last thing the people need now is a silent backbench Liberal”.⁵² She was referring to the same Limoges who held a campaign event to warn CAW members against voting for the Canadian Alliance because of what the Alliance could do to labour relations in Canada. McDonough did not respond to this argument in her stop in Windsor, not did she make any labour-related promises to the CAW members that came to hear her speak. At the same rally Ken Lewenza, the president of CAW Local 444, lashed out against the Liberals, accusing them of dismantling the Autopact and putting “high paying manufacturing jobs on the block to the lowest bidder.”⁵³

Election Outcome

The NDP had thirteen MPs elected in the 2000 election. Joe Comartin won his seat in Windsor-St. Clair, becoming the first New Democrat to be elected to Ottawa from Ontario in over ten years. However, the NDP fell both in seat count and popular vote from 1997. There are a number of explanations for the drop in electoral support. Again the party lost votes from union members to the Canadian Alliance and the Liberals - 14% of union members voted for the NDP, while 30% voted for the Canadian alliance.⁵⁴ The rightward shift of the working class vote was due to, in part, the promises of tax cuts coming from these parties. In the final days of the campaign the

⁵¹Chris Hornsey, “Alexa rallies the troops”, *The Windsor Star*, 25 Nov 2000, A1.

⁵²Ibid

⁵³Ibid

⁵⁴Elisabeth Gidengil, André Blais, Richard Nadeau, Neil Nevitte, *Making Sense of the Vote: The 2000 Canadian Election*, Paper presented at the biennial meeting of the Association for Canadian Studies in the United States, San Antonio, Texas, November 14-18, 2001, 7

Liberals ran a series of ads attempting to scare soft-left voters into voting for the Liberal party to stop the “hidden agenda” of the Canadian Alliance. This tactic seems to have worked, as the Liberals were returned with an increased majority.

In the 1997 election the CLC and the NDP worked very closely, and this helped to elect a very labour-friendly NDP caucus. In 2000, the NDP seemed to virtually ignore Labour, and parts of the labour movement were very critical of the NDP. Alexa McDonough had essentially abandoned the traditional labour support base of the NDP in order to court undecided centrist voters. The NDP’s shift to the right had exactly the opposite effect, with the 2000 election being a virtual disaster that saw the party lose 20% of the popular vote.⁵⁵ Before the election was called and throughout the election campaign McDonough appeared totally unwilling to respond to the grievances that Hargrove, and some others in the labour movement, had with the NDP and the direction the party was heading. Nor did McDonough make any attempt to disown Bob Rae. While the Social Contract was long over in Ontario, and Rae had been defeated by Mike Harris, his legacy still hounded the NDP in Ontario. The federal NDP needed to extend an olive branch to Labour in Ontario by disowning the actions of Bob Rae.

The 2000 election saw Labour almost totally left out of the NDP’s election platform, virtually no campaign stops for Labour events, and the concerns of Labour virtually ignored by the party establishment. This could be due, in part, to the reshaping of the party to be closer to the New Labour of Tony Blair - a party that embraced neoliberalism in both theory and practise. The events of the 2000 election put a serious strain on the relationship between the NDP and organized labour. The stress of the relationship was not lost on the CLC. In September of 2001 the CLC launched an

⁵⁵Bickerton, *op. cit.*.

independent political campaign which it described as “a legislative agenda based on union-devised indicators to improve the quality of life in Canada.”⁵⁶ The CLC did not include the NDP in this campaign. Nancy Riche, the CLC’s secretary treasurer said “This will not be in conjunction with *any* party, so what does that tell you?”⁵⁷

⁵⁶Justine Hunter, “NDP faces rebirth without labour: CLC moving away from its partnership”, *National Post*, 23 July 2001, A6.

⁵⁷Ibid. Emphasis mine.

Chapter Six: The 2004 Election

The New Politics Initiative

The four years between the 2000 general election and the 2004 general election marked the largest renewal effort the NDP had seen since the formation of the party. The party had not yet fully recovered from the collapse in 1993, and it lacked a clear direction. McDonough's shift to the right was opposed by party activists, labour activists and even some sitting MPs. In 2001 two sitting MPs, Libby Davies and Svend Robinson, spearheaded the New Politics Initiative (NPI). NPI was a call to abandon the NDP and create a new party to contest elections. This party would be a broad based party on the left which would incorporate many "non-electoral social movements including the environmental, anti-globalization, labour, women's, anti-racist, gay lesbian and transgendered, anti-poverty, seniors, and disability rights campaigns."¹ The NPI saw a specific place for the labour movement in the proposed new party, and clearly outlined that Labour would have a role to play; a role that was much more centric than the current role Labour was playing in the NDP.²

NPI launched a campaign amongst local riding associations and union affiliates to promote the NPI program. Part of this included publishing a series of discussion papers which outlined what the NPI was, NPI's proposals, and how to reach these objectives. Of the eleven discussion papers published, four discussed the role of organized labour in NPI, and one paper was explicitly dedicated to the labour movement. The first discussion paper outlined the main goals of the NPI and it made a very clear and explicit promise to include labour. The discussion paper made note that "class is

¹Jim Standford & Svend Robinson, "The New Politics Initiative: Open, Sustainable, Democratic" in *What's Left? The New Democratic Party in Renewal*. Eds. Z. David Berlin & Howard Aster, (Oakville: Mosaic Press, 2001), 80.

²Ibid, 81

a crucial axis along which millions of working Canadians are systematically exploited and disadvantaged.”³ The NDP had long since abandoned the rhetoric of class as a political cleavage, in an attempt to make the party seem less radical, while the NPI was more than willing to recognize that class exists in Canada. The paper went on to make explicit promises to the labour movement: “We must be on the picket lines with trade unionists supporting their particular workplace struggles, while we advocate forcefully for working people on broader labour issues such as anti-scab laws, health and safety protections, restoring UI benefits, protecting and expanding pensions, better holidays and reduced working time.”⁴ These promises seem like the CLC’s dream come true; NPI was promising to campaign on, and if elected implement, all of the major policy initiatives that Labour has long fought for. Further, NPI was promising to respect picket lines and march on them with workers. The NPI was charting a clear course to become much more labour-centric than the NDP was. NPI was also making these promises without receiving financial donations from trade unions. The NPI vision saw no political donations by corporate entities or trade unions.⁵ This suggests that the NPI was linked to the labour movement from an ideological standpoint, rather than a financial one.

The eighth discussion paper in the series was a strategic plan for using labour’s resources to win elections. It was written by the President of the Toronto & York District Labour Council, and

³New Politics Initiative, “Discussion Paper #1: The New Politics Initiative: Open, Sustainable, Democratic” retrieved from <http://web.archive.org/web/20031220203721/www.newpolitics.ca/paper1.htm>. Accessed 20 Feb 2008.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

stressed the importance of labour friendly candidates in elections.⁶ The discussion papers were more than academic tools to promote the Initiative. One of them, paper number nine, was a speech NPI co-founder Libby Davies gave to CAW members. In the speech Davies explained that the labour movement “is one of the most powerful instruments for bringing about a fundamental change in politics.”⁷ NPI was clearly attempting to make Labour more important in the proposed new party than it was in the NDP.

NPI readied a resolution for the 2001 NDP convention that would see the end of the NDP and the creation of a new electoral party. The resolution was supported by riding associations and union locals from across six different provinces.⁸ The resolution was endorsed by the CAW, who had been one of the most vocal opponents of the NDP’s rightward shift.⁹ The resolution was hotly debated on the convention floor, but it eventually failed. The final vote count saw the resolution fail 684 to 401.¹⁰ While the NPI was not adopted by the NDP, a full third of the delegates supported the motion. This suggests that the defeat was not decisive; indeed, the NPI continued to promote its policy agenda and kept pushing for the NDP to move to the left. The NPI resolution had the support

⁶John Cartwright, “Discussion Paper #8: The Rexdale By-Election: A Potential Catalyst for Building Labour/Community Power in Toronto” retrieved from <http://web.archive.org/web/20040309002213/www.newpolitics.ca/paper8.htm>. Accessed 20 Feb 2008.

⁷Libby Davies, “Discussion Paper #9: What is New Politics, and How do We Build It? Speech to the Collective Bargaining Convention of the CAW” retrieved from <http://web.archive.org/web/20040405232642/www.newpolitics.ca/paper9.htm>. Accessed 20 Feb 2008.

⁸Libby Davies, Svend Robinson, Murray Dobbin, Louise James, Judy Rebick & Jim Stanford, “After the labour pains, a new NDP?”, *Globe and Mail*, 22 Nov 2001, A27.

⁹Brian Kappler, “NDP should move to the left: Energetic left-wing party a valuable part of Canadian democracy”, *Edmonton Journal*, 27 Nov 2001, A14

¹⁰The Globe and Mail, “ABCs of NDP”, *Globe and Mail*, 7 Jun 2002, A20

of many union locals, and the NPI was supportive of a more inclusive role for organized labour within the NDP. The failure of the NDP to adopt NPI certainly did not help ease the tension that existed between the NDP and organized labour. The NDP had sent a clear message that it was willing to continue on its path to support the Third Way and its rightward shift.

In the end NPI was not endorsed by or supported by any union or union federation. The NPI proposal would have severed institutional links between labour and the NDP (ending the affiliation system, for example), and had the potential to treat the labour movement as “just another” social movement with connections to the party. This institutional delinking was not favoured by the labour movement, who saw NPI as a way that labour could potentially *lose* influence in the NDP rather than gain it.

2003 Leadership Convention

2003 saw a race to replace Alexa McDonough as leader of the NDP. This leadership selection would be the first of its kind, as the party had adopted a one-member-one-vote system of leadership selection. One-member-one-vote was initially opposed by the affiliated trade unions as they saw this as an attempt by the party establishment to decrease Labour’s influence on the party. The New Politics Initiative, which was still functioning as an internal faction of leftists even though their resolution had failed, was concerned that one-member-one-vote could “remove the structural relationship between the labour movement and the NDP.”¹¹ This seemed to be a reversal of the NPI’s previous position, which called for an ending of the institutional links between labour and the

¹¹Thomas Ponniah & Judy Rebick, “Discussion paper #2: The New Politics Initiative: Towards a Living Democracy”, retrieved from <http://web.archive.org/web/20040309002213/www.newpolitics.ca/paper2.htm>. Accessed 20 Feb 2008.

NDP. McDonough was able to negotiate a compromise between Labour and the supporters of one-member-one-vote. While one-member-one-vote would be the method of selecting a new leader, 25% of the votes in leadership contests would be allotted to affiliated trade unions. This new system was markedly different from the old way labour participated in the conventions (see chapter one).

