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**Woodworkers and Legitimacy:
The IWA in Canada, 1937-1957**

by

Stephen Gray

B.A., Simon Fraser University, 1977

M.A., Simon Fraser University, 1982

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in the
Department of History

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Abstract

During the late 1930s and early 1940s, as part of a broad North American phenomenon of industrial militancy and labour law reform, the International Woodworkers of America (IWA) became recognized as the legitimate bargaining agency for most woodworkers throughout the Pacific coast. In British Columbia, as a basis for consolidating trade unionism and furthering the class struggle within the important forest industry, a well-organized cadre of communist trade union militants channelled the syndicalist and revolutionary traditions of earlier twentieth century woodworker organizations into District One of the IWA, and into compliance with state institutions governing industrial relations that emerged during World War Two.

By 1948, though, the quest for legitimacy had entrapped the communist leaders of District One in a restrictive web of institutional, bureaucratic and political relationships from which they sought escape by severing ties with the union they had struggled hard to establish. Their fledgling Woodworkers' Industrial Union of Canada, considered illegitimate by both the state and the mainstream labour movement, attracted only a small minority of woodworkers and enjoyed a very short, unremarkable history.

Through a detailed examination of union, industry and state records of industrial relations activity, this thesis provides both narrative and analysis of a complex course of events leading from the era of the open shop, through the attainment of union recognition and a period of consolidation, to a final confrontation in 1947-48 within the Canadian IWA between two distinct visions of trade union practice.

Ultimately, the early, militant woodworker traditions, subsumed within communist industrial unionism, proved to be in contradiction with the institutional structures governing relations between labour and capital in postwar Canada. The post-1948 leaders of IWA District One more closely reflected the emerging North American reality in their approach to trade unionism and industrial relations than did their predecessors. Out of the intense struggles of the 1930s and 40s, a full-blown business unionism emerged by the latter

1950s as the governing programme of the modern Canadian IWA, albeit a programme not universally accepted by rank-and-file woodworkers.

To my family

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List of Abbreviations

AFL	American Federation of Labour
APL	Alberni Pacific Lumber Company
BCFL	British Columbia Federation of Labour
BCLA	British Columbia Loggers' Association
BSW	Bloedel, Stewart and Welch Limited
CCF	Cooperative Commonwealth Federation
CCL	Canadian Congress of Labour
CIO	Congress of Industrial Organizations
CMA	Canadian Manufacturers' Association
CPC	Communist Party of Canada
CPUSA	Communist Party of the United States of America
CWL	Canadian Western Lumber Company
DB 17	Decision Bulletin 17
FIR	Forest Industrial Relations Limited
ICA Act	Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act
ICA Act (1947)	Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1947
ICA Act (1948)	Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1947, Amendment Act, 1948
IDI Act	Industrial Disputes Investigation Act
ILMA	Interior Lumber Manufacturers' Association
ILWU	International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union
ITM	Industrial Timber Mills Limited
IWA	International Woodworkers of America
IWW	Industrial Workers of the World
LPP	Labour Progressive Party
LRB	Labour Relations Board
LSWU	Lumber and Sawmill Workers' Union

LWIU	Lumber Workers' Industrial Union
NAC	National Archives of Canada
NAM	National Association of Manufacturers
NLRB	National Labor Relations Board
NSS	National Selective Service
NWLB	National War Labour Board
OBU	One Big Union
PABC	Public Archives of British Columbia
PCLB	Pacific Coast Labour Bureau
RWLB	Regional War Labour Board
TLC	Trades and Labour Congress of Canada
TURB	Trade Union Research Bureau
UAW	United Automobile Workers
UBCJ	United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners
UBC-SC	University of British Columbia Library - Special Collections Division
UE	United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers
UNRRA	United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration
USW	United Steel Workers of America
VLM	Victoria Lumber and Manufacturing Company
WIUC	Woodworkers' Industrial Union of Canada
WUL	Workers Unity League

List of Locals in IWA District One

- 1-71 Vancouver (mainland coast and the Queen Charlotte Islands) logging local
- 1-80 Courtenay and surrounding area
- 1-85 Port Alberni
- 1-118 Victoria
- 1-217 Vancouver mill local
- 1-357 New Westminster
- 1-367 Mission (Fraser Valley)
- 1-405 Cranbrook (east Kootenay)
- 1-417 Kamloops
- 1-418 Princeton (including south Okanagan)
- 1-423 Kelowna (north Okanagan)
- 1-424 Prince George (northern/interior)
- 1-425 Nelson (west Kootenay)

Introduction

When, therefore, I spoke of history in an earlier lecture as a dialogue between past and present, I should rather have called it a dialogue between the events of the past and progressively emerging future ends. The historian's interpretation of the past, his selection of the significant and the relevant, evolves with the progressive emergence of new goals.¹

E.H. Carr

The Argument

Beginning in the late 1920s, there emerged, out of the ruins of the old Lumber Workers' Industrial Union (LWIU), a new band of militants dedicated to the idea of bringing trade unionism to the woodworking industry of British Columbia. This cadre of communists, leftover syndicalists and other nondescript radicals coalesced in the mid-1930s to form a new version of the LWIU. The appearance of this fledgling union coincided with a wave of labour organization across North American industry, given impetus by New Deal labour law reform in the United States. American trade union organizers looked to a helpful, if not benevolent, state in their attempts to forge industry-wide bargaining relationships with some of capital's biggest and toughest employers. With the success of industrial unionism in New Deal America clearly in mind, woodworker organizers in British Columbia (first in the LWIU and later, in its successor, the International Woodworkers of America (IWA) looked to the Canadian and provincial state structures for legislative support. Legitimation by the state would assist them in surmounting the problem of organizing a transient and traditionally individualistic workforce in an industry dominated by the blacklist. These organizers believed legal recognition and signed contracts were the keys to consolidating their union in the camps and mills of British Columbia.

Through the early years of the war, regardless of the shifting line of the Communist Party, the leaders of the British Columbia District (District One) of the IWA doggedly pursued those trade union objectives. Soon after a successful recognition strike on the

Queen Charlotte Islands in October 1943, and with the help of industrial relations reform at both the provincial and federal levels, District One achieved its first "industry-wide" contract on the coast. During the succeeding two years, it set about the less glorious tasks of consolidating its organization, attaining full membership, and strengthening its contractual position as bargaining agent. These years of consolidation coincided with a period of wartime accommodation between capital and labour across North America. But moderation in District One was dictated by the internal requirements of the trade union, not the policies of international communism or those of the Canadian state.

With the end of the war, however, a period of North American industrial relations reform and of wartime accommodation came to an end. Similarly, an era during which communists were able easily to meld their political programme with industrial trade union activity was brought to an abrupt halt by renewed Soviet-American hostility, and by a re-emergence of conservatism amongst capitalists, legislators and trade union bureaucrats. In District One of the IWA, the change was marked most dramatically in 1946 by a prolonged 37-day strike. The District leadership attempted to turn this post-war "catch-up" strike into the spearhead of a national movement for a radical reconstruction of the economy and society. At the same time, British Columbia's industrialists, with the aid of the provincial state, were moving sharply to the right in an effort to recover ground lost to the labour movement during the war. The 1946 strikes by the IWA and other British Columbia unions provided an excellent pretext for legislative action against organized labour.

The District One strategy of tying the horse of trade union organization so closely to the cart of state legitimation, was quickly called into question by the 1947 passage of Bill 39. This bill, and a subsequent one in 1948, amended the provincial Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act (ICA Act) specifically so as to restrict, if not altogether prohibit, radical attempts at integrating economic and political action within a collective bargaining context. This new legislation served to widen a growing split in District One between the forces of moderate "pure-and-simple" unionism, and the leftist cadre of militant "political" trade

unionists. Because of these internal divisions, the mighty woodworkers' union, rather than lead the British Columbia working class into a direct political confrontation with the provincial state over the ICA Act amendments, was forced to capitulate to the new legislative reality in its own collective bargaining.

During 1947, and into 1948, the District leadership chafed at the new legislative bit put in its mouth. As the post-war woodworking labour force grew dramatically, the original militant cadre was diluted. The overly bureaucratic, "hot-house" union that grew up during the war within the state structures of legitimation and control, proved to be an inappropriate vehicle through which to ignite a new militancy within the ranks of the woodworkers. Despite quixotic attempts at remobilizing the rank-and-file behind a radical collective bargaining agenda, the District leadership fell victim to the forces of pure-and-simple trade unionism that it had inadvertently called into being during the legitimation process. The triumph of the so-called "white bloc" moderates of District One, and the final departure of the communist cadre in October 1948 into the lean and militant Woodworkers' Industrial Union of Canada (WIUC) was a logical, if not preordained, outcome of the quest for legitimacy during the years prior to 1946.

A brief note on the title of the thesis will conclude this summary. The IWA entered British Columbia and began organizing north of the international boundary as a natural expansion into the Canadian section of the North American west coast forest industry. But just as the IWA did not remain an exclusively west coast union in the United States, neither did it intend to do so in Canada. The organizational thrust into the interior of British Columbia during 1944-46 was the first step in what was viewed as a much broader eastward expansion into Alberta, and then on into central Canada—particularly Quebec. During the period I have chosen to study, it is true, the IWA's Canadian operations were restricted almost exclusively to the Pacific province. But it is crucial to an understanding of this thesis that the IWA cadre in British Columbia was originally part of an international union dedicated to organizing woodworkers on as broad an industrial basis as possible.

District One leaders did not intend their district to remain a provincial adjunct to an otherwise American union.

Furthermore, I have tried to cast this story within the more general context of labour history in Canada during the 1930s and 1940s. The IWA played a significant role in the development of industrial relations policy on a national scale—a role that has not been previously appreciated. Finally, the general theme of the struggle for legitimacy, as it is applied here to British Columbia woodworkers, is certainly an integral chapter in the history of the Canadian working class as a whole—one with serious ramifications for the present condition of the labour movement. That point should not be lost amidst the particularism of provincial or regional history. While this thesis is set on a provincial stage, it addresses issues of national, if not international scope.