The race to replace McDonough had six candidates. Joe Comartin, the MP from Windsor, had the support of CAW president Buzz Hargrove.¹² Pierre Ducasse, a member of the NDP's federal executive, was endorsed by Ken Georgetti, president of the CLC.¹³ Jack Layton, the eventual winner, was endorsed by Judy Darcy, of CUPE, and by OFL president Wayne Samuelson.¹⁴ Layton also received the endorsement of the NPI, as well as endorsements from former party leaders Broadbent and McLaughlin.¹⁵ Layton was seen by some as the most left leaning candidate, and as one who could move the party back to the left from the centrist position it had been driven to. Layton won a surprising victory on the first ballot, capturing 53.5% of the vote. Blaikie finished a distant second with 24.7% of the vote.¹⁶ Layton won a majority of votes from both the individual members and from union members. Indeed, over 60% of the union votes went to Layton.¹⁷ This support for Layton from the labour movement came as somewhat of a surprise given that the leaders

¹²Bill Curry, "NDP at loggerheads over business", *National Post*, 24 Jan 2003, A8.

¹³Andrew Chung, "Blaikie rips main rival Layton", *Toronto Star*, 25 Jan 2003, A4.

¹⁴Colin Perkel, "Layton has work cut out in arousing NDP interest", *Kingston Whit-Standard*, 27 Jan 2003, 12

¹⁵Jeffrey Simpson, "Liberal heir apparent fixed in Layton's sights", *The Globe and Mail*, 27 Jan 2003, A1

¹⁶Tim Harper & Andrew Chung, "Firebrand seduces NDP", *Toronto Star*, 26 Jan 2003, A1.

¹⁷Montreal Gazette, "New NDP leader faces up hill challenge", *Montreal Gazette*, 28 Jan 2003, A2

of both the CAW and CLC had endorsed other candidates. While Layton was the choice of most the NDP members who wanted to move the party to the left, Buzz Hargrove was cautious about supporting the new leader. Hargrove announced that it was his ‘number one job’ to move Layton fully to the left of the political spectrum and to “get away from the idea we want to appeal to everyone”.¹⁸

Election Finance Changes

Labour has always been one of the major financial backers of the NDP. Between 1975 and 2002 organized labour contributed an average of \$1.9 million annually to the NDP (18.4% of the party’s revenue); in election years the average jumped to \$3.7 million (28.1% of party revenue).¹⁹ In 2003 the Chretien government introduced Bill C-24, which was designed to make sweeping changes to *Canada Elections Act*. These changes would have a profound impact on the relationship between Labour and the NDP. The changes banned both corporate and union donations, both monetary and in-kind, to national political parties and set an annual limit of \$1000 that any one union could give to a candidate or local riding association. Interpretation of the law established that union locals could not be considered separate entities from the central union, so if two locals of the same union were each to make contributions of \$1000 to local candidates, the union would be breaking the law.²⁰

When the changes to *Elections Act* in Bill C-24 were announced in January 2003, Labour

¹⁸Star-Phoenix, “Layton brings hope to NDP”, *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix*, 28 Jan 2003, A8.

¹⁹Harold Jansen & Lisa Young. “Solidarity Forever? The NDP, Organized Labour, and the Changing Face of Party Finance in Canada.” Paper presented to the 2005 Annual Meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, London, Ontario. 9

²⁰Ibid, 15

and the NDP started a joint campaign for one final donation. The plan was to create a permanent headquarters for the NDP; the building could then be used as capital to secure bank loans. In the past, the Labour Movement had secured the NDP's bank loans during election campaigns. If the NDP defaulted on the loan (which they never had) then Labour would be responsible to pay the loan back; of course, this would be treated as a donation to the NDP and would thus be illegal under the provisions of Bill C-24. Before Bill C-24 took effect Layton and Labour began a donation drive, the NDP's 'capital fund'.²¹ This drive resulted in a one time donation of over \$5 million from Labour to the NDP; which accounted for *half* of the NDP's operating budget for 2003.²²

The legislation also limited third party spending, should the third party spend more than \$500. Any third party which had planned on spending more than \$500 on an advertising campaign would have to register with Elections Canada, and would be restricted to spending \$3378 in each electoral district and \$168 900 in a national campaign.²³ These restrictions applied to any advertising campaign which was intended to influence how an elector might vote, by promoting or opposing a registered party or the election of a candidate, including a message that takes a position on an issue with which a registered party or candidate is associated. Very clearly this would limit the CLC from running parallel campaigns during federal elections.

In the past unions were able to 'book off' workers from their positions to work on NDP campaigns, allowing the labour movement to provide manpower to election campaigns. As this is

²¹Alan Whitehorn, "Jack Layton and the NDP: Gains But No Breakthrough" in *The Canadian General Election of 2004*. Jon H. Pammett & Christopher Dornan, eds. (Toronto: The Dundurn Group, 2004), 112

²²Jansen & Young, *op cit.*, 17

²³*Ibid*, 16

an “in kind” donation to the NDP, Labour’s ability to provide manpower was severely restricted by Bill C-24. Union members who wished to help the NDP during the 2004 election campaign were forced to volunteer their time. This would prove to be a major obstacle for both Labour and the NDP to overcome. Union officials reported that they had to “rein in” some of their staff members who did not completely understand the new regulatory environment.²⁴

The changes to *Elections Act* almost completely severed the financial relationship between Labour and the NDP. Labour would no longer be able to finance electoral campaigns, provide staff to the NDP for elections, nor advertise for the NDP in any significant manner. The changes had the effect of drastically reducing Labour’s influence in the NDP and severely restricting Labour’s involvement in election campaigns. The CLC recognized this, and prepared a document dealing with potential political action in the aftermath of Bill C-24. The CLC was very frank about the direction it would have to take in electoral politics: “Our present activities in partisan politics will fundamentally change and this will change both our relationship with the NDP and how we will be able to participate as unions in the political process.”²⁵ The CLC did not see the changes as a reason to abandon the NDP: “the challenge is how we are going to build political momentum so a party on the left can use our campaigns to propel themselves to higher support.”²⁶

Pre-Election Period: Setting The Stage

Before the writs were dropped for the 2004 election the CLC ran a “Labour Issues”

²⁴Ibid, 20

²⁵Canadian Labour Congress, “Labour’s Political Activism Post C-24”, 5.

²⁶Ibid. In the post C-24 era the CLC began to focus much more on municipal politics. See Larry Savage, “Organized Labour and Local Politics: Ontario’s 2006 Municipal Elections”, currently unpublished, for an excellent discussion of the CLC and Municipal politics.

campaign. The CLC identified the issues that were of concern to unionized workers and created a series of radio advertisements based on the issues. The ads discussed the issues and encouraged voters to keep these issues in mind when deciding who to vote for. It is important to note that because the ads were aired before the election writs were issued, the ads did not fall under the provisions of the *Canada Elections Act*. Because the ads were not subject to the *Act* they legally could have endorsed the NDP or encouraged workers to vote NDP. The ads, however, *did not* endorse the NDP or encourage votes for the NDP, instead, they simply let listeners draw their own conclusions based on the information provided by the ads.²⁷

The NDP created their Election Planning Committee (EPC) before the writs were dropped. The EPC had between 30 and 35 members, including representatives from the CEP and the CLC. The committee was co-chaired by George Nakitas, a member of the Steelworkers and former chief of staff to Ed Broadbent, and Angela Schira, the secretary-treasurer to the B.C. Federation of Labour.²⁸ Thus, Labour was well represented in planning the NDP's strategy for the 2004 election.

While the sponsorship scandal set the stage for the 2004 election²⁹ it soon became apparent that Health Care would once again become a key issue in the election. Internal polling done by the NDP also suggested that Health Care would become the primary issue of the election campaign.³⁰ The NDP developed a strategy to win over soft Liberal voters - those that might not be comfortable with the 'campaign from the left, govern from the right' strategy of the Liberal party. The issue of

²⁷Jansen & Young, *op cit.*, 20.

²⁸Whitehorn, *op cit.*, 109 - 110.

²⁹Jon H. Pammett and Christopher Dornan, "Election Night in Canada: the Transition Continues" in *The Canadian General Election of 2004*. Eds Jon H. Pammett & Christopher Dornan, (Toronto: The Dundurn Group, 2004), 7

³⁰Whitehorn, *Op Cit.*, 115

health care played into this strategy, as the NDP could highlight the cuts to health care made under the Liberal regime. The NDP also latched onto the rise of environmental politics, paying much more attention to the environment than they had before. The NDP adopted a message of “fostering jobs while protecting the environment”, which was an attempt to make a co-operative message between Labour and the green movement.³¹

The 2004 platform, *Jack Layton and the NDP: New Energy. A Positive Choice*, was sparse on commitments to Labour. Nowhere in the platform was anti-scab legislation mentioned, nor was there a promise to introduce card based certification. In the introduction, however, there was an explicit promise to “help business prosper”³² in the section on ‘building the Canada we want’. There are some scattered commitments to Labour in the platform. There is a promise to put “Canadian workers” on the CPP investment board and a promise to better protect Canadian pensions.³³ On economic issues, the NDP noted that Canadian jobs were under attack, and that it was “time to act in a concerted manner with our labour partners.”³⁴ The NDP also promised to include Labour in Economic planning - “Organized labour will be brought to the table, rather than the sidelines as the Liberals did, in a National forum on the Economy with government, business and community organizations.”³⁵ While the NDP was promising to include Labour in economic matters, the promise did contain the rhetoric of the Third Way - the NDP was promising to include business, and the platform suggested that ‘jobs under attack’ was very bad for business. While Layton was the leftist

³¹Ibid, 118

³²New Democratic Party, *Jack Layton and the NDP: New Energy. A Positive Choice*. Platform 2004, 4.

³³Ibid, pages 8 & 50.

³⁴Ibid, 47

³⁵Ibid.

candidate at the leadership convention, the language of his first policy platform did not show any significant movement to the left.

The NDP nominated a full slate of 301 candidates in the 2004 election. Out of the candidates nominated two were high profile labour candidates. Sid Ryan, president of CUPE Ontario, ran in Oshawa and Peggy Nash, a longtime assistant to Buzz Hargrove, ran in Parkdale-High Park. Although both candidates lost (Ryan lost by only 463 votes in a very close race), the candidacy of Nash and Ryan certainly highlighted the connection between organized labour and the NDP in this election. Further, it secured the almost immediate endorsement of both CUPE and CAW - the two largest unions in Canada.

The NDP adopted a strategy of targeting 14 incumbent ridings and 26 “winnable” ridings to focus the party’s efforts on during the campaign.³⁶ This strategy makes it easier for the NDP to spend resources, but it also prevents the party from developing a truly national campaign. In turn, this makes it difficult for Labour to participate in a National campaign with the NDP during the election.

The Campaign

In the early days of the campaign Buzz Hargrove made an effort to bury the hatchet with the NDP. Hargrove endorsed Layton as a friend of labour, saying Layton was “reaching out to the labour movement, understanding that you can’t have a successful democratic socialist party without the support of the labour movement.”³⁷ One of Layton’s first stops in the campaign was at a steel plant

³⁶Whitehorn, *op cit.*, 117

³⁷Toronto star, “Layton sets his sights on disaffected Liberals”, *Toronto Star*, 24 May 2004, A9.

in Hamilton, Ontario. There the NDP leader took Paul Martin to task for allowing the steel industry to collapse and letting manufacturing jobs leave Canada. In response, Layton was endorsed by Steelworkers in Hamilton, with a local organizer claiming the NDP was the only party who would speak out on behalf of the steel industry.³⁸

In the second week of the campaign, Quebec Labour weighed in on the 2004 election. The Quebec Federation of Labour (QFL) announced that it would not endorse any party in the election. Henri Masse, president of the QFL, refused to endorse the NDP because the party supported the 1982 patriation of the Constitution.³⁹ On top of this, Buzz Hargrove once again endorsed the Bloc in Quebec instead of the NDP.⁴⁰ Hargrove did not explain his endorsement, but there are two plausible explanations. First, the NDP has never been strong in Quebec, indeed, it has never won a seat in a General election in Quebec, and the endorsement of the Bloc may have been a simple recognition of the fact that the NDP was not competitive in Quebec. The second explanation is that Hargrove thought the Bloc was a better party for Labour, but since the party only runs in Quebec, it could only be endorsed in that province.

The second week of the campaign also saw Layton speaking to a gathering of about 700 CUPE members. The crux of Layton's address was that there was no difference between the federal Liberals and the Ontario Liberals. Layton admonished the Ontario Liberals for introducing health

³⁸Bruce Campion-Smith, "Layton unveils platform's green focus", *Toronto Star*, 26 May 2004, A7.

³⁹Edmonton Journal, "Quebec labour sits this one out", *Edmonton Journal*, 3 Jun 2004, A6.

⁴⁰Lysiane Gagnon, "The NDp's best friend? The Bloc", *The Globe and Mail*, 31 May 2004, A13. The CAW has been endorsing the BQ since the 1993 election.

care premiums and suggested that the federal Liberals would enact similar policies.⁴¹ Of course, the Ontario division of CUPE had already endorsed the NDP - the president of CUPE Ontario was a candidate for the NDP.

The third week of the campaign saw Layton visit Windsor, Ontario. Layton gave a speech to over 200 CAW members. Layton suggested that Stephen Harper was simply a 'clone of Mike Harris'.⁴² Subsequently, Layton suggested that Harper would introduce tax cuts that would bring about user fees, and declining standards in health care, education and community services. Further, he suggested that Harper's promise to reduce corporate taxes if corporations gave up federal subsidies would be bad for the auto sector, as the jobs would be driven 'south of the border'.⁴³ This campaign stop marked the first time in many elections that the NDP leader made the auto industry the primary focus of the leader's visit to Windsor. Layton was making a serious attempt to get votes from CAW workers, and he was addressing issues that were of importance to these workers. This stop in Windsor marked the only labour event for Layton in the third week of the campaign.

In the fourth week of the campaign the NDP struggled with PSAC. PSAC's political action committee refused to endorse a party outright, instead addressing each riding separately and endorsing a candidate in that riding who best suited PSAC's political goals. In the Ottawa region PSAC endorsed three NDP candidates - Ed Broadbent (Ottawa Centre), Marlene Riviere (Ottawa West - Nepean) and Pierre Laliberte (Hull-Aylmer).⁴⁴ In the thirteen remaining ridings in the

⁴¹Bill Curry, "Martin will break promises, too", *The Ottawa Citizen*, 30 May 2004, A4.

⁴²Robert Fife, "Layton attacks Tories' tax cut plans", *Kingston Whig-Standard*, 12 Jun 2004, 17

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴The Ottawa Citizen, "PSAC makes its call on candidates", *Ottawa Citizen*, 18 Jun 2004, B1. PSAC defines the term "National Capital Region" as 'Ottawa, Hull and Surrounding Areas.'

National Capital Region, PSAC refused to endorse any candidate, including NDP candidates. At the same time that PSAC was struggling to find candidates to endorse in the National Capital Region, the Quebec wing of PSAC endorsed the Bloc in all 75 Quebec ridings.⁴⁵ PSAC's strategy highlights the fact that not all NDP candidates are considered to be 'labour friendly' by the labour movement.

The final ten days of the election campaign saw more Labour involvement than the first four weeks of the campaign combined, and not all of it was positive for the NDP. In Saskatchewan, the federal party was facing backlash against an unpopular provincial NDP government. The provincial budget for Saskatchewan was not popular amongst public-sector unions, who saw only a two percent wage increase over three years in the budget. Larry Hubich, president of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour (SFL), said that many union members were 'thinking twice' about getting involved in campaigning for the NDP and that there might be repercussion at the ballot box for the unpopular budget.⁴⁶ Hubich noted, however, that he did "believe it's not as severe as what happened in Ontario."⁴⁷ The SFL did not offer an endorsement to the NDP. Nor did CUPE Saskatchewan. Tom Graham, president of the Saskatchewan wing of CUPE, said "We're not going to tell union members how to vote."⁴⁸ Graham made it clear that he would personally vote for the NDP but CUPE Saskatchewan would not endorse the NDP; he also suggested that the federal NDP will "almost certainly face some loss of support among rank-and-file union members as a result of unhappiness with the provincial NDP government."⁴⁹ Again the federal NDP was being dogged by

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Neil Scott, "NDP may suffer from a union backlash", *Regina Leader Post*, 21 Jun 2004, A1.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Ibid

⁴⁹Ibid.

provincial governments that were unpopular amongst the labour movement, and again the federal wing refused to distance itself from these unpopular governments.

In Ontario the NDP received the endorsement of the OFL. Wayne Samuelson, president of the OFL, spent time canvassing with the NDP candidate in Niagara Falls - Wayne Gates.⁵⁰ In Windsor NDP candidate Joe Comartin was making a last minute blitz of his riding attempting to secure votes. Comartin's campaign manager noted that the campaign was being hurt by the new election finance regulations. Previous NDP campaigns in Windsor had relied heavily on union bookoffs, which were banned for the first time in 2004. Ian Bawden, campaign manager for Comartin, noted that he had lost between 30 and 40 union members who would have worked in the final days of the campaign.⁵¹

Conclusions

The NDP elected 19 MPs. In Windsor Joe Comartin easily won re-election with the help of the CAW. Peggy Nash lost in Parkdale - High Park to a Liberal and Sid Ryan lost in Oshawa to a Conservative. The 2004 election saw a definite decline in the interaction between the NDP and organized labour during the election period. There were virtually no major campaign events that included organized labour; and organized labour was slow and reluctant to endorse the NDP. While the NDP received endorsements from CUPE Ontario and the CAW, this was largely due to high-profile candidates from these unions running as New Democrats. What was very indicative of the relationship between Labour and the NDP were the labour organizations that chose to not endorse the NDP: the SFL, the QFL, The CAW in Quebec, PSAC, for example. The decision of the party

⁵⁰Corey Larocque, "Think local with vote: Tory", *Niagara Falls Review*, 25 Jun 2004, A3

⁵¹Doug Williamson, "Parties mobilize for E-Day blitz", *Windsor Star*, 26 Jun 2004, A19

to campaign for soft Liberal voters suggests that the NDP was still seeking to replace the Liberals.

PSAC-Quebec's endorsement of the Bloc highlights a systemic failure for the NDP in Quebec. Organized labour in Quebec has routinely endorsed the Bloc or refused to endorse any political party at all during elections. Trade unions tend to support the Bloc in Quebec because the trade union movement has been supportive of the sovereignty project. The NDP's position on sovereignty has contributed to their failure to be endorsed by Quebec Labour. If the NDP wants to be taken seriously as the national political arm of organized labour the party needs to work to gain the support of Quebec Labour. The fact of the matter is, however, that the Bloc is the party of the left in Quebec, and there is little room for a second one.

Of course, the implications of the changes to election financing cannot be ignored. Labour was unable to donate money to the NDP nor were unions able to book off members to work on the NDP campaign. The ability of Labour to participate in the 2004 election campaign was severely restricted by the changes to election financing. While the relationship between Labour and the NDP was fundamentally altered by the changes to election financing, neither party chose to end the relationship.

There were signs that the relationship between Labour and the NDP was seriously strained by election day in 2004. Before the campaign had started the CLC ran a pre-election campaign on issues of importance to the Labour movement, and the campaign did not endorse, or even mention, the NDP. For its part the NDP campaigned even less, in both campaign promises and campaign stops, to the Labour movement in 2004 than in any previous elections. The party platform did not contain any policy promises to the labour movement, but it did contain a number of promises to the business community. Layton was seen by NPI as a leader who could move the party to the left; and

Layton received widespread support from union voters during the leadership convention where he was elected leader. But although Layton appeared to be a potential agent of change for the NDP, the party was not fundamentally different under Layton than it was under McLaughlin or McDonough.

Chapter Seven: The 2006 Election

In 2004, a minority Liberal government was elected. This government would ultimately be brought down by a motion of no confidence. On 1 November 2005, the Gomery Report was released; this report detailed the events surrounding the so called Sponsorship Scandal.¹ The three opposition parties, the Conservatives, the Bloc and the NDP, united to table a motion of no confidence, arguing the Liberals had lost the moral authority to govern. While the report was released on 1 November 2005, the no confidence motion was not passed until 28 November 2005. In the days leading up to the motion of no confidence, the NDP was encouraged to vote against the motion and let the Liberals govern. Ken Georgetti, president of the CLC, urged the NDP to allow the Liberals to keep governing, arguing that there were still a number of progressive gains that could be made from the government.² Buzz Hargrove made a personal appeal to Jack Layton not to pull the plug on the government, explaining that health care and the need to protect pensions still should be attended to.³ Labour even resorted to lobbying individual MPs to support the Liberal government. Ken Lewenza, president of CAW 444 in Windsor, began to lobby Joe Comartin to vote against a motion of no confidence, while Hargrove kept pressure on Layton to support the government.⁴ Thus, when the NDP forced the election, it was against Labour's wishes.

¹See <http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/groupaction/> for an overview of the sponsorship scandal.

²Jim Stanford, "NDP gains: one hand clapping", *Globe and Mail*, 30 Jan 2006, A13. Stanford notes that many other progressive movements including Aboriginal leaders, urban advocates, and child-care advocates had explicitly asked the NDP to *not* collapse the government.

³Brian Laghi, "CAW chief urges Layton not to pull the plug", *Globe and Mail*, 7 Nov 2005, A1.