Theory and Methodology

When one embarks upon the Ph.D. dissertation one ought to be equipped with a fundamental purpose, if not explicitly clear to the mind, at least embedded in the origin of the work, in the being of the author. There must be some justification for the project, both to self and to others, as part of its very definition and legitimacy. That justification may only realize its true shape and nature in the course of completion. It may contain within it many layers. The process of peeling off the layers, of coming to a full realization of what the thesis is about, sustains one's interest to the end. The historian's method of gradually uncovering "truth" through a process of mediation or dialogue between empirical evidence and subjective disposition² bears its fruit in the becoming, or coming into concrete being of the initial notion of the thesis. Only at the end, when one fully discerns the meaning of the project, can it be properly introduced in all its layers and dimensions.

This project emerged as part of an attempt to turn in my doctoral studies away from an overly-empirical, narrow, if not parochial frame of reference in which my previous graduate work had been cast. In an effort to infuse historical research and writing with a more solid theoretical perspective I turned once again to Marx with the question: how can my work break through the confines and strictures of modern historical empiricism and become a true synthesis of theory and practice; a work of history that itself becomes an instrument of the historical working out of the class struggle (while at the same time preserving its academic respectability)? To be avoided at all costs was the dreaded Althusserian "bogey" lurking in the lecture halls and seminar rooms which, in the colourful language of E.P. Thompson "allows the aspirant academic to engage in a harmless revolutionary psycho-drama, while at the same time pursuing a reputable and conventional intellectual career."³

This initial disposition manifested itself in simultaneous engagement in trade union/political and academic work. Encouraged by an involvement with similarly "engaged" students in Professor Palmer's graduate seminar, I entered along with thousands of others in British Columbia, into the "Solidarity Days" of 1983, an important contributing experience to this work.

If the Solidarity struggle had any core meaning or lesson for both labour historian and Marxist activist (I being a neophyte in each category) it appeared to be that the legitimacy of the existing trade union structures and leadership—a legitimacy recognized by both the working class and the "ruling class"—had served to disappoint, diffuse and ultimately undermine a genuine mass resistance movement against oppression and the erosion of human rights. I received this historical "fact" not just as a passive outside academic observer, but also as a passionate participant on the side of the masses. The failure of the trade union movement to try to seize hold of this mass movement and synthesize the industrial and political struggles of the people into one united movement for social and political change was for me (among many others) disillusioning. A more

seasoned veteran of the labour wars, would, no doubt, not have been so shaken. It was, in retrospect, to tap into the perspective and insight of those "old-timers" that I turned my work as an academic in the direction of the origins, nature and consequences of the era of trade union legitimacy in Canada.

And I turned in the direction of the IWA more precisely because, as I observed in 1983, it was the specific unwillingness of this largest private sector industrial union in British Columbia to transform its particular industrial struggle into a leading component of a broader social and political struggle that crippled Operation Solidarity. Without the real economic muscle of wide-scale industrial action led by this important union, the much-touted importance of the trade union movement's bank-roll—the main basis of organized labour's claim to leadership in the Solidarity Coalition—amounted to very little in terms of any mass programme of change. Woodworker President Jack Munro was not just the "fall guy" at Kelowna. His so-called accord with Premier Bill Bennett signified the collaboration of industrial unions in British Columbia in the government programme to dismantle the emerging power of their public sector counterparts through lay-offs and changes to the industrial relations system. It also involved complicity in a broad government programme aimed at radically curtailing the social and public services provided by that sector of workers. Ultimately the accord signalled acceptance of Social Credit's participation in the restructuring of welfare capitalism and the post-war compromise with the organized working class that was taking place across many western industrial societies.⁴

The IWA then was an obvious place to enter the historical record, not only because of its performance in 1983, and its important position within the British Columbia labour movement throughout the post-war period; obvious as well because of the rich documentary sources available and the undeveloped nature of the topic within scholarly literature. The problem at the time seemed to be not one of sources, or lack of purpose or direction, but rather one of methodology and scope.

Scope itself was defined ultimately and quite simply by the time and resource limitations of a Ph.D. student, and by the sheer volume of material available in archival depositories and elsewhere on the subject of the forest industry and its chief trade union. In the spirit of my Marxism I had originally conceived of a comprehensive political economy of the forest industry in British Columbia, including major sections on working class culture and industrial relations. But both the sources and the immediate crucible of experience in British Columbia labour politics led me into the thicket of industrial relations history from which I was never to emerge. Despite misgivings about not fulfilling my Marxian imperative to study the totality of relations comprehensively, I proceeded along a much more (for me) familiar if less challenging path of piecing together a historical narrative of industrial relations from miles of microfilm and pages of documents, journals and papers. But the tedium of the work was often relieved by the thought that I was not just preparing a thesis to be offered up to the academy in the true spirit of scholarly investigation—though I hoped it would be that. I was sustained mainly by an underlying belief that this narrative would help explain an important process that had unfolded and that continued to unfold in British Columbia—one that I had witnessed and participated in personally. Just what that historical process was, however, was not immediately apparent in the fulness and specificity of its meaning.

At first it appeared I was writing an account of the Canadian IWA's participation in a North America-wide development in industrial and working class relations—the legitimation and ultimate institutionalization of the labour movement. As such I could draw on a rich American and Canadian literature on both the war and post war period.⁵ Then I encountered the “white bloc,” internal union conflict and 1948—the split of the existing leadership away from District One of the IWA. The theme of legitimacy and institutionalization had then to be enriched and enlarged to include the role and nature of communist leadership in the woodworkers' union, and since the IWA was the most important union at the time in British Columbia, also the nature of relations between the

Communist Party's political and industrial arms. The relationship, then, between communist leadership and the drive for trade union legitimacy had to be worked out within an analysis of communist or "revolutionary" industrial unionism. Given the post-1919 fusion of the political and industrial wings of the socialist movement within the structures of the Communist Party, and given the leading role of the industrial trade unions within the Party structure in Canada, how did one interpret the drive for legitimacy through to 1945, and the equally powerful drive towards an apparent sectarian militancy during 1946-48? The key appeared to lie within the sphere of industrial relations, but also involved the world-historical shifts after World War Two, and the parallel transformation of state institutions regulating labour unions. But what would this analysis mean to my argument, carefully constructed through the first five chapters, that in industrial matters, the Party's larger political agenda was always subordinated to or subsumed within the more immediate trade union agenda? How to sort out the problematic relations between industrial relations in the woods and the larger world conflict between capitalism and communism eventually became the major project of the chapters on 1946-48.⁶

If in the end, however, the Party trade unionists in the IWA came through this crisis with the integrity of their commitment first and foremost to their industrial union intact, why was it necessary for them to part company with the existing form of that union? To answer this question, it was necessary to return to the original problem of the inner meaning of legitimacy and institutionalization to a union cadre committed, in the final analysis, to using the trade union structure as a leading instrument of social and political change in the direction of socialism, if not true communism. If, in fact, institutionalization ultimately proscribed the project of synthesizing industrial and political activity within the existing structures of trade unionism and industrial relations, then the departure of the District One leaders in 1948 might be understood in a more profound dimension than that provided in conventional political accounts of the general impact of the cold war, anti-communism and the intervention of the IWA International and Canadian social democrats.

If in turn, the 1948 split could be understood in structural terms relating to the very nature of trade union practice and industrial relations in British Columbia, then the mystery behind the IWA's apparent lack of enthusiasm for entering a broader coalition struggle against government oppression and the erosion of human rights in 1983 might start to be explained. Not, of course, fully since between the 1948 split and the 1983 Kelowna accord much history transpired. Only a section of that history is covered in a final chapter on the 1950's. And if the conclusions to that chapter point clearly ahead to 1983, they also look back to the early days of woodworker radicalism in British Columbia, even to the IWW. While this study falls somewhat short of offering a full narrative interpretation of the background to Jack Munro's flight to Kelowna on that fateful November night, it does finally, and in spite of itself, offer up some much more significant conjectures (not definitive conclusions) which I would offer here as the "unpeeled" purpose and justification of this dissertation.

What I have entitled "Woodworkers and Legitimacy: The IWA in Canada, 1937-1957" for purposes of objective and conventional academic labelling, could perhaps be more appropriately sub-titled "The Demise of the Marxian Revolutionary Tradition in British Columbia." A movement with roots in the 1880s and 90s, in the coal mines, the forests and the urban labour halls of the pre-World War One era; that exploded in a paroxysm of class confrontation in 1919-20, and then revamped itself into the structures of the Communist Party during the 1920s and 30s; finally died with the invention of the Woodworkers' Industrial Union of Canada in October 1948.⁷ This so-called "October Revolution" in reality sounded the death knell for a Marxist practice in British Columbia. The split of the IWA cadre signified a decisive and historical break between industrial and political struggle in British Columbia, if not in Canada. That is not to say that individuals and political groupings within the trade union movement and left parties have not continued to fight for an integration, or reintegration of work place struggle and deeper social and political transformation. But 1948 signalled a decisive structural division—a labour

movement, broadly defined, transforming itself, and being transformed into a trade union movement.⁸ Without one foot in the concrete world of class struggle, the Marxist revolutionary tradition in British Columbia was left gradually to wither on the thin vines of political sectarianism and academic discourse. The Communist Party of British Columbia, left without a real base in the working class, quickly lost its direction and focus and found itself submerged within the abstract reformism of the anti-imperialist Canadian peace and independence movements of the 1950s. In short, in 1948 the revolutionary left in British Columbia was cut off from its source; the British Columbia working class cut off from its political and historical direction.