⁴The Windsor Star, "CAW urges NDP to reconsider", *The Windsor Star*, 9 Nov 2005, A3.

In the pre-election period the NDP began to build up staff for the upcoming election. Brian Topp, the executive director of actor's union ACTRA, joined the campaign as campaign director. Topp had previously acted as the chief of staff to Roy Romanow.⁵ The Election Platform Committee was co-chaired by Peggy Nash from the CAW.⁶ The platform, and subsequent campaign, was focussed on three key issues identified by internal polling: reducing health care waiting times, providing affordable seniors care, and improving education.⁷ The platform, *Jack Layton: Getting results for people*, was almost a reproduction of the 2004 platform. References to Labour were few and far between; the two-page long introduction letter did not mention Labour. Labour was also left out of other sections where, in the past, a token commitment to Labour could be found. Promises to include unions in EI retraining were left out. The section on NAFTA ignored Labour. There were no promises to renegotiate NAFTA with better labour standards, or to protect jobs. Following the section on NAFTA, under the heading of "jobs", the NDP promises to make Canada a more hospitable place for small business.⁸ In the 45 page platform, only one promise is made to organized labour - a promise to introduce anti-scab legislation.⁹

On the eve of the confidence vote, the British Columbia wing of the NDP drastically altered its relationship with the labour movement. BC NDP leader Carole James led a charge to drastically

⁵Star-Phoenix writers, "Federal parties poised for election", *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix*, 16 Nov 2005, A1.

⁶Alan Whitehorn, "The NDP and the Enigma of Strategic Voting" in *The Canadian Federal Election of 2006*, Jon H. Pammett & Christopher Dornan, eds. (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2006), 103.

⁷Ibid, 96. Of course, the election would be fought almost exclusively on "accountability" and governmental ethics.

⁸New Democratic Party, *Jack Layton: Getting results for people*, 2006 election platform, 29

⁹Ibid, 31.

weaken the party's ties with organized labour. Unions in BC used to be allowed to buy "bulk" memberships in the NDP at 25% of the fee charged for normal individuals. Unions could use these memberships to qualify for delegates at conventions. This practice saw Labour control about one quarter of all the delegates at conventions.¹⁰ The BC NDP changed these rules, banning union memberships to the party; union members would have to join as individuals; further, the rules were changed to one-member, one-vote for all policy decisions, further weakening labour's strength in the BC party.¹¹ This meant that in order for labour to have a meaningful voice in the NDP, enough rank-and-file union members would have to join the party to be able to command a majority of the riding associations and party executive. Union representation on the provincial council was increased from four seats to six seats, but the council has over one hundred members.¹² These changes sent a clear message: the BC NDP was clearly moving away from organized labour. Since the NDP is an integrated party, meaning that is if you are a member at the provincial level you are also one at the federal level, these changes would also have a lasting effect on the membership base for federal elections.

The NDP fielded a full slate of 308 candidates, which included "high profile" labour leaders Sid Ryan (president of CUPE Ontario, running in Oshawa) and Peggy Nash (CAW staffer, running in Parkdale - High Park). While Labour candidates were few and far between, the NDP made a great deal out of the nomination of Paul Summerville as a NDP candidate in St. Pauls (a Toronto riding). Summerville was the former chief economist with RBC Dominion Bank and contributed to the

¹⁰Vancouver Sun, "NDP takes an important step by loosening ties with organized labour", *The Vancouver Sun*, 29 Nov 2005, A12.

¹¹Ibid

¹²Ibid

Financial Post.¹³

The Campaign

In the early days of the campaign the CLC released a pamphlet called “Working Families” which highlighted important issues for union members in the campaign. The pamphlet listed six priorities: health care, pension protection, economic equality for women, standing up for worker’s rights (including anti-scab legislation), education and training for families, and jobs with decent wages and benefits. The pamphlet did not tell unionists to vote for the NDP, but instead encouraged members to think about these issues and vote for a party which would “put working families first”.

The first week of the campaign started with an endorsement from Labour for the NDP, but would end in almost complete disaster for the party. On the second day of the campaign the BCFL endorsed the NDP. Jim Sinclair, president of the BCFL, encouraged members to vote NDP in the federal election. His endorsement did come with reservations, as he told trade unionists that “no political party deserves a blank cheque from the labour movement. We’ve got to stand up for ourselves, no matter who’s in power.”¹⁴ While the endorsement did come with reservations, it was still a better endorsement than what the CLC and PSAC gave to the NDP. Following the strategy set in 2004 PSAC refused to endorse the NDP, choosing to endorse candidates on a riding-by-riding basis. In Ottawa-Centre, Paul Dewar, NDP candidate and vice president of the Ottawa Carleton Elementary School Teachers’ Federation, was told he would not receive the endorsement of PSAC

¹³Star-Phoenix writers, “Federal parties poised for election”, *Saskatoon Star - Phoenix*, 16 Nov 2005, A1. Summerville finished third in the riding and subsequently quit the party. He would go on to join the Liberals and become a supporter of Bob Rae in Rae’s run for the leadership of the Liberal Party of Canada.

¹⁴Maurice Bridge, “Tough fight vowed in B.C. labour talks”, *The Vancouver Sun*, 29 Nov 2005, B7

until after he had been reviewed. The refusal of PSAC to endorse an NDP candidate, even one from the labour movement, suggests that the union was growing increasingly suspicious of the party. Four days into the campaign the CLC weighed in on the election. Ken Georgetti announced that the CLC would not officially endorse the NDP in the election, but also called on union members to vote NDP in ridings where there was an NDP incumbent or “where they were close last time”.¹⁵

At the end of the first week of the campaign the NDP suffered a body blow from the CAW. Buzz Hargrove endorsed Paul Martin and the Liberals in any ridings that the NDP could not win. Hargrove said the Conservatives must be stopped at all costs and in order to do this, it was best to vote Liberal in any riding that the NDP was not competitive in. Hargrove was publicly calling for a Liberal minority with the NDP holding the balance of power.¹⁶ Major newspapers ran a picture of Hargrove and Martin hugging, and pictures of Hargrove putting a leather CAW jacket over the shoulders of Martin. The damage to the NDP was irreparable.

Less than ten years before Hargrove had been a harsh critic of the NDP, positioning himself to the left of the party. Hargrove had condemned the shift to the right and called for the NDP to become a socialist party. Now Hargrove had thrown his support behind the Liberal party, a party which openly supports the interests of business and which is positioned to the right of the NDP. The implications of Hargrove’s endorsement of the Liberals are vast. The CAW is Canada’s most powerful private sector union with vast resources and personnel. While financial donations are no longer legal to political parties, past evidence has suggested the CAW has been better than most

¹⁵Bill Curry & Steven Chase, “Layton counting on traditional union support”, *Globe and Mail*, 2 Dec 2005, A12.

¹⁶Anne Dawson, “CAW boss backs Liberal minority”, *Montreal Gazette*, 3 Dec 2005, D11

unions at mobilizing its members to go to rallies and campaign events. Further, the endorsement suggests that the CAW lost faith in the NDP to either form government or to represent the policy goals of organized labour. It is possible other unions could follow the CAW's lead and abandon the NDP.

The second week of the campaign saw more damage done to the NDP from organized labour. Dan MacLennan, president of the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees (AUPE), urged his members not to “squander votes on long-shot parties which could allow Conservative candidates to squeeze by the Liberals.”¹⁷ MacLennan did not come right out and endorse the Liberals, but clearly he was referring to the NDP as a “long-shot”, especially in conservative Alberta. Mere days after Hargrove had endorsed the Liberals, the CAW council, which included more than 900 delegates from across Canada, passed a resolution endorsing Hargrove's plan for strategic voting.¹⁸ This suggests that not only did the CAW leader move away from the NDP, but that many rank-and-file CAW members supported the strategic voting plan. At the end of the second week Hargrove once again appeared on stage with Martin, and sang the praises of the Liberal party.¹⁹

While most of the second week of the campaign was bad news for the NDP, the CEP did officially endorse the party. Brian Payne, president of the CEP, claimed he was “taken aback” by Hargrove's support of the Liberals, and encouraged CEP members to vote NDP in all ridings across

¹⁷Globe and Mail Staf, “Don't vote for long shots, Alberta union leader says”, *The Globe and Mail*, 5 Dec 2005, A6

¹⁸Standard Staff, “CAW council supports Hargrove call for Liberal minority backed by NDP”, *St. Catharines Standard*, 5 Dec 2005, B4

¹⁹Anne Dawson & James Gordon, “Hargrove stops just short of hugging PM”, *National Post*, 10 Dec 2005, A5.

Canada.²⁰ Days later the vice president of the CEP echoed this endorsement, telling his members that “the only friend to workers in Ottawa is Jack Layton and the NDP.”²¹

At the start of the third week of the campaign, Wayne Samuelson, president of the OFL, endorsed the NDP.²² Samuelson was in Niagara to open the campaign office of Niagara Falls New Democrat Wayne Gates, a CAW member. Gates took the opportunity to disagree with his national leader, telling voters “What Buzz is saying in the media doesn’t really play in this riding. In this riding, there really is no Liberal candidate. We have two Conservatives and the NDP.”²³ The CAW subsequently endorsed Gates in the Niagara Falls riding.

During the third week of the campaign Layton publicly affirmed his support for worker’s rights. Layton was challenged by the National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE) to sign the “Worker’s Bill of Rights”. Layton signed the pledge and made a statement, “A worker’s right to join a union and bargain collectively is an important human right. I’m proud to show my support for these principles.”²⁴ Supporting the Worker’s Bill of Rights marks Layton as different from previous both McLaughlin and McDonough, who often failed at publicly supporting workers’ rights. By signing the pledge, and incorporating a promise for anti-scab legislation in the platform, it appears as if Layton was trying to bring the NDP closer to organized labour. It is also possible that Layton was attempting to secure as much support as he could from unions in an attempt to play down

²⁰Steven Chase & Bill Curry, “Layton bobs, weaves, keeps to NDP script”, *The Globe and Mail*, 7 Dec 2005, A4.

²¹Jason van Rassel, “Alberta labour leader backs Layton’s NDP”, *Calgary Herald*, 9 Dec 2005, A5

²²Niagara Falls Review, “Gates calls on labour leader to open campaign office”, *Niagara Falls Review*, 12 Dec 2005, A3

²³Ibid

²⁴Mike Blanchfield, “Layton signs pledge”, *Regina Leader Post*, 12 December 2005, A5.

the CAW's call for Labour to support the Liberals.

While the third week of the campaign saw Labour and the NDP coming closer, the fourth week once again saw the NDP under attack from Labour. The fourth week of the campaign saw Quebec labour weigh in on the election campaign, and it was not good for the NDP. Early in the week the QFL endorsed the Bloc Quebecois and called for all of the QFL's members to vote for the Bloc. This came after the QFL refused to endorse any party at all in the 2004 general election. In his speech endorsing the Bloc, Henri Masse, president of the QFL, launched an attack on the NDP. He told voters that the NDP's centralist view favours greater power in Ottawa, which is disadvantageous to Quebec; he provided an example of this - the NDP was calling for a national day care plan, while Quebec labour had long supported the already established Quebec day-care plan. Masse also suggested that Labour could not support the NDP because the NDP had supported the 1982 Constitution Act. Perhaps the most scathing attack on the NDP came when Masse told union members that when he attends conventions of the CLC, other labour leaders from English Canada say "the Bloc is just as good *and sometimes better* at defending worker's interests than the NDP."²⁵

Near the end of the fourth week of the campaign Hargrove and the CAW weighed in on the issue of Labour in Quebec. Appearing on stage with Bloc leader Gilles Duceppe, Hargrove called on the 25 000 members of the CAW in Quebec to vote and actively campaign for the Bloc.²⁶ Indeed, Duceppe even got his own CAW leather jacket, just as Paul Martin had. Hargrove's support of the Bloc makes much more sense than his support of the Liberal party. The Bloc has always been a

²⁵Kevin Dougherty, "Que. labour throws support behind Bloc", *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix*, 20 Dec 2005, B7. Emphasis mine.

²⁶Kevin Dougherty, "Quebec auto workers give support to Duceppe", *National Post*, 23 Dec 2005, A8.

labour-friendly party, supporting Labour's agenda in Ottawa. Further, the NDP has never been competitive in Quebec, while very clearly the Bloc is.

The fifth week of the campaign fell over Christmas and New Years, and no party or organization actively campaigned during this time. Near the end of the sixth week of the election period the CLC launched their campaign. The campaign, titled "Better Choice Campaign", did not endorse the NDP. Instead, the CLC called on unionists to look at policy issues that were important to the labour movement, and assess which party would support these issues.²⁷ This tied in very closely to the "working families" pamphlet that had been launched at the very start of the campaign. Barb Byers, vice president of the CLC, noted that while the labour organization would not be endorsing the NDP, many of the CLC's election priorities were closely aligned with the NDP's platform.²⁸ This marks the second election in a row where the CLC refused to endorse the NDP.

The seventh week of the campaign saw the NDP make a number of promises to the labour movement and many unions endorsed the NDP. During a major labour rally put on by the BCFL, Layton made a number of campaign promises to organized labour. Layton told the labour crowd that the NDP "will stand up for working people. We'll fight for laws that put working people at the head of the line in front of the banks [referring to plant closure laws]. We'll work for pay equity and for fair wages. And we will try once again to bring laws that get so called replacement workers out of the picture in the national legislation."²⁹ This marked the largest number of promises made to organized labour, explicitly about labour issues, in the recent history of the NDP. Layton was clearly

²⁷Rod Mickleburgh, "CLC puts issues at forefront", *Globe and Mail*, 5 Jan 2006, S1

²⁸Erin Warner, "Labour Congress plans to stay neutral", *Leader Post*, 11 Jan 2006, B2.

²⁹National Post staff, "NDP promises labour laws", *National Post*, 9 Jan 2006, A8

attempting to get votes from the labour movement, and was tailoring his speeches directly to Labour. Past leaders, especially McDonough, had repeated standard campaign speeches to Labour rallies, keeping the content for Labour the same as the content for the general public.

At the same rally the NDP received a number of glowing endorsements from Labour. Paul Moist, president of CUPE, told those present “There’s not a Canadian that wants a majority government. Send New Democrats to Ottawa to exercise power.”³⁰ Ken Neuman, national director of the United Steelworkers, said it had a ‘clear and deliberate message’ for Steelworkers in Canada: “we want you to elect as many NDP folks as you can.”³¹ Besides the endorsements from CUPE and the USWA, the NDP also received endorsements at the Labour rally from the BCFL, from The International Longshore and Warehouse Union, and the Telecommunications Workers Union.³²

In Ontario, the Canadian Employment and Immigration Union (CEIU) took what for it was the unusual step of becoming involved in the election. CEIU Ontario vice president Ian Shaw held a news conference in Oshawa where he told the press “As a union representing front-line federal workers across the region, we have taken this - for us - unusual step of direct political endorsement because we feel compelled to speak out during this election.”³³ Shaw readily admitted his union was breaking protocol and government regulations by becoming involved in the election campaign, but he said the issues at hand are more important than following regulations and protocol. Shaw ended the news conference by endorsing Sid Ryan, NDP candidate for Oshawa and president of CUPE

³⁰Bruce Campion-Smith, “Layton rallies unionists”, *Toronto Star*, 8 Jan 2006, A02.

³¹*Ibid.*

³²Elizabeth Thompson, “NDP will stick up for workers, Layton promises B.C rally”, *Edmonton Journal*, 8 Jan 2006, A5.

³³Stan Josey, “Union support is made to measure”, *Toronto Star*, 10 Jan 2006, B2

Ontario. Shaw also presented Ryan with a jacket bearing the crest of the CEIU. Later in the week, Shaw presented CEIU jackets and endorsements to Jack Layton, Olivia Chow (NDP candidate in Toronto-Danforth) and Marilyn Churley (NDP candidate in Beaches-East York).

The eighth week of the campaign saw the NDP receive some more endorsements. However, many of them were not at the national, or even provincial, level. PSAC had bought into the logic of strategic voting, and was endorsing candidates on a riding-by-riding basis. In Ottawa, PSAC endorsed four NDP candidates and two Liberal candidates.³⁴ In northern Ontario, the Sudbury and District Labour Council endorsed two New Democrats. The council endorsed Gerry McIntaggart and Claude Gravelle, the NDP candidates in Sudbury and Nickel Belt.³⁵ Both ridings are heavily unionized mining ridings, and both have a history of sending Liberals to Ottawa, although Nickel Belt has sometimes elected NDP members. This election would prove no different. In Calgary, the Calgary and District Labour Council endorsed two members of the Labour Council who were running in the election. Holly Heffernan, the NDP candidate in Calgary Southwest and a member of the Labour Council, was endorsed. Heffernan was running against Stephen Harper in Calgary Southwest, so the endorsement was a token gesture. In Calgary Centre-North, the president of the Labour Council, Peggy Askin, was endorsed. Askin was running for the Marxist-Leninist Party in Calgary Centre-North.³⁶ Given that Askin was president of the Labour Council, it is no surprise she was able to get the council to endorse her, and not the New Democrat in that riding.

³⁴Vito Pilioci, "In Ottawa, PSAC picks 4 NDP and 2 Liberal candidates", *Ottawa Citizen*, 19 Jan 2006, A4

³⁵Star staff, "Labour council backs NDP candidates", *Sudbury Star*, 21 Jan 2006, A4.

³⁶Herald staff, "Local labour council endorses candidates", *Calgary Herald*, 21 Jan 2006, A5

The NDP did receive a province wide endorsement during the eighth week of the campaign. OPSEU encouraged its members to vote for the NDP. Leah Casselman of OPSEU used the endorsement as an opportunity to attack Hargrove's call for strategic voting: "The boss does not become the friend of working people just by putting on a union jacket. The boss is the boss is the boss!"³⁷ Paul Moist, president of CUPE, also attacked strategic voting during the eighth week of the campaign. In a letter to the *National Post*, Moist suggested that Harper was running a campaign which channelled "popular anger at Liberal arrogance and corruption" into support for the Conservatives.³⁸ Moist called upon those who were angry with the Liberals to vote NDP because strategic voting "doesn't work. Not all voters are able to determine who has a chance of winning and who does not, and they shouldn't rely on Liberal rhetoric to make their choice."³⁹

In the final stages of the campaign, Hargrove managed to cause a great deal of trouble for Martin and the Liberals. Campaigning in Quebec, Hargrove reiterated his call for progressive voters to support the Bloc. His reason, however, was different from his previous statements that the Bloc could be counted on to support Labour rights. Hargrove was concerned that Harper was a separatist. Harper had been campaigning on promises to increase provincial rights, and grant more provincial autonomy from Ottawa. Hargrove thought that "Harper's view of federalism in Canada is not going to keep Canada together over the long term," and that Harper was "undermining the Confederation as we know it today."⁴⁰ Hargrove saw that increasing provincial rights would allow for Quebec to

³⁷Andrew Mills, "Layton energizes supporters", *Toronto Star*, 15 Jan 2006, A3

³⁸Paul Moist, "Be strategic: vote NDP", *National Post*, 20 Jan 2006, A16

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Mark Kennedy and Allan Woods, "Key labour backer puts Martin in stew", *Vancouver Sun*, 19 Jan 2006, A1

push its claim for sovereignty. In order to prevent this from happening, the Conservatives had to be kept out of office. In Hargrove's mind the best way to do this would be to support the Bloc. This forced Martin to publicly defend Harper in public, telling the press that Harper was not a separatist.

The final week of the campaign saw the NDP suffer more blows from the Labour movement. The Quebec wing of PSAC encouraged all of its members to vote for the Bloc.⁴¹ This came mere days after the rest of PSAC launched a membership awareness campaign called "Think, Ask, Vote" that encouraged PSAC members to view the party platforms of all the parties, and decide which party would be better for "public service issues". Ed Cashman, a regional vice president with PSAC, was very explicit in saying that his union was not telling his members how to vote.⁴² While PSAC Quebec had endorsed the Bloc, PSAC in English speaking Canada was refusing to endorse any party at all.

During the final days of the campaign, The Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists (ACTRA) issued a questionnaire to each of the parties in the election, asking various questions about policy issues. Stephen Waddell, the president of ACTRA, said he was 'disappointed' with the Liberal response, and noted that the Conservatives did not respond at all. While Waddell said that he was 'pleased' with the responses from the NDP and the Bloc, ACTRA did not end up endorsing any political party in the election.⁴³ While neither the endorsement of ACTRA nor PSAC could be considered critical to the NDP campaign, it is telling that these unions

⁴¹Pauline Tam, "Proulx holds on to Hull-Aylmer", *Ottawa Citizen*, 24 Jan 2006, D10.

⁴²Ed Cashman, "We are not telling our PSAC members how to vote", *Ottawa Citizen*, 22 Jan 2006, A15.

⁴³Chris Cobb, "Can you hear me now?", *The Ottawa Citizen*, 22 Jan 2006, C2. It should be noted that while ACTRA may not be a traditional trade union, it is affiliated with the CLC and does act as a legal collective bargaining agent.

did not encourage their members to vote NDP.