What does this admittedly conjectural conclusion mean for my Marxism, for my commitment as an academic to make my scholarly work part of the existing class struggle? In spite of my inability to develop a total analysis of relations in the forest industry, this work is still infused with the Marxist spirit of synthesizing theory and practice inasmuch as my historical investigation proceeded from the concrete and particular, asked questions of empirical data in order to provide a concrete theoretical interpretation of an historical process that contained objective and practical answers of relevance to the present situation. Unfortunately whatever objective conclusions can be drawn from this attempt to live out the Marxian paradigm must fall on barren soil. Though they may give rise to lively debate within the halls of academe, they cannot be hoped to enliven or inspire an "existing" mass working class movement for social change.⁹

Does that conclusion necessarily invalidate a Marxist approach to historical studies? I think not. Rather it necessitates a reevaluation of the notion of Marxian praxis.¹⁰ What I have termed a Marxian disposition (since I cannot claim to have either fully implemented or explained here a thoroughgoing Marxist methodology) to historical studies, engaging one's academic work with the goals of objective struggle as it exists in the world, must be tempered with the realization that Marx misjudged the world-historical role that the industrial working class would play, at least for the almost century and one-half after he

discovered it. That is not to say he was wrong about the proper and desirable end result of human history—that is, communism.¹¹ But as the era of the industrial working class as the quintessential manifestation of human alienation is superceded by new forces and relations of production, it is now past time that those who still struggle towards a “truly human” world both move beyond and subsume the Marxian paradigm. For labour historians who belong to that category of “individuals for a human end to history,” that means approaching the subject of our academic work as a finite, historically-specific phenomenon, the study of which ought to be undertaken with a view to a more general application to the existing situation than simply enlightening, inspiring or otherwise aiding the industrial proletariat in its antedated historical mission. If that conclusion is the “unpeeled” inner meaning that was embedded in the origins of this study, then the process of uncovering and giving concrete form to this “more general application” will perhaps become the implicit justification of my next undertaking.

Historiography

Both the subject matter of this dissertation and the institutional approach I have chosen are both “old staples” of labour history in Canada. What justifies a new endeavour in this old field? The Canadian IWA, especially during its formative years of organization and legitimation, has never been properly studied. What little of substance there is has all but ignored the important subject of industrial relations, focussing rather on politics, and on the period after 1943.¹²

On the legitimation of labour in Canada, the literature is considerably more developed, but focuses too rigidly on the federal state, and on the specifically central Canadian context of CIO industrial unionism. My analysis attempts to enrich our understanding of this key process in twentieth century labour history by enlarging the scope of Canadian studies to include British Columbia labour; by focussing more specifically on the role of the provincial state; and, by drawing out some important linkages

and contrasts with a parallel American history.¹³ But, as the history I have chosen to write involves Carr's dialogue between these past events and a "progressively emerging future," this study also attempts to contribute a specifically historical dimension to recent work on the so-called "assault on trade union freedoms" which Panitch and Swartz see as bringing an end to an era of free collective bargaining with a "turn to coercion" in the 1970s and 80s.¹⁴ Bourgeois reforms, these authors predict in hindsight, "however much they are the product of class struggle, are not without their contradictions. Left unchallenged they can undermine the very conditions which called them into existence, opening the way for future defeats."¹⁵ My thesis can be viewed as very much a case study making more concrete and explicit those contradictions.

If this "staple" study has forward linkages to the 1980s and the "future defeats" embedded in the strategy of trade union institutionalization, it also has backward linkages to the 1920s and what Larry Peterson has termed the origins of communist labour unionism. Peterson's general model posits a convergence of two distinct forms of left-wing activity after World War One. With the discrediting of the conventional parliamentary Marxism of the Second International, "Revolutionary socialists found the key to uniting political struggle with the economic militancy of workers in the structure of the industrial movements."¹⁶ At the same time, "syndicalists and other industrial activists," who had previously eschewed political activity in favour of more direct economic struggle, "turned to the Comintern because they were searching for a new strategy after the failure of their own industrial approach to revolution." The latter found the communists congenial partners since the Comintern's programme for revolution was heavily influenced by the "experience of industrial action between 1917 and 1920."¹⁷ But while there was a very harmonious marriage of convenience with the Communist Party in much of western Europe, Peterson, in his own version of American exceptionalism, emphasizes that the union of OBU and IWW leaders with North American communists foundered on the uncompromising stubbornness of the industrial militants and the sectarianism of the Party

in Canada and the United States. North American communists, while incorporating lessons of industrial militancy into their larger economic strategies, argues Peterson, tended "to supercede and transform" rather than directly carry forward the earlier industrial tradition.¹⁸

The research I have done on the woodworkers indicates that this latter model is not so clearly the case. Rather, these earlier traditions lived on surprisingly directly into the 1930s and 40s through the Lumber Workers' Industrial Union and into the IWA-CIO, however uneasily alongside the emergence of trade union bureaucratization and the institutionalization of industrial relations. Peterson's general non-North American model explains the case more accurately. The Comintern, or more accurately in this particular case, the Party leaders in the woodworkers' union, "incorporated much of the programme" of the militant pre-1920 loggers into their approach not only to revolution, but, more specifically, to trade union practice. That is not to say there was perfect unity; but in spite of the drive for, and attainment of legitimacy during the 1940s, there was considerable continuity in the history of unionism in the woods from the Wobblies through to the Woodworkers' Industrial Union of Canada.

Contrary to the characterization that both Ian Angus and Ian Radforth give to either Workers Unity League (WUL) unions in general, or the LWIU in particular, in the British Columbia context the Lumber Workers' Industrial Union was not a dual or sectarian, but very much a main-stream trade union. Radforth explains the easy transition the communists in the pre-1928 LWIU in Ontario made to the insurrectionary policies of the Comintern during the so-called "third period" (1928-35) by the fact that the union "had never been a mainstream, AFL union."¹⁹ On the other hand, after 1935, there was a sudden break as the LWIU disbanded, and "left-wing activists" streamed into the AFL's Lumber and Saw Mill Workers' Union, replacing "class-war rhetoric" with strategies of collective bargaining and signed agreements.²⁰ Angus, for his part, belittles the achievements of the WUL unions generally with the charge of a dogmatic sectarianism that

undermined whatever "important advances" the Party had been making in the unions up to 1928.²¹ But his analysis excludes the case of the British Columbia woodworkers' union which even during the WUL phase was very much the mainstream; in fact, the only viable organization in the British Columbia woods. And to the extent that the LWIU laid important foundations for, and very smoothly melded organizationally into the IWA (in spite of the brief AFL interlude of 1936-37), the "third period" in British Columbia can be seen as not only not undermining Party advances in the trade union field, but rather building towards the organizational breakthrough of the 1940s. For Radforth, the 1935 shift in Comintern line was decisive in bringing Party unionists into the woodworker mainstream via the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America (UBCJ). It also signalled the adoption of a "new approach" to industrial relations in general involving much closer relations with the state and with Ontario's version of "labour policies found in President Roosevelt's New Deal that were encouraging collective bargaining south of the border."²² In Chapters Two through Four below the argument is clearly made that a similar industrial strategy in British Columbia was very much rooted not in Comintern policy, but in the experience of the Party unionists themselves trying to organize a transient workforce along the sprawling and unlimited vastness of the British Columbia coast.

But, if the IWA in Canada was very much a mainstream trade union, what was the specific nature of communist labour unionism in the British Columbia woodworking industry? Many of the early leaders in District One of the IWA, men who would continue to dominate the affairs of the union through the 1940s, were either members or fellow travellers of the Communist Party. They comprised a cadre of militant trade unionists who, along with fellow communists in other British Columbia industrial unions of the day, were not notable social theoreticians. While someone like Hjalmar Bergren may have cherished books by Marx and Lenin as valued possessions,²³ in general what made these men "communist" trade unionists was not their understanding of, or belief in, historical materialism, nor even a dogged adherence to the Party line. In fact, many of these men

were noted for their inattention to broader ideological and party work, and detachment from the more general political concerns of the Party. What distinguishes them was their approach to union work, which, during the organizational phase of industrial unions in Canada, was particularly effective and won them a broad following. As Norman Penner has argued, "The Communists who won and were able to hold leading trade-union executive positions were accorded those offices not as revolutionaries but for their excellence in trade-union functions, which are, by their very nature in capitalist society, reformist."²⁴ At the same time, the Party viewed itself as a vanguard or organized minority movement in the trade unions representing both the long-term political, and more immediate industrial interests of the workers. As Nelson Lichtenstein has so aptly written of communists in the CIO during this period, although their "commitment to the Soviet Union as the symbol of the socialist ideal remained inviolable and provided the essential ideological element that engendered loyalty in the party cadre, the actual trade union activities of the party came to differ little from those of unionists in the CIO mainstream."²⁵

From the point of view of the press, government officials, and political opponents in the CCF and elsewhere, communists were identifiable by their slavish adherence to Moscow. From the perspective of the workers in the woods or on the mill floor, the communists were often the ones who had a sense of organizational purpose, a clear line on trade union objectives, and the tenacity to go up against the rough and ready men who ran the lumber companies. It was in the task of producing that kind of militant vanguard in the IWA during the 1940s that Bergren, Morgan and company particularly defined themselves as Party trade unionists. And it was in their radical reorientation after 1945 of their union's institutional relationship with a restructuring capitalism and state apparatus, as well as with their own rank-and-file from whom they had grown bureaucratically estranged, that Pritchett, Dalskog and others continued to define their brand of trade unionism in the tradition of the post-1919 political-industrial convergence.²⁶

Sources

If there is some historiographical justification in pursuing this old staple of labour history anew, without recourse to new or previously under-utilized sources this project would still have questionable merit as scholarly historical writing. As it turned out, previous writers, for a variety of reasons, have not thoroughly mined earlier available historical sources, as in the case of the Pritchett-IWA collection and its rich offerings on the subject of industrial relations. This collection is now very conveniently complemented by the IWA records contained in a massive University of British Columbia Library acquisition of material from the Trade Union Research Bureau which acted (as well as during its earlier incorporation as the Pacific Coast Labour Bureau) as the research and industrial relations consultant of the pre-1948 IWA. A voluminous collection of records on microfilm of the post-1948 IWA, containing several important files on the communist era as well, has relatively recently been made accessible to researchers also through the UBC Library. Spanning both IWA eras from the other side of the industrial relationship is a still unacquired collection of very important documents housed in the Vancouver offices of Forest Industrial Relations Ltd., the industrial relations arm of the British Columbia woodworking industry, and the successor company to Stuart Research Services which figures so prominently in the trade union history up to 1949. The minute books of the British Columbia Loggers' Association, as part of the Council of Forest Industries (COFI) papers at UBC are always a source of great interest and richness.