Results and Post Election Aftermath

On 23 January 2006 twenty-nine New Democrats were sent to Ottawa. Many of them had a background in labour including Pat Martin in Winnipeg Centre, Yvon Godin in Acadie-Bathurst, David Christopherson in Hamilton Centre, Peggy Nash in Parkdale - High Park, Wayne Marston in Hamilton East - Stoney Creek, Paul Dewar in Ottawa Centre, and Catherine Bell in Vancouver Island North. The majority of the MPs with a labour background came from Ontario, but trade unionists were also elected in Manitoba, British Columbia and New Brunswick. While not a trade unionist, Joe Comartin was re-elected in Windsor with the help of the CAW. Sid Ryan, in Oshawa, lost again to the Conservative candidate in the riding. Ryan suggested one of the major reasons he lost the riding was because of Hargrove's strategic voting strategy. "I would go to many doorsteps where people would tell me, 'but Buzz is saying vote Liberal.' I had to spend time everywhere explaining this was not the case in Oshawa."⁴⁴

The NDP was able to increase both their seat count and percentage of the popular vote from the 2004 election. It is undeniable, however, that Hargrove's call for strategic voting seriously damaged the NDP. Hargrove had once been a harsh critic of the NDP on the left, calling for the NDP to move to the left and abandon the Third Way policies that McDonough had adopted. Hargrove had also criticised the party for not being receptive to Labour's goals during election periods. It is utterly ridiculous that Hargrove would take the CAW's endorsement to Liberals if he believed in a socialist vision. Further, strategic voting is flawed. Collecting riding-by-riding information is very difficult before an election - almost no polling is done at a riding level. This

⁴⁴Tony Van Alphen, "How Hargrove upset labour, NDP", *Toronto Star*, 27 Jan 2006, F1.

would make it hard to judge if a progressive voter should cast a ballot for a Liberal or a New Democrat.

The call for strategic voting calls into question Hargrove's motives. If Hargrove was a socialist he should have recognized that both the Liberals and the Conservatives are neoliberal parties which are barely distinguishable from each other. While the NDP is certainly not a socialist party, they are ostensibly different from the Liberals and the Conservatives. If, on the other hand, Hargrove was simply attempting to align himself behind the Liberals because he thought they would win the election, Hargrove should have considered how receptive the Liberals have been in the past to adopting Labour friendly policies.

The strategic voting strategy certainly did not work. The Conservatives formed a minority government, and there were not enough NDP MPs in the House to hold the balance of power. In spite of these facts, Hargrove stood by his decision: "I think if you look at the results, it worked. I would certainly consider recommending to our council that we do it again."⁴⁵ Hargrove wrote an editorial in the *Globe and Mail* standing by his decision. Hargrove felt that "the fundamental direction of Canadian society was at stake" and that his plan would allow for policies that would "enhance equality and security, support national child care, new spending on housing and culture, the aboriginal deal, new protections for workers, and the continuing support for Kyoto."⁴⁶ Hargrove felt that the CAW would have more political influence if the union adopted an independent, flexible

⁴⁵Ibid

⁴⁶Buzz Hargrove, "Why I did what I did", *Globe and Mail*, 26 Jan 2006, A23. It is somewhat ironic that under the Harper regime virtually the opposite of all of the policy goals has occurred. With the support of the Dion Liberals, Harper has cut social security, ended the national child care program, ended the support for Kyoto and defeated a private members bill to create federal anti-scab legislation.

approach rather than being treated as the “automatic arm of any particular party.”⁴⁷

The 2006 election saw the CLC distancing itself from the NDP. The CLC encouraged its members to vote for the NDP only in ridings that had an NDP incumbent or in a riding where the NDP candidate was close in the 2004 election. Essentially, the CLC was endorsing Hargrove’s call for strategic voting. The choice for the CLC to run an issues campaign, without even suggesting that the NDP was closest to the CLC’s position on the highlighted issues, suggests that the CLC no longer saw the NDP as the ‘political arm of organized labour’.

While Hargrove may have thought strategic voting was the best strategy for the CAW, many rank-and-file members of the union disagreed. Many rallies during the campaign saw CAW members carrying anti-Hargrove signs, and wearing buttons that said “Buzz Off. I’m voting NDP.”⁴⁸ Peggy Nash, a CAW staffer who was elected as an NDP MP in Toronto, was critical of the strategic voting strategy, suggesting that it did more harm than good.⁴⁹ During the course of the research for this project, I read numerous letters to the editors from CAW members across Canada who were overly critical of the strategy, and called on CAW members to vote for the NDP. Clearly, there was a gap between Hargrove and some rank-and-file members.

Criticism of strategic voting came from other unions as well. Leah Casselman of OPSEU spoke out against Hargrove: “Strategic voting hasn’t worked and it won’t work. Hargrove should not have been speaking for the labour movement.”⁵⁰ Ken Neumann of the USWA wrote a scathing

⁴⁷Buzz Hargrove, “Utterly convinced CAW position is right”, *National Post*, 1 Feb 2006, FP23.

⁴⁸Tony Von Alphen, 27 Jan 2006, F1

⁴⁹Ibid

⁵⁰Ibid

letter in the *Globe and Mail* suggesting that “the vast majority of unions and their leaders simply don’t agree and are sticking to supporting the New Democratic Party as the best choice for working people.”⁵¹ Clearly the CAW did not speak for the entire labour movement in the 2006 Federal election.

For its part, the NDP seemed to have made an attempt to move itself closer to labour in the 2006 election. Some high profile labour activists were NDP candidates; and more importantly, Layton made a number of stops at Labour events and signed the ‘Worker’s Bill of Rights’. At campaign events for the labour movement, Layton made promises to support the political aims of Labour rather than just repeating the standard campaign messages - a practise previous NDP leaders followed. Even though Layton was making an attempt to reach out to labour, there was no significant change in NDP policy. The platform contained numerous promises to business, while only mentioning labour once. Granted, the platform did promise that the NDP would implement anti-scab legislation, but that promise was but one line to organized labour in a forty-five page document.

While Layton may have attempted to bring the NDP closer to Labour, clearly the actions of Hargrove and the CAW drove a massive wedge between the labour movement and the NDP. Unions seemed to be split over the strategic voting issue. Some unions besides the CAW explicitly endorsed strategic voting, while others remained staunch NDP supporters. For its part the CLC did not endorse the NDP. The issue of which party, if any, labour should support at election time was not resolved in the 2006 election, and it does not appear as if this question will have an answer in the

⁵¹Ken Neumann, “Why we didn’t do what Buzz Hargrove did”, *The Globe and Mail*, 31 Jan 2006, A15

near future.

Conclusions

The NDP as a Neoliberal Party

The NDP and organized labour are quite clearly on divergent paths. The NDP continues to drive towards the centre of the political spectrum in an attempt to gain multi-class support. The NDP seems more interested in gaining seats at any cost, rather than promoting the agenda of Labour. It appears as if the NDP hopes to replace the Liberal party as the party of the quasi-left in Canada, much as the British Labour Party supplanted the British Liberals. As the party attempts to open up to more multi-class support, Labour becomes increasingly marginalised in the party.

A rift which arguably started well before the 1988 election was exacerbated during that election. The NDP saw 1988 as the chance to replace the Liberal Party, and to this effect campaigned on a broad platform of social democratic issues, including the party's traditional strengths of health care and social programs. This, unto itself, is not a bad thing, indeed it shows that the NDP had a strong social democratic orientation during the onset of neoliberalism. However, the 1988 election would rapidly become a one issue election - Free Trade. By not concentrating solely on Free Trade, the NDP quickly returned to its third place status in the House of Commons. Labour had urged the NDP to only campaign on the Free Trade question, and parts of the labour movement felt betrayed by the NDP for not adhering to a Free Trade only agenda.

The problems between labour and the NDP were made worse in the 1993 election. The Federal NDP was suffering massive blowback from the actions of the Ontario NDP. By not immediately condemning Rae's attacks on labour, the Federal party had, in the eyes of some, implicitly endorsed *The Social Contract*. The NDP was in a particularly difficult position as the Federal party must rely on the infrastructure of the provincial wings during election campaigns - the

federal party has no permanent infrastructure. This meant that should the party have chosen to condemn Rae, it could have theoretically risked being cut off of support from the Ontario NDP. In the end the 1993 election proved to be disastrous for the NDP, seeing the party reduced to nine seats and locked out of Ontario. Besides the *Social Contract* labour felt as if the NDP had ignored the issue of NAFTA during the 1993 election, an issue that was of the utmost importance to labour. The situation seemed to be momentarily made better during the 1997 campaign when the NDP made a concerted effort to reach out to labour. Even though the NDP did include promises to labour in their platform and paid more attention to labour issues during the campaign, there was not a significant shift in the party's discourse nor program. The NDP was still seeking to replace the Liberals during the 1997 election, and was in the process of becoming even more of a 'big tent' party. Of course, as the NDP opened itself up and shifted towards the centre, labour became increasingly sidelined in the NDP. The aftermath of the 1997 election saw the NDP forced into making a programmatic choice: should the party continue to drive towards the centre and seek to become appealing to a larger section of the electorate, or should the NDP remain where it was at?

McDonough, of course, chose to move the NDP closer to the centre of the political spectrum in order to capture more votes. McDonough chose to base the transformation of the NDP on the transformation that British Labour undertook. This change saw the NDP implicitly embrace neoliberalism as an ideology, even if the party had not adopted all of the policies of neoliberalism. The 2000 election saw the transformed NDP make no significant gains in the polls. The NDP faced heavy criticism from Buzz Hargrove and the CAW during this time for shifting to right. The 2004 election saw a new leader in Jack Layton who had pledged to move the party to the left. The new leader, however, did not make a difference in the direction of the NDP. The NDP's goal in the 2004

election was to win over soft liberal voters - the NDP was still attempting to replace the Liberals. The 2006 election saw a continuation of this strategy, but the party was dogged by Buzz Hargrove's call for strategic voting and his support of the Liberal party.

Throughout the course of time in this study the NDP has gradually drifted rightwards, embracing neoliberalism as an ideology. This is quite evident while examining the platforms of the party. In each of the six election platforms studied, explicit promises were made to business, and it was detailed how the NDP would help business prosper. Promises to labour were made in the 1997 platform and the 2006 platform - promises to introduce anti-scab legislation should the NDP be elected. In the 2000 election platform the NDP talked to labour working in cooperation with business to seek solutions for EI recipients. The election platforms of the NDP give a clear indication of the direction the party was heading - the discourse of the NDP has become increasingly neoliberal, treating business and the market as supreme, and placing more importance on business than on labour. The NDP made no promises to introduce friendly labour legislation, or to undo some of the assaults on trade union freedoms sustained by labour. While the NDP was not openly espousing neoliberal treatments towards organized labour, the party certainly was not promising to improve conditions for labour either. As the NDP became increasingly neoliberal, labour became increasingly sidelined by the party.

Perhaps another striking example of the neoliberal shift within the NDP is the rhetoric used by the party to address potential voters. The 1988 platform was addressed to "ordinary Canadians". This changed over time to "average Canadians", to "ordinary people", while the 2006 program was simply addressed to bring solutions to "people". Przeworski notes that social democratic parties often shift rhetoric to appeal to "masses" (or in this case, "people") in order to broaden electoral

appeal.¹ Przeworski goes on to suggest that by broadening their appeals to the “masses”, social democrats weaken the general salience of class as a determinant of political behaviour of individuals.² This is quite indicative of what the NDP has attempted to do. The party has grown less concerned with appealing to the working class or to organized labour in an attempt to become a party with broader appeal. In their attempts to turn into a broader electoral coalition the NDP has increasingly alienated the labour movement from their own ranks.

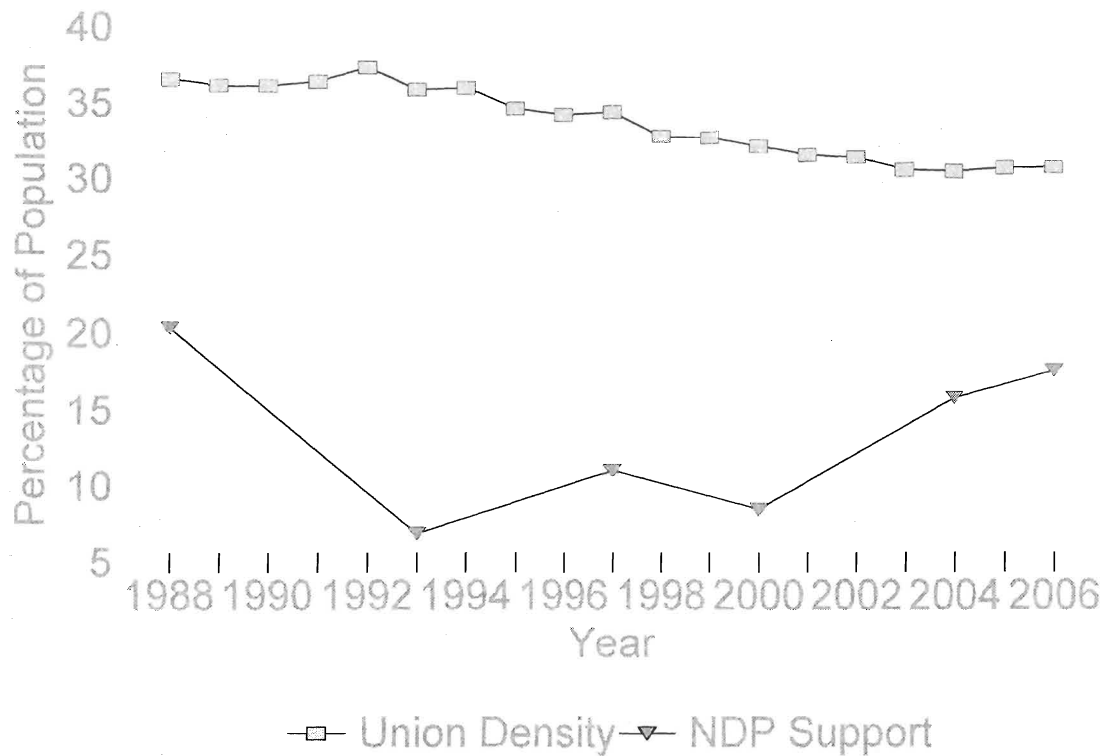
The Labour Vote

In both the 1997 and 2000 election rank-and-file union members were more likely to vote for radical right wing parties, Reform and the Canadian Alliance respectively, than they were to vote for the NDP; and it has been suggested by the authors of the Canadian Election Survey that this trend will not change.³ While it would be impossible to mobilize *every* union member to vote for the NDP, the support the NDP receives at election time has been consistently lower than the proportion of electorate that is unionized:

¹Adam Przeworski, *Capitalism and Social Democracy*, (Paris: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 27.

²Ibid.

³Elisabeth Gidengil, André Blais, Richard Nadeau, Neil Nevitte, *Making Sense of the Vote: The 2000 Canadian Election*, Paper presented at the biennial meeting of the Association for Canadian Studies in the United States, San Antonio, Texas, November 14-18, 2001, 7

Table 1: Unionization Rates and NDP Popular Support

The popular support for the NDP remains at about half the level of union density in Canada. It must be noted, however, that the NDP enjoys support outside of union members, which suggests that rank-and-file trade union support for the NDP is very low: members of the CLC do not consistently vote for the NDP.

What Is To Be Done?

Labour issues have been largely ignored by the NDP. Promises for anti-scab legislation are not included in NDP platforms with any consistency, card check certification is ignored by the party, Labour's concerns about NAFTA have been largely relegated to the sidelines of the party, and the

NDP does not seem at all interested in nominating a significant number of candidates with ties to the union movement. For its part the CLC has been unable to mobilize voters in any significant way, although, it must be asked if the CLC has any vested interest in electing New Democrats given the direction the party has taken with Labour. With the new restrictions on campaign finance, it is becoming difficult for the CLC and affiliated unions to provide financial support to the NDP. What can be done?

Katrina Burgess proposes that once the organizational ties between labour and parties become weak enough, parties will begin to make centrist reforms which may be exceptionally damaging to the labour movement. This causes labour leaders to find themselves in a 'loyalty dilemma' in which they 'must choose between supporting reforms, thereby remaining loyal to the party while behaving disloyally towards workers, or resisting reforms, remaining loyal to workers while behaving disloyally towards the party.'⁴ During the 1980s and 1990s, a fundamental shift occurred inside social-democratic parties in western nations.⁵ This shift saw changes in economic rhetoric and the emergence of post-materialist values, while socialist leaders redefined their objectives and sought to sever connections with Keynesian pasts. In turn, unions frequently assumed the function of an *intra or extra* organizational counter-power.⁶

⁴Katrina Burgess, *Parties and Unions in the New Global Economy*, (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004), 9

⁵By way of example, Burgess lists the Labour Parties in Britain and New Zealand, Peronist Party in Argentina, the National Revolutionary Movement in Bolivia, Solidarity in Poland, the African National Congress Party in South Africa, as well as the social democratic parties in Germany, Sweden and Austria.

⁶Gerassimos Moschonas, *In The Name of Social Democracy. The Great Transformation: 1945 to Present*. Trans. Gregory Elliot. (New York: Verso, 2002), 133. Emphasis mine.

This shift is occurring within the NDP. Certainly the provincial wings of the party have undergone a number of reforms and policy initiatives that have been damaging to labour. At the Federal level the party is shifting further to the right and relegating labour to the sidelines of the party. The CAW has most certainly gone through a loyalty dilemma, and the actions of the CLC during the 2006 election suggest that the seeds of a loyalty dilemma are occurring there as well.

Burgess suggests that labour leaders have three options when they are facing a loyalty dilemma. First, they can engage in ‘demand-making that conforms to the norms governing their interaction with the party: a *norm-based voice*’; second, they can engage in ‘demand making that violates the norms governing their interaction with the party: a *norm-breaking voice* (intra-organizational counter-power); lastly, they can ‘defect from the alliance with the political party: *the choice of exit* (extra-organizational counter-power).⁷ These strategies can form as a continuum, with labour first choosing a norm-based voice, then moving to a norm-breaking voice, and finally exiting from their alliance with a political party.

Canadian trade unions have moved along a continuum of these options. The Canadian labour movement engaged in a norm-breaking voice after the 1988 election, suggesting that the NDP did not campaign against Free Trade strongly enough. This norm-breaking voice continued through subsequent elections, in some elections the opposition to the NDP from within the labour movement was quite strong. Perhaps the best example of this were the very public attacks Hargrove made against the NDP leading up to the 2000 election. In 2004 some unions began an ‘exit’ strategy where union affiliates suggested that they ‘would not tell members how to vote’, or, instead of supporting a single party judged candidates on a riding by riding basis. In the 2006 election the CAW engaged

⁷Burgess, *op. cit.*, 9. Emphasis original.

in exit by openly endorsing the Liberal party of Canada.

The specific case of labour in Quebec must be mentioned. With the rise of the Bloc Quebecois, most trade union federations in Quebec and the Quebec arms of national unions exited from the NDP and chose, in some elections, to provide support to the Bloc. It appears as if the Bloc has become the party of labour in Quebec.

It would be misguided for Canadian labour to follow the CAW's lead and move to the Liberals. The Liberals are simply another party representing the interests of Capital, who have no real interest in furthering either a working class or trade union agenda. A move to the right is not a move that labour should embrace. Neoliberalism has succeeded in making workers think of themselves as atomized individuals, not as members of a class; class consciousness is shrinking, not growing. This 'declassification' of politics, as well as the persistence of regionalism, language, and various post-materialist issues to dominate the discourse of Canadian politics, suggests that Canada is not ready for a Labour party.

Thus, Canadian labour has three options available to it: remain in an alliance with the NDP as it currently is; attempt to 'salvage' the NDP by taking over the party from within; or to sever all ties with the NDP. Clearly, remaining in the alliance with the NDP without attempt to exert any change on the NDP is misguided. This strategy will not see labour issues in political discourse, and labour will continually be pushed to the edges of the party.

An internal reorganization of the NDP may be a viable project for labour to undertake. This would require Labour to take a controlling role in individual riding associations, as well as the party's executive. This project would require a massive organizational effort, and would probably be met with a great deal of resistance from the rank-and-file members of the NDP. If this strategy

was successful, however, it would be possible for Labour to increase the number of labour-friendly candidates nominated during elections, and would also allow for NDP policies to closely mirror the policy objectives of Labour. The question remains: would a takeover of the NDP actually exert meaningful change in Canadian politics? The NDP has consistently been the 'Third Party' in Canadian politics, and under neoliberalism has never gained more than 25% of the popular vote. The Canadian populous is leery of trade union power, and survey data suggests that Canadians want to see unions have *less* political power, not more.⁸

The CLC has the option to exit from the alliance they have with the NDP. The QFL acts independently of political parties, during some elections the QFL has endorsed the Bloc, during other elections the QFL has chosen not to become involved at all. The CLC could adopt a very similar strategy. The NDP is currently counting on Labour's support without giving anything back to Labour. If the CLC acted independently of the NDP, the NDP could be forced to take Labour's agenda more seriously if the party sought the electoral support of Labour. This strategy may have merits, but considering that Labour is a marginalised group within the NDP currently, it is more likely than not that Labour would lose what small voice it has if it was operating outside of the NDP.

Clearly, the question facing organized labour is one of remaining in an alliance with the NDP, or leaving the alliance to start a new political project. Organized labour must ask itself: "is the NDP better than nothing, or is nothing better than the NDP?"