As for the "third" party in this story—the state—the Provincial Archives of British Columbia contains very important records of the provincial Department of Labour, including the first Labour Relations Board, many of which have been generally available for a relatively short time. Records of the federal Department of Labour, and various branches of the Canadian wartime bureaucracy housed in the National Archives of Canada have also been consulted in my treatment of the important period of organization and

consolidation from 1940 to 1945. All these prime sources have, of course, been supplemented with a variety of published and secondary material.

In sum, while the IWA in Canada seems, at first glance, to be an old story, it is one that has never been told from the perspective of historical scholarship, and one to which I hope I have at least provided an introduction.

Chapter One

1930s: Era of the Blacklist and the Open Shop

During World War Two a transformation took place in the economic relations between capital and labour in Canada. Under the impact of wartime demand, economic output rose by two-thirds, together with enlistment, drying up the pools of surplus labour left over from the dirty thirties. Between 1939 and 1945 organized workers doubled their numbers. Industrial conflict intensified, reaching a peak in 1943. Out of this conjuncture of productive and labour market forces emerged the first significant institutional adjustment in the conduct of industrial relations since the passage of the 1907 Industrial Disputes Investigation Act.¹ The IWA, like several other industrial unions that had formed in Canada during the 1930s, was formally recognized by the state and employers as legitimate bargaining agent for tens of thousands of British Columbia woodworkers.

Over the preceding decade in the British Columbia forest industry, a group of dedicated, militant and politically committed trade unionists had fought against the increasingly organized forces of anti-union camp and mill operators. Aided by the provincial state, the latter dug in their heels to defend the open shop under which they had done business largely undisturbed since the demise of the old Lumber Workers' Industrial Union in the early 1920s. In order properly to understand the organizational breakthrough in the British Columbia woods during World War Two, it is necessary to review the background of industrial relations in the province's most important industry in the years immediately prior to the war, and in particular, to analyze the changing role of the state as it became an increasingly more active participant in what had previously been the largely unregulated world of "lumberjacks" and "boss loggers."

I

Since 1929, led by the WUL-affiliated Lumber Workers' Industrial Union, British Columbia loggers, shingle and lumber workers had fought against wage cuts, piece work,

the blacklist, and for some form of union or camp committee recognition. Operating within a largely laissez-faire world of industrial relations, seemingly outside the administrative grasp of the Industrial Disputes Investigation (British Columbia) Act, workers quit work, struck and picketed when it suited them. Union organizing activity, because of limited resources, focussed on a few large camps and mills on Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland. Strikes flared up quickly over firings of union organizers or sudden wage cuts. Employers retaliated by dismissing entire crews, hiring strikebreakers and enforcing their rights with the help of local and provincial police.² The British Columbia Loggers Association (BCLA) camps ran an efficient blacklist system through the British Columbia Loggers Employment Agency, managed by an appropriately named Mr. Black, who cooperated closely with R. V. Stuart, secretary-manager of the BCLA. To help the Agency do its job the BCLA employed the services of at least one "operative" to carry out "labour investigation."³

When the depression, followed by a \$3 per thousand feet American duty, hit the lumber industry, the big Association camps and mills cut wages, laid off crews and extracted greater output from those remaining on the job. Wage policy was still a matter for individual action though some coordination of wages with respect to the all-important fallers and buckers was attempted through the Association office. LWIU strikes occurred in response, in the fall of 1931, at Fraser Mills, the nearby Barnet Lumber Company and Thurston Flavelle in Port Moody, as well as at the large logging camps on Vancouver Island and the Queen Charlotte Islands. These were organizational strikes linked to the world economic crisis. Within the context of the WUL, the LWIU fought for improved wages and conditions, but also to organize and educate workers for the larger fight against capitalism.⁴

Typically, the 8 June 1935 edition of the B.C. Lumber Worker, the official organ of the LWIU and one of its chief organizing tools, found that the Forest Branch report for 1934 was "shot through with reference to the splendid work of the various Trade

Commissioners and lumber salesmen.” But when the camp and mill owners went looking for new markets with cheap lumber “the logger and millworker took it on the chin in the form of lower wages and harder work.” “We have a right,” the editorial concluded, “to demand a bigger share of that 45 million dollar ‘melon’ that was pocketed by the timber pirates, a demand that will enable us to live a little more decently, at least until we are able to enforce the complete control over the industry ourselves.”⁵

As British Columbia’s lumbermen, with the help of the Forest Branch and the federal government, blasted their way back into world—and especially United Kingdom and commonwealth-markets through an active trade promotion programme built upon the Ottawa Trade Agreements of 1932—it became all the more essential for them to hold down their wage bill and thwart the industrial union drive. As the industry got back on its feet, so did the union begin a more concentrated organizational effort. The January 1933 convention drew up a new programme, the principal feature of which was to focus organizational efforts on one of the major camps. Under the leadership of the Norwegian-born logger Ted Gunrud, for the next 10 months the LWIU centred its efforts on the Menzies Bay camps of Bloedel, Stewart and Welch (BSW), where an essentially underground union was built up in order to avoid the blacklist. Gunrud’s efforts laid the basis for a major confrontation with the Vancouver Island logging operators in 1934.⁶

The 1934 general strike of the Vancouver Island logging camps, triggered by the 28 January walkout of 500 Menzies Bay loggers, was carried out in the midst of this dramatically improving market situation for British Columbia producers. It was the culmination of a two-year educational and organizational drive by the LWIU in the Vancouver Island camps. This strike featured all the elements of a laissez-faire industrial relations battle—a tent city, picket camps, no strike fund, flying picket squads and leafletting, an “anti-scab” trek and provincial police protection for strike breakers. From Menzies Bay the strike quickly spread to the Elk River camp at Campbell River and from there “gathered the weight of an avalanche” according to official union mythology.⁷

The main issues in the strike, "speed up, death in the woods, higher wages to reflect rising log prices, and the right to union representation" were underlined by a head-on confrontation with the anti-union policies and tactics of the organized operators. At the height of the strike the six main logging companies involved, while they refused throughout to negotiate directly with LWIU officers, reluctantly agreed orally to no discrimination against strikers and recognition of camp committees. Happily for them they were not to be held to this promise as the union rejected the government's new \$2.45 per day minimum wage. The operators immediately terminated negotiations and proceeded with unsuccessful efforts to organize a company union.⁸

Strike breakers from this so-called "Coast Loggers Union" were escorted by provincial police, under instruction from the Minister of Labour, into BSW's Great Central Lake operation, chosen by the operators as the site of a final confrontation. The union countered with a strikers' march from scattered points on the east side of the Island across to Port Alberni, and from there over hilly terrain to Great Central Lake. Once there, any attempt to shut down the BSW "scab" operation was thwarted by the presence of provincial police. With the help of strikebreakers, the Department of Labour and the police, the operators were able to break the back of the strike just as vital log stockpiles at the export mills were running dangerously low.⁹

The 1934 loggers strike demonstrated certain weaknesses in the union's programme, most importantly the failure to involve the mills to a sufficient extent really to deliver an economic blow to the industry.¹⁰ The failure to accept the wage proposal along with the offer of committee recognition and no discrimination may have been a tactical error. In 1943, with the IWA still struggling for union recognition, one member of the oppositional white bloc still held it up as a classic mistake made by a doctrinaire communist leadership without the true interests of the workers at heart. "Yes we were offered union recognition in 1934 but we threw it out the window," John Ulinder wrote District President Harold Pritchett. "Even if the wages offered at that time were low, we could by now have

the employers eating out of our hands.”¹¹ Given the fervency of the BCLA open shop position, the numerical and financial weakness of the union, and the lack of any legislative support for collective bargaining or union recognition in 1934, such an outcome would have been highly improbable. The loose promises extracted from the operators in 1934 were a long way from formal contractual consolidation of union rights.

Since 1920, in response to the threat from militant industrial unionism, the Association operators had adhered unequivocally to the open shop principle. After the demise of the first LWIU in the early 1920s, this principle had been relatively easy to maintain, buttressed by sporadic wage increases, improved camp conditions, bonuses and other management experiments to co-opt workers. By 1922, 1500 members of the LWIU, including its best organizers, had been blacklisted and forced to find employment elsewhere.¹² The 1930s and the rise of the second LWIU only intensified the operators' resistance to the establishment of militant, communist-led trade unionism amongst its workforce. After successfully restructuring their export markets by 1933-34, the logging and lumber companies and associations were not about to have their new-found prosperity threatened by the collective action of workers they had grown used to managing unchallenged.

In the wake of the 1934 strike many of the LWIU's chief organizers were barred permanently from working in the Association camps, and camp committees were attacked. Led by Elk River Timber, many Association companies opened a renewed drive against the union. Union membership dropped by one-third to approximately 2000, according to optimistic accounts. The defeat of a strike at Alberni Pacific Lumber (APL) in October 1934 with assistance from strikebreakers and the police, put a damper on the union drive in the Alberni Valley. Only at Cowichan Lake and in operations on the Queen Charlotte Islands did loggers manage to retain union camp committees.¹³

To show his confidence in the preservation of the open shop, J.H. Bloedel took the opportunity in the midst of the 1934 general strike to announce BSW's intention to

construct a new sawmill at Somass.¹⁴ In March 1935, the Chairman of the Board of the BCLA met with the provincial Minister of Labour and the Chairman of the Board of Industrial Relations regarding matters affecting the Loggers Agency. He received assurances that the government intended to resist all efforts of the LWIU to have private employment agencies closed and to oppose suggestions for new legislation making it compulsory for the logging industry to negotiate with representatives of trade unions. In May 1935 the Directors of the BCLA agreed to recommend to their member companies support for a proposed industrial relations council in British Columbia. In 1936, the industry enjoyed its best year since the onset of the depression. Exports to the United Kingdom rose dramatically during the first half of the decade as the British market became the new mainstay of the British Columbia lumber export trade. By that year, the WUL "red" or "dual" unions including the LWIU, had disbanded to join in the popular front against fascism. That fact did not reassure the operators however, as they moved to block the new organizational drive of the LWIU cum Lumber and Sawmill Workers Union (LSWU) to bring British Columbia's loggers and millworkers into the American Federation of Labour.¹⁵

In March 1936 two loggers were fired from the Victoria Lumber and Manufacturing Company (VLM) Camp 10 at Cowichan Lake for distributing copies of the B.C. Lumber Worker. The crew immediately called a strike and set up a picket camp. Prior to the LSWU drive at Cowichan, Camp 10 had been open to union organizers. The Lumber Worker saw the change in policy as linked to VLM's recent alignment with the Loggers Agency operated by the BCLA: "It is apparent that pressure has been brought to bear on the Camp 10 operators to bring them into line with the general policy followed by members of the Association, that of suppressing organization at any cost" to prevent a link up with the American central. Camp 8 at Cowichan Lake quickly went out in sympathy with Camp 10.¹⁶ In line with its popular front strategy, the LSWU (now an affiliate of the UBCJ) adopted slightly different tactics and rhetoric than in previous strikes. It used the Trades

and Labour Congress of Canada (TLC) as a negotiating vehicle and noted in its bulletin that while increased profits in the industry flowed by and large out of the country, "whenever the men...are able to force wages up at the expense of profits, they are contributing towards the prosperity of the entire province."¹⁷ Calls for the demise of capitalism were muted, but the militant struggle against the blacklist, discriminatory firing and the open shop principle of the "boss loggers" remained central even within the new political context.

Support for the Lake Cowichan strikers came from Harold Winch of the CCF, and Percy Bengough, secretary of the Vancouver Trades and Labour Council, who demanded that the Minister of Labour, George Pearson, hold a referendum on union representation. He also attempted to intercede with John Humbird to bring about negotiations, but the general manager refused to meet with any committee other than of his own men. Bengough subsequently arranged such a meeting, but to no avail, while the Loggers Agency made unsuccessful efforts to recruit strikebreakers for Camps 10 and 8. In the midst of the strike, in April, the LSWU established a District Council with representatives from all sectors of the industry. Plans were discussed for a general strike. In view of the operators' repudiation of the 1934 settlement with respect to recognition of camp committees, the union this time would settle for nothing less than union recognition as well as increased wages.¹⁸

One structural obstacle to coast-wide organization of the industry at this point was well demonstrated in this 1936 strike—the existence of small, difficult-to-organize operators who undermined the efforts of Camp 10 and 8 workers by continuing to supply logs to the VLM mill at Chemainus. The union was striving to equalize British Columbia wage rates with those in Washington, but it still had much work to do to overcome the uneven development of the industry in its own backyard. Even so, to keep the strike from spreading to his sawmill, Humbird, the grandson of the founder of VLM, laid off his Chemainus crew for two weeks and threatened to fire any employee disseminating information regarding the strike.¹⁹

By May, the strike did spread, however, to the Industrial Timber Mills camp at Youbou, the Lake Logging Company at Cowichan Lake, and to the Merrill Ring and Wilson Camp at Rock Bay. Fourteen camps were affected to some degree by the end of the month. Employees of several shingle and saw mills also went out in support including the big Capilano Shingle mill in North Vancouver. As the strike became more generalized, the BCLA directors held a general discussion on strike strategy.²⁰

Humbird stood firmly against any kind of settlement with the union. The sporadic sympathy strikes, in the absence of a coherent district-wide organizational structure or the wholehearted support of the workers involved, soon lost their steam. The Minister of Labour may not have been totally off-base when he claimed that the struggle was really between unionists and those workers not ready for unionism. When the strikes involving an estimated 2000 workers were called off at the end of May, Humbird kept Camp 10 closed until all those considered undesirables had left the district. The two men originally discharged were certainly not reinstated. The union urged all members who went out to work in the small non-Association camps to do everything possible to get blacklisted men placed in a job. At the same time the Loggers Association stepped up its efforts to resist the union drive. At its November 1936 meeting, the Board of Directors approved a \$3500 contribution toward the reorganization of the Industrial Association of British Columbia to act as lobbyist and to conduct public relations work for the organized employer groups in the province.²¹

In the wake of the strike, union organizational activity was in disarray. To spread the organization deeper into the various camps, efforts were made to stress the importance of the locals, by having men pay their dues directly to the local rather than to the District. But with men working two weeks in one local, two weeks in another, then going to Vancouver for a layover, the administration of such a system became terribly confusing. At an October 1936 conference of the four logging locals, it was decided to hire a man in

Vancouver to coordinate the transfer of members and dues from one local to another, and generally help the local organizations keep their files straight.²²

The only two agreements with employers held by the woodworkers as of mid-1937 were in the logging sector of the industry with Lake Logging at Cowichan Lake, and J.R. Morgan, on the Queen Charlotte Islands. Some organizational gains were reported in the Courtenay area, but the greatest activity occurred around Cowichan Lake. In both the Vancouver and New Westminster sawmill locals, little progress was reported. At Dominion Mills, for example, where several members lost their jobs during the organizational drive, a fear of being blacklisted was blamed for keeping workers out of the union. The District Executive wished to publicize such cases of discrimination, "but the members were afraid that if we used their names they would be blacklisted and unable to obtain employment in the industry," the officers informed the July District convention.²³

The three shingle weavers' locals in Vancouver, North Vancouver and New Westminster were decimated by participation in the 1936 strike. As the District Secretary reported, "Where we had over 300 members, we today have no shingle weavers' union in the lower mainland. Even the executive members of the union were forced to go to work in industry." The secretary of the New Westminster local suggested possibly amalgamating the three shingle locals.

In the main Association logging camps on Vancouver Island, outside of the Lake Cowichan area, things were not much different. Loggers around Port Alberni were "even more afraid to come near the Union than the workers in other areas." In the Courtenay area, the backbone of the BCLA, targeted by the union as its main point of concentration, inadequate finances hindered organizational work all during the 1936-37 season. During the summer of 1937, union organizers combined union work with electioneering, joining with the United Mine Workers in Cumberland to get Colin Cameron elected to the Comox constituency. During the election campaign, the union was able to open an office in Courtenay on the main street. Working side by side with the CCF and Cameron paid off,

particularly amongst loggers in the Comox camps. As the District Secretary reported, "In the past our Union in that area had been not only isolated from the loggers in the camps but was isolated from the community. I believe now that in Courtenay we have a good basis on which to work..." Even in Lake Cowichan the union was far from entrenched. When the camps shut down over Christmas, Lake Logging decided to try to get rid of the union, but was apparently persuaded by local and District leaders to take a large majority of the workers back into camp.

By mid-1937 this organizational instability was compounded by jurisdictional confusion, as the new, industrially-based Federation of Woodworkers threatened to take all Pacific coast woodworkers into the CIO. In the midst of the CIO affiliation referendum, the British Columbia District of the LSWU was still anxious to maintain labour unity at the local level. The predicament was put succinctly by the District Secretary: "Our union is in a very peculiar position—an industrial union hitched up to a Craft International. We have had great support from Local 452 of the Carpenters here but have had no support from the International Office..."²⁴

By the summer of 1937, then, trade unionism amongst British Columbia woodworkers was not much further advanced than it had been at the inception of the WUL drive in 1929. Defeat in the poorly-conducted "general" strike of 1934, and the abrupt dissolution of the LWIU in 1935, no doubt weakened the ability of the LSWU to capture the industry for the AFL. Further, no party line could for long paper over the inherent contradictions in the alliance of the woodworkers with the conservative and domineering UBCJ.²⁵ Amidst the organizational instability of 1935-37 it was difficult for organizers to concentrate on the immediate tasks of signing up members, fighting grievances and combating the anti-union tactics of the employer. But even in British Columbia, where the new IWA would have a much clearer path in the absence of a serious jurisdictional fight with the AFL than was the case in the American districts,²⁶ the key to successful

organization of the lumber industry appeared to lie outside the organizational structures of the trade union movement.

II

The possibility of using the state as a vehicle through which to pursue elusive trade union objectives was at the time being demonstrated through dramatic changes taking place in the American system of industrial relations, with the introduction of the National Labour Relations Act (1935). Senator Robert Wagner's New Deal labour legislation was an attempt to stabilize labour's share of national income by enforcing, through state authority, collective bargaining between employers and trade unions. Initially his efforts were supported by both the older AFL unions and the newer CIO unions in the United States. The conjuncture of the CIO challenge to AFL control of the organized labour movement, with the actual passage and court enforcement of the so-called Wagner Act, quickly turned AFL leaders against New Deal collective bargaining policy.⁴ CIO leaders equally as quickly realized the Wagner Act's significance for fledgling industrial unions attempting to win recognition and first collective agreements, often in the face of jurisdictional rivalry from older craft unions. In part, what pleased CIO and worried AFL leaders was the fact that the right to represent workers in collective bargaining would no longer be worked out in the privacy of the trade union hall, but would be a matter for the state to determine on the principle of majority election.²⁷

In the middle of the national debate on the Wagner Act, open rivalry broke out between the AFL and CIO unions—a rivalry which directly affected woodworkers in both the United States and Canada. The growing strength of the industrially-based Sawmill and Timber Workers Union (AFL) in the Pacific Northwest, and the Lumber and Sawmill Workers Union in British Columbia, as demonstrated in the mass strikes of 1934-36, posed a serious threat to the UBCJ national leaders' attempts to keep the woodworkers under their control.²⁸ A new Federation of Woodworkers was established in September

1936 as an industrial union within the UBCJ, demanding full voting rights and privileges. Harold Pritchett, the recently elected President of the UBCJ's District Council in British Columbia, was elected President of the Federation. At its founding convention the Federation's incompatibility with Carpenter leadership became immediately evident in a resolution to request the AFL Executive Council to withdraw suspension of the CIO unions and support the organizational drive in mass production industries. As Vernon Jensen comments, "this action was enough to damn the Federation in the eyes of the Carpenter officials" then leading a vigorous fight to stamp out industrial unionism. On the other hand, industrially-minded lumberworkers, with a strong tradition of rank-and-file control, resented the domination of the Carpenters bureaucracy. At a convention in May 1937, a resolution passed requesting the Executive Board of the Woodworkers to work toward affiliation with the CIO and to call a special convention for that purpose. During the summer of 1937 the Woodworkers CIO affiliation referendum passed by over 16000 to 5000. At the July convention in Tacoma, delegates supported Pritchett's motion to affiliate with the CIO. On 20 July, the Woodworkers reconvened as the International Woodworkers of America (CIO) to be headquartered in Portland, Oregon. In British Columbia, local unions already established received new charters from the IWA. In January 1938, the new union held its first District Convention.²⁹

It was axiomatic to the communist leaders of the British Columbia Woodworkers at this time, that there be a close affiliation with the industrial union movement in the United States. Given the strength of the American labour movement, which after 1935 experienced an enormous increase in growth, the leaders of the active industrial unions in British Columbia, still much weaker by comparison, were "mesmerized" by the American example. Being affiliated with an American union, they believed, was an expression of true proletarian internationalism, a deeply felt and solidly-held part of their political philosophy.³⁰

Along with this commitment to the American connection went an equally strongly felt adherence to the legislative approach to the problems of organization, collective bargaining and union recognition. The example of the successes of the CIO unions, under the Roosevelt New Deal programme, was overwhelming. In August 1936 a debate was held in Vancouver between visiting British Communist MP, Willie Gallacher and Woodworker's leader and Party member Harold Pritchett, on the subject of industrial relations. Speaking from within the British tradition which held that a collective agreement was not something "known" to the law, Gallacher warned against workers putting their fate in the hands of a bourgeois government. Pritchett and others felt that if their unions were strong enough to get the government to give them the statutory protection they desired, they would be strong enough to ensure the government lived up to its commitment.³¹ Two years later, in June 1938, as president of a new North American industrial union Pritchett gave a radio talk in British Columbia. In that province, Pritchett explained, as in the United States, woodworkers were confronted by a united employer interested only in large profits attainable most easily by maintenance of the open shop. Eighty percent of the big lumber operations in British Columbia, he estimated, were owned and controlled by American capital:

The Weyerhausers, Bloedels and McCormicks are the identical employers with which our sister and brother members south of the international border have, through organization, with the assistance of the New Deal government, established collective bargaining rights and entered into agreements which as far as we are concerned, are lived up to, which provide a minimum wage scale of 62½ cents per hour, an eight-hour day, and a forty-hour week, with time and one-half for any time in excess of the forty hours. Therefore, in view of the fact that the Canadian working people are faced with a government that has definitely proven they are not in sympathy with the problems of labour and have in conclusion continuously worked in the interests of the employer and said employer is international in scope, through a highly organized International Employers' Association, requires therefore that our union must out of necessity be international in character.³²

Part of that international character was explicitly a determination to win legislation that would recognize the rights of employees to organize into a trade union and rights of a trade

union to bargain collectively for the employees who had selected it as their bargaining agent.

In 1925, in order to clear up some constitutional confusion regarding the governance of labour relations in Canada, the British Columbia government had passed the Industrial Disputes Investigation (British Columbia) Act, making any industrial dispute within the jurisdiction of the province subject to the federal IDI Act. The chief feature of the federal Act was its attempt to outlaw strikes, lockouts and changes in working conditions prior to and during compulsory conciliation and investigation proceedings. The latter could be initiated by either party to a dispute, or, by the Minister of Labour. Boards of conciliation and investigation were composed of one representative from each side and a jointly chosen chair. These boards served two main functions, conciliation and adjudication. The former involved facilitating private negotiations between the two parties; the latter took the form of formal public hearings, presentation of briefs, followed by deliberations and a decision, either unanimous or majority. In the case of adjudication, reports of the majority and minority non-binding recommendations were transmitted to the Minister, and then, from him to the parties and the public at-large. Only after this process was complete was a strike or lockout legal, an innovation that particularly distinguished the Canadian system. This legislation directly involved the state in the resolution of industrial disputes, largely to the disadvantage of workers. It was not in any way intended to protect the rights of workers or trade unions to organize, bargain and engage in industrial action.³³

With the rise of the CIO unions in Canada, organized employer and state hostility to labour reached a peak unmatched since 1919. In the newly-organizing manufacturing and resource industries in Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and British Columbia in particular, employers dug in to resist the incursion of militant, often communist-led trade unions from south of the border. Industrial unionism posed a threat not only to the lumber barons and mining magnates, but also to the established craft unions which had developed their organizational strength within the context of craft exclusivity and self-administration of

jurisdictional disputes. Legislation that gave the state the power to define union jurisdictions opened up the possibility that carefully-nurtured craft lines could be wiped out in a wave of industry-wide organization.³⁴ Wishing to avoid the split that had occurred in its American parent organization, the TLC, during 1937, resisted pressure from the AFL to expel the still numerically weak CIO-affiliated unions.³⁵ Probably in large part to maintain a degree of unity, the Congress succumbed to pressure from the CIO unions and adopted a variant of the Wagner Act for presentation to provincial governments as proposed legislation.³⁶

In British Columbia, the IWA, at its January 1937 District Conference in Nanaimo, passed a resolution demanding the right of collective bargaining and the abolition of the blacklist system, and lobbied the Vancouver and Victoria Trades and Labour Councils to its support.³⁷ Industrial unions in British Columbia also began pressuring for the reestablishment of the British Columbia Federation of Labour, disbanded since 1920. In the fall of 1937 the Victoria Trades and Labour Council called a province-wide conference of unions in conjunction with the legislative session, to lobby for the passage of new labour legislation.³⁸ The Victoria Conference endorsed a CCF draft bill which addressed some of the weaknesses of the original "model bill" by explicitly including the rights of trade unions to organize and bargain collectively. Vancouver East CCF member Harold Winch, who was involved in the Conference, tried unsuccessfully to get this bill placed on the order paper of the House. Colin Cameron, CCF member for Comox, introduced a separate bill which would have given organizers the right to enter logging operations.³⁹

By the time of the fall legislative session, however, much of the immediate political pressure from the left was off Premier Pattullo's Liberal government. As a result of the June election, the CCF, experiencing the consequences of recent internal disruptions, had lost its status as the official opposition to the Conservatives.⁴⁰ The new draft legislation brought to the floor of the House in December, the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, was largely a provincial rewrite of the IDI Act, with a very half-hearted nod to

employees' rights to organize and bargain collectively. The conciliation and adjudication functions were broken into two separate stages: compulsory conciliation by a conciliation commissioner, followed, if unsuccessful, by the appointment of a board of arbitration. The IDI Act restrictions on the right to strike were maintained, and strengthened somewhat by a provision requiring a secret ballot vote of employees on a board recommendation, supervised at the discretion of the Minister, followed by a further 14 day "cooling-off period," before a strike could be legally conducted. As a concession to labour, a 14 day time limit was placed on the appointment of the commissioner, but no time limit was placed on the deliberations of the board.⁴¹

The main exception taken to the bill by the comparatively conservative Vancouver Trades and Labour Council was to the compulsory conciliation and arbitration sections.⁴² No criticism was levelled at weaknesses in the ICA Act with respect to state recognition of trade union rights—something that would have aided the organizational efforts of the struggling industrial unions. And there was much to criticize from the latter's perspective. The definition of "organization" did include "trade unions" but only as supplementary to the more general category of "organization or association of employees formed for the purpose of regulating relations between employers and employees." That included the company unions specifically outlawed by the Wagner Act. Section 7(2) of the British Columbia bill provided that organizations were entitled to enter into an agreement with an employer requiring all employees to be members of a specified organization of employees, thus, in theory, permitting a union shop agreement. Section 4 did recognize the right of employees to organize for any lawful purpose, and employers refusing to bargain would be liable to a fine of \$500. Trade union officials not necessarily employed in an operation could be elected as bargaining representatives. But since trade unions as such were not explicitly recognized as legal bargaining agents, employers were not compelled to bargain or enter into agreements with trade unions, even in cases where the majority of workers were already members. Nothing in the Act, in fact, compelled employers to enter into an

agreement of any kind. Without a union agreement there was very little chance of unions winning any form of security, so essential to organizing in an industry like logging, characterized by mass transiency.

The ICA Act of 1937 insured that in future recognition of a trade union as bargaining agent would be a matter for negotiation, arbitration and possibly job action, rather than, as under the Wagner Act, a matter determined by statute and government agencies prior to negotiation proceedings. The Act's failure to recognize trade unions as legitimate bargaining agents threw into question the effectiveness of its anti-discrimination clause as well. Section 7(1) provided a \$500 fine for the offence of seeking to compel a person to join or refrain from joining any organization by threat of loss of employment or actual loss of employment. The question remained, would the government of British Columbia ever enforce a provision that would enhance the efforts of a union to become an established industrial relations entity?⁴³

The severe weaknesses of the ICA Act were very rapidly brought to public attention by events at two Port Alberni mills. Early in 1938, the IWA stepped up its efforts to organize mill employees in the crucial Port Alberni area. The two mills in question were owned by two of the biggest companies in the industry. Alberni Pacific Lumber Company mill and its remaining timber supply had been purchased in 1936 by H.R. MacMillan Export for \$1.7 million. MacMillan then beat out the Bloedel interests in securing John D. Rockefeller Jr.'s timber holdings in the Ash Valley for \$2.6 million to secure a 20 year operating supply for the mill. A \$500,000 logging railroad was set up to service the Ash Valley timber. The other mill in question was owned by one of MacMillan's chief rivals, Bloedel, Stewart and Welch. In 1935, BSW had bought all outstanding shares in the previously jointly-owned Great Central Sawmill, and had completed construction of its medium-sized Somass mill. In addition it owned and operated the Red Band Shingle mill in Burnaby, as well as two different logging operations at Menzies Bay and Franklin River on the Island. It held timber estimated at over 2.5 billion feet. Both these companies then,

were in the process of major expansion and consolidation based largely on the export trade opened up since 1932. Heavily involved in large capital expenditures, and with BSW considering a pulp mill at Port Alberni, these "timber barons" were not about to countenance the organization of their workers by a militant industrial union;⁴⁴ 75 men, all members of IWA local 1-85, were fired without apparent cause from the two mills on 4 June 1938. That same evening, bargaining committees for each mill were nominated and petitions circulated for their election. A meeting of employees on 5 June endorsed the committees. When the companies refused to recognize the elected committees, or to negotiate rehiring of the fired employees before any replacements were hired, a union delegation interviewed labour Minister Pearson in Victoria and sought the appointment of a conciliation commissioner. The Minister suggested the delegation would have to sign up 51 percent of the employees involved in the dispute before a commissioner would be appointed. Meanwhile the company proceeded to circulate a counter-petition which, according to an affidavit sworn out by the APL mill superintendent, asked the men to have nothing to do with a CIO-affiliated union. When the APL employees took their own petition for a commissioner back to Pearson on 17 June with an alleged 60 percent majority, the Minister refused to recognize the existence of any dispute in light of the existence of two conflicting petitions. The request for a conciliation commissioner was therefore refused. Subsequently, Pearson directed the employees to elect negotiating committees by secret ballot at meetings attended by a majority of employees. If the employer still refused to bargain, a conciliator would then be granted.⁴⁵

The Minister was quite unprepared, if not unwilling, to administer the ICA Act. Regulations as to how to comply with its provisions had not been established, and indeed would not be for some time (see chapter three below). The union was forced into a lengthy series of meetings, petitions and trips to Victoria in an effort to secure only the appointment of a conciliation commissioner.

The events at Port Alberni demonstrate well the new direction in which District One was headed. In 1936, the firing of two loggers for union activity at Cowichan Lake had touched off a strike that eventually involved 2000 loggers and mill workers throughout Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland. In 1938, there was no strike at Port Alberni over the firing of 75 employees, in part because the IWA's efforts were absorbed in a concerted test of the new ICA Act at Blubber Bay. More generally, though, the quest for recognition and legitimation by the state had already begun to distract union officials. The ICA Act, if far short of the dreamed-of Canadian Wagner Act, was an opening through which the union hoped eventually to find a legislative solution to its organizational problems. The Blubber Bay episode serves to reinforce this conclusion. The union's decision to expend so much of its energy at this one small operation can only be understood in terms of a struggle with the state itself in order to secure the kind of legislation that would facilitate the much larger organizational task before it. The fruit of that struggle, the December 1938 amendment to the ICA Act would make a mockery of the union's effort.

III

The Pacific Lime Company, in production at Blubber Bay on Texada Island for 30 years, had as its main operation the quarrying and export of lime and subsidiary products. It also ran a small lumber mill at the site with a daily capacity of 40,000 feet. Some of its employees were also involved in longshore work at the loading dock. Through an agreement with the Longshore and Mine Mill unions, the IWA had been given jurisdiction over the entire operation which employed approximately 100 Chinese and 25 white workers. Pacific Lime was controlled by a New York firm, Niagara Alkali Company. E.T. Kingsley of New York was a minor shareholder as well as owner of Kingsley Navigation Company in British Columbia. Kingsley had joined the Shipping Federation at the outset of the 1935 longshoremen's strike, locked out his AFL employees and established a company union. For the Woodworkers, this link with the Shipping

Federation gave the struggle at Blubber Bay added importance. In fact, the union viewed the "blacklisting" Federation, rather than the "boss Loggers Association" as its main antagonist.⁴⁶

On 23 July 1937, 133 employees had struck for a wage increase and recognition of the Lumber and Sawmill Workers' Union. On 8 September an agreement was reached providing for recognition of an elected shop committee as bargaining representative, for no discrimination against striking employees, and for a minimal wage increase. The company also agreed, as a matter of form, to continue its traditional practice of distributing longshore and maintenance work amongst available employees during the slack winter months. When normal lime quarry operations resumed in the spring, regular practice had been that employees would return to their usual jobs.⁴⁷

Meanwhile, however, a change of management dictated a new hard-line policy at Blubber Bay. By January 1938, Pacific Lime members of the LSWU had been transferred to the IWA, and in March this small crew was designated a separate local, 1-163. On 21 January, the company, in an attempt to undermine the union, called a meeting of employees to discuss the status of the existing employee committee, four members of whom were temporarily unemployed. The men, including the Chinese, remained solid. The company's strategy was to try to form a company union which would repudiate the rehiring agreement of 1937. When the company refused to allow three laid-off committee members to attend a subsequent meeting called on company time, and attempted to have its own committee ratified, 92 employees signed a petition for a conciliation commissioner. Blubber Bay thus became the first intervention by the Department of Labour into a labour dispute under the ICA Act. Commissioner McGeough held an election on 12 February in which the original committee was upheld 87 to 30. He then advised the company to live up to the 1937 agreement. Only three days later the company informed the employee committee that its policy would be to hire all men needed for the reopening of the plant from Vancouver. A quickly assembled employees meeting decided, despite calls from the

floor for an immediate walk out, to apply for further conciliation. Union officials alleged six cases of discrimination due to union activity.⁴⁸

At the end of February McGeough returned to Blubber Bay. He found that three of the men had been laid off prior to 10 December 1937 and were thus not covered by the ICA Act. The company agreed to rotate the employment of the other three men, but soon after fired a union engineer and refused to open negotiations with the elected union committee. These actions provoked a second strike on 6 March, and yet another intervention by McGeough. He arranged a return to work on 17 March based on the company's undertaking to enter negotiations on a union proposal for union recognition, union shop, reemployment of all men on payroll on 23 July 1937 (date of the first strike), a base rate and overtime provisions, equitable distribution of boat-loading work, and rotation of white and oriental employees on an equal basis. On 21 March, the union informed the Minister Pearson that the company was deliberately provoking the men by hiring from other points while local men were without work. A commissioner was requested for the third time and appointed on 28 March.⁴⁹ The union informed McGeough that the company had rejected all of the key demands, and had abrogated a number of long-standing work customs. The Commissioner reported on the complete lack of agreement and recommended referral of the dispute to a board of arbitration.⁵⁰

During the short time between the granting of the arbitration board and the initiation of hearings, Pacific Lime added to the 23 union men already denied reemployment by firing nine more with company service ranging from four years to 29 years. Efforts were made by Provincial Police Sergeant T.D. Sutherland and Constable J. Sweeney during the first part of April to recruit local residents on relief to fill the positions of the fired men.⁵¹ A three day strike followed this latest mass firing which was too blatant even for Pearson to ignore. Upon receiving demands for reinstatement from the IWA District Council and Harold Winch of the CCF, Pearson threatened the company with legal proceedings unless the nine men were reemployed. After compliance by Pacific Lime, and with a promise

from the company to continue negotiations, the men returned to work. A board of arbitration consisting of Chairman Judge Charles McIntosh, local union man Frank Leigh, and R.D. Williams, ex-president of the Shipping Federation, heard representations in early May. The union case was handled largely by Winch.⁵²

The board dealt with nine of the most contentious clauses. Quite remarkably, its unanimous decision ignored the previous committee election supervised by McGeough. Not only did it refuse union recognition, but recommended that the negotiating committee be composed of two union employees, one non-union employee together with the general manager and plant superintendent. A general grievance committee was to have union and non-union members.⁵³ Pearson told Winch that the committee representation clauses would only remain if both sides agreed, otherwise Section 5 of the Act would automatically apply. The Minister then assigned Judge McIntosh to the task of straightening out the mess with a legal union strike deadline of 2 June pending. The Judge secured company agreement to recognize the existing elected committee, and, in principle to reemploy all men on payroll as of 23 July 1937. The company refused, however, to give any undertaking as to a reasonable time limit for reinstatement, pleading loyalty to its "scab" employees. In essence, the company's position and intention had not altered since the beginning of the dispute. Faced with such intransigence, the union had no choice but to carry through with its strike threat.⁵⁴

Once the strike had begun, plant superintendent Oswald Peele arranged with Sergeant Sutherland for the recruitment of strikebreakers. Sutherland attempted to solicit the help of the local relief investigator for Powell River District, but this plan was thwarted by intervention from Victoria. Sutherland nevertheless went on his own. The main job of recruiting Chinese strikebreakers, was undertaken in Vancouver by one Queue Yip, also casually employed as a government interpreter. By mid-July the union estimated over 50 strikebreakers had been imported to Blubber Bay. It set up a picket line at the dock, bolstered by IWA members from Vancouver, and Pulp and Sulphite workers from Powell

River, in order to deter "scabs" arriving by boat. The Provincial Police, in addition to herding "scabs," assisted company officials with the forcible eviction of strikers from their homes.⁵⁵

The union retaliated by securing from the Maritime Federation of the Pacific convention a threat to place all Pacific Lime cargo on the unfair list unless the company responded to union demands. It also initiated court action against the company on behalf of 26 resident workers (all Chinese) for unlawful eviction and assault. The situation was ready-made for violent confrontation, and on 21 July and 17 September, upon the arrival of boats from Vancouver, strikers and their wives clashed with police aided by strikebreakers and company officials. After the first encounter, several strikers were given fines for assault and obstruction, and in one case a 30 day prison sentence. After the 17 September melee, the IWA obtained affidavits from passengers on board the docking vessel testifying that the confrontation had been set up in advance by the police.⁵⁶ The union, supported by the eye witness account of Colin Cameron, alleged that in a well-rehearsed action the Provincial Police had charged the picket line with gas and clubs, "driving the strikers into a volley of stones and clubs between two rows of scabs lined up on either side of the road to ambush them." Police clubbed any who turned to escape. One union man, Bob Gardner, was arrested the next day and in the course of being jailed had four ribs broken by Provincial Police Constable Williamson. Charged by the union in a noteworthy court action, Williamson eventually received a six month sentence for assaulting Gardner. All other charges against strikebreakers and police were dismissed for lack of evidence while 15 union picketers, including Gardner, received three to four month prison sentences. The central figure in the IWA's test of "bourgeois" justice never properly recovered from his injuries, became ill in prison, and died shortly after in Nanaimo.⁵⁷

On 17 September, the day of the second outbreak of violence on the Blubber Bay dock, George Pearson issued a statement blaming the union for his department's failure to settle the dispute. He asserted that, "so far as this department is concerned everything

possible has been done to deal with this dispute in a manner that would be helpful to the employees, but their rejection of the unanimous award exhausted our powers." Pearson also announced he had received a request from the present company employees to elect a new committee since the old one no longer properly represented them. He noted that he had "had to take the position that I cannot agree to this until I am satisfied that the dispute had in some way been satisfactorily disposed of."⁵⁸ The Provincial Police quickly took care of that obstacle using old fashioned methods of force and intimidation in place of the industrial relations machinery that had proven inadequate.

The union, too, realizing that the ICA Act was a dead letter for the moment, sent a delegation consisting of Reverend H.P. Davidson, Grant McNeil, Harold Winch and John Stanton to see Attorney General Gordon Wismer with a sheaf of affidavits charging the Provincial Police with misusing their authority by practising intimidation against strikers and their families. Wismer ordered an immediate investigation into the charges. He was quickly over-ruled by Premier Pattullo, who, according to Colin Cameron, had been pressured by Mel Bryan, Liberal MLA, and Sergeant Sutherland, both of whom would have been exposed as using their positions to assist Pacific Lime.⁵⁹

The 17 September picket line confrontation and ensuing legal battle appeared to weaken the resolve of the strikers, who, at any rate, were living a hand to mouth existence. Pearson announced, in early October, that negotiations would resume and predicted a quick end to the strike. The most the company would offer was reinstatement of 20 from a list of 106 strikers presented by the union. With the strike apparently lost, attention was turned to the new session of the legislature and attempts to confront the government with the consequences of its inadequate labour legislation.⁶⁰

The events at Blubber Bay clearly demonstrated the complete emptiness of the ICA Act with respect to employer discrimination against union members, and recognition of trade unions as bargaining agents. Also exposed was the inadequate and unfair conciliation and arbitration machinery set up by the Department of Labour under the Act. In the midst

of the dispute, the IWA began clamouring once again for a proper British Columbia equivalent of the Wagner Act. Pritchett, in a speech at the Blubber Bay picket camp in October, struck his familiar theme linking the IWA's part in the trade union struggle against "the international exploitation and aggression of big business" to "an intensified campaign, both politically and organizationally, to change the British Columbia Labour Bill No. 94 into a democratic measure such as the Wagner Act..."⁶¹ To that end, the IWA endorsed the renewed campaign of the Vancouver Trades and Labour Council to have ICA Act amended. A council committee, after studying the Act, and consulting with the provincial government, brought forward suggested changes explicitly placing trade unions at the centre of the definition of "organization" and at the centre of the anti-intimidation, discrimination and collective bargaining sections of the Act. As a direct response to the Blubber Bay arbitration board decision, the committee recommended that no employer representative should sit on any union or employee association grievance or bargaining committee. The conciliation sections of the Act would be struck out, providing for immediate referral of any dispute directly to a board. With the fall legislature session just underway, the Lumber Worker warned that "the action from parliamentarians on the Blubber Bay issue will show who are in favour of a new deal and on the other hand, who are the stooges of big business."⁶²

As the session progressed, it became apparent that the minister was not inclined to undertake any wholesale revision. After meeting with a TLC delegation, headed by Percy Bengough and Birt Showler, the government announced its intention to amend section 5 only, so that officials of a union which had organized a majority of the employees in an operation would automatically become bargaining agents.⁶³

Employer reaction was swift. A group, including logging, mining and manufacturing concerns headed by Wendell Farris, K.C., urged the government not to open the Act for amendment at all, and if that proved impossible, to grant recognition only to unions already organized, and not to any organized subsequently. Pearson accepted this

suggestion as a "temporary compromise," promising full consultation with both sides towards a satisfactory rewrite of the clause within a year's time. The Minister defended his inaction, indicating his personal preference had been to leave the Act intact. The ICA Act, he excused, though it had not stimulated labour organization, had not interfered with unions either. One of the problems, he admitted, was the extreme difficulty in writing into any law a clause preventing employer discrimination. Blubber Bay, Pearson claimed, was the "only serious blot" on an otherwise peaceful labour relations record since the Act had been installed. And that "blot" was the fault of the workers, he accused, who, on unsound union advice, rejected the arbitration board award, thus leaving his Department powerless to act. Had they listened to wiser counsel, and accepted the award, Pearson assured the legislature, he could have brought the company around to a more reasonable position.⁶⁴

In view of the decision of the AFL Convention in November 1938 to order the Trades and Labour Congress to expel all CIO affiliates (an action promptly carried out in January 1939) it is not surprising that both the Vancouver Council and the provincial executive of the Congress expressed satisfaction with the government's surrender to organized capital's vocal concerns. "We did not get all we asked," said Bengough, "but we won part of our request."⁶⁵ The impending split in the Canadian labour movement had made it considerably easier for Pearson to work out his compromise position. What pleased some craft union leaders and mollified the industrialists, was the fact that the amended Act did nothing to improve the opportunities of the newly organizing industrial unions to get established in the province. There would still be no legal onus on an employer to negotiate with a trade union as bargaining agent, or to sign a union agreement, even in cases where an operation was one hundred percent organized, if the union had not been elected prior to 7 December 1938. The reign of the blacklist and the open shop in the woods would continue unabated. Moreover, the Act implicitly recognized in law the distinction between "good" and "bad" unions, thus reinforcing what would become the major argument of employers against recognition of the IWA and other communist-led

unions during the war. If Blubber Bay had demonstrated to labour the obvious inadequacy of the law, it had also served to reinforce in the minds of British Columbia's large industrial employers their intense reluctance to deal with fighting unions, such as the Woodworkers, in any organized industrial relations system.

For the moment, as far as legislative action was concerned, the IWA was stymied at the provincial level. The British Columbia District's "Blacklist Committee," headed by John Stanton, turned its attention toward Ottawa, and began collecting affidavits and other data in support of the efforts of CCF members of the federal House, McNeil and J.S. Woodsworth, to have pro-labour amendments written into the criminal code. The result was Section 502A of the Criminal Code (1939), making it an indictable offence to use membership in a union as the sole reason for dismissal, refusal to employ or intimidation. The section's wording, however, and the difficulty in proving such instances, made conviction "virtually impossible."⁶⁶

By the end of the decade the shape of industrial relations in the woodworking industry of British Columbia was remarkably similar to its condition in 1931. As the directors of the BCLA reported at the end of 1940, despite "outside interference" of "C.I.O. agitators" in three of their camps, another year had ended with "our members running their own business without union regulation or union permission." C.D. Anderson, Chairman of the Board went on:

We have fair labour legislation both Provincial and Federal. This is one of the reasons we are able to run our own business. It is up to us to see that our labour laws remain fair. We can rest assured that elements interested in collecting Union Dues will never slacken their efforts....if we wish to continue to enjoy the benefits of the "open shop" we must keep in mind, all the time, that eternal vigilance is the price. And this applies not only to the woods by to the legislative halls as well.⁶⁷

The events of the 1930s had cast the industrial relations struggle in British Columbia within an institutional and legislative framework. That the IWA had chosen to fight for recognition and legitimacy within the institutions of the state did not imply it was

quiescent, conservative or legalist in its approach. Rather, the District leaders saw this strategy as the most effective path to organizing a very difficult industry and pursuing the class struggle in the woods. Just as with the logging operators, the union recognized that their struggle against the open shop had to be waged both in the woods and in the legislative halls. The historical conjuncture of the 1930s, during which industrial relations in North America were becoming established as part of the institutionalized political system, provided the British Columbia District of the IWA with its first opportunities to advance the struggle on the parliamentary front. The labour market and general economic conditions of the war years would provide the first real breakthrough for trade union organizing in the British Columbia woods, and would open up the possibility for the labour movement in general to move beyond the "phoney" labour statutes of the later 1930s. It is to this two-pronged struggle of the war years that we will turn our attention in the following three chapters.

Chapter Two

The War Years: Labour Market, Capital Formation, and Union Strategy

I

The open shop and blacklist strategy of the Association operators worked for them during the lean years of the Depression. A relative labour surplus meant low wages, the ability to pick and choose amongst even skilled loggers, ensuring that few inroads were made by union organizers. The fact that these operators, as it was often said, always had three crews at any given time, one coming, one going and one working, was not a big problem, so long as a steady supply of labour was maintained. The BCLA's Loggers Agency in Vancouver dispatched at least three-quarters of all loggers to the Queen Charlotte, Vancouver Island and mainland camps, and maintained a closed shop as far as union activists were concerned. The loggers' world, centered in Vancouver, included the entire coastal region. Even though coastal logging operations remained open through most of the year a fluctuating workforce made union organizing extremely difficult, yet did not lower production. If anything, it permitted the operators to force higher rates of production through piece work and speed-up.¹

By 1941 there was full employment in Canada and by 1942, in most industries including the lumber industry, severe labour shortages.² This labour market was a function of both an absolute decrease in available employees due to enlistment, as well as an increase in production, especially intense during 1940-41. The domestic wartime infrastructure of airplane hangars, army barracks and a myriad of other facilities and supplies created an unprecedented demand for coastal timber. Canada's building programme, including the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, required the construction of 9000 wooden buildings during 1940-41. In 1940, British Columbia provided 25 percent of Canadian government timber procurements, the highest of any province. By 1941, Canadian lumber production reached an all-time high, but fell off

considerably in 1942 due to shortages of labour.³ Ironically, this labour market situation at first exacerbated the problem of labour fluctuation. With jobs aplenty, men could pick and choose, moving from one camp to the next in search of better "grub," cleaner beds and easier foremen.

New employment opportunities also lured experienced loggers to the booming shipyards of Vancouver and to wartime construction work. As well, the opening up of spruce logging for airplane timber in the Queen Charlottes drained skilled labour away from lower coastal and Island camps, a situation noted by the Loggers Agency as early as June 1940. In November 1940, the secretary of the BCLA met with the federal Deputy Minister of Labour to discuss possible government action to regulate wage increases and control the movement of labour from one plant to another. In March 1941, Black reported to the Association on a shortage of riggers and loaders as men grew increasingly restless and mobile. The following spring, the Loggers Agency reported 377 men on order, of whom 160 were riggers, and 139 fallers and buckers. Black was busy scouring the prairies for recruits, with authorization from National Selective Service (NSS). The Agency worked closely with NSS in an effort to establish standard wages across the industry and bring experienced men from other regions or other industries to fill critical shortages in the woods.⁴

During April 1942, R.G. Clements of the Federal