⁸Neil Nevitte, Andre Blais, Elisabeth Gidengil & Richard Nadeau, *Unsteady State: The 1997 Canadian Federal Election*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2000), 107.

Appendix I: NDP Election Results

Table 2: NDP Seats Held

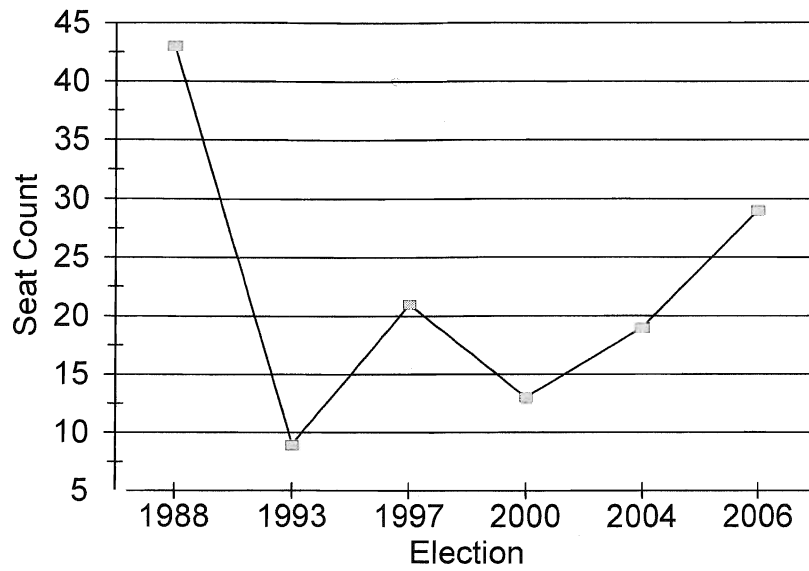
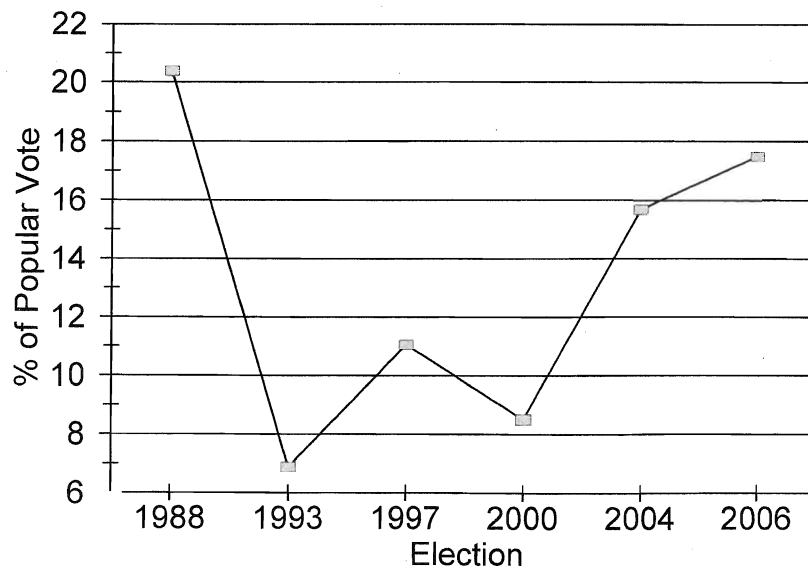


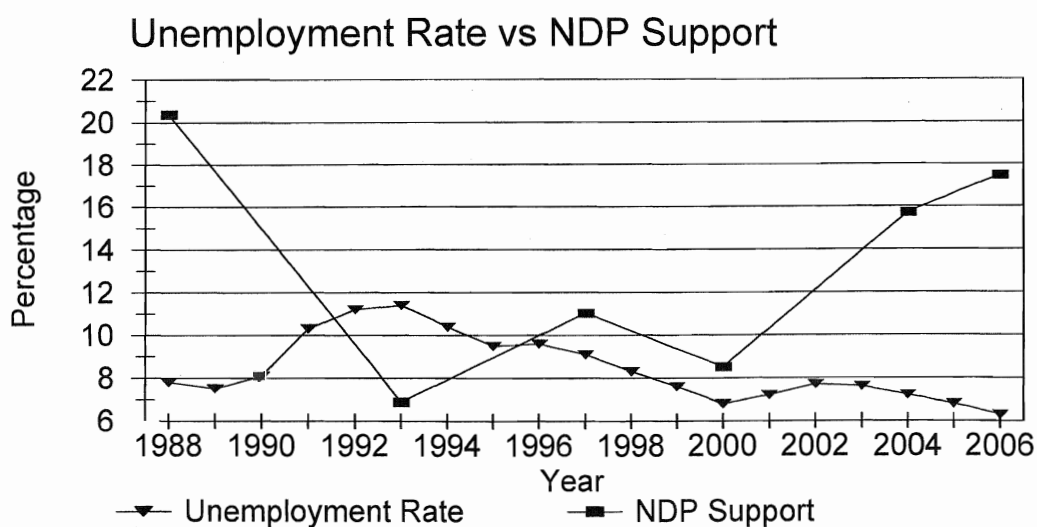
Table 3: NDP Popular Support



Appendix II: Unemployment and NDP Support

Pervious work has been done on economic conditions and the success, or lack thereof, of the NDP. Erickson has found that changing economic conditions have little predictable effects on NDP success at the polls.¹ While unemployment rates do not give an exhaustive look at the state of the Canadian economy, they are still an useful indicator of economic conditions. Looking at both NDP popular support and the unemployment rate during the years of this study, there does not appear to be any correlation between the unemployment rate and the NDP's success at the polls.

Table 4: Unemployment Rate and NDP Popular Support²



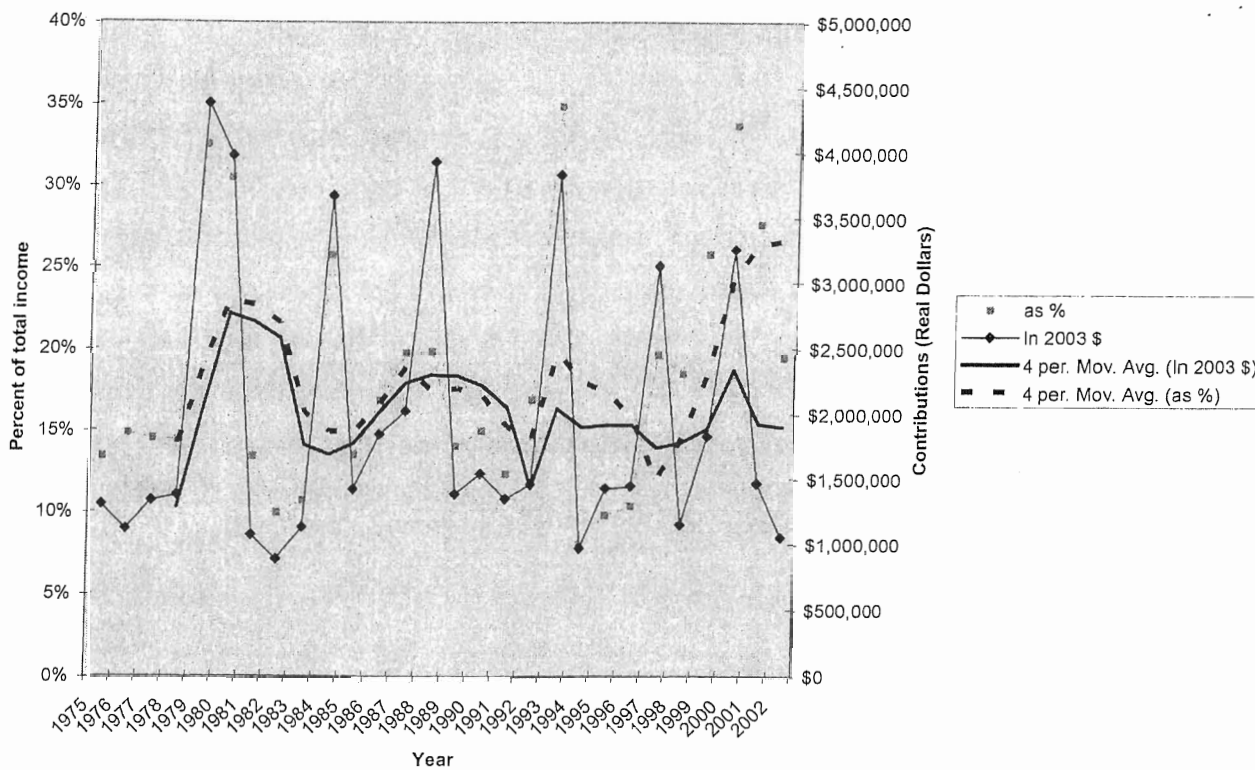
¹Lynda Erickson, "CCF-NDP Popularity and the Economy" in *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, XXI:1, March 1988, 108.

²Human Resources Development Canada, *Indicators of Well-Being in Canada*, retrieved from <http://www4.hrsdc.gc.ca/indicator.jsp?lang=en&indicatorid=16>, accessed 02 sept 08.

Appendix III: Labour's Financial Contributions to the NDP

The following chart, compiled by Janzen & Young¹, shows union contributions to the NDP for the time period from 1975 to 2003. This data is helpful to understand the institutional relationship between the NDP and organized labour.

Table 5: Financial Contributions to the NDP by Organized Labour



¹Harold Jansen & Lisa Young, "Solidarity Forever? The NDP, Organized Labour, and the Changing Face of Party Finance in Canada." Paper presented to the 2005 Annual Meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, London, Ontario.

Appendix IV: Federal NDP Structure

The Federal NDP is an amalgamation of the provincial wings of the party, and as such, do not have their own infrastructure themselves. The Federal party relies on the provincial wings for infrastructure during election campaigns. The Federal NDP is governed by a “Federal Council” which makes policy decisions and directs the party as a whole. The Federal Council has the following sub-bodies: Officers, Executive, Council Federal Riding Representatives, Labour Representatives, Regional Participation of Women Representatives, Youth Representatives, Equity Committee Representatives, and Provincial & Territorial Table Officers. The total composition of the Federal Council usually sits around 100 members (the 2006 - 2008 council has just over 100 ‘places at the table’, but some positions are vacant). There are about twenty positions on the Federal Council that are held by organized labour. Labour has an “associate president” at the ‘officer’ level, two labour representatives sit on the executive, and there is a labour youth representative. Under the category of ‘Labour Representatives’, the following unions and labour centrals are represented: BCFL, CEP, CUPE, IAMAW, IBEW, ILWU, NUPGE, PSAC, SEIU, UFCW, & USWA. Before the 2006 election, the CAW was represented on the national council.

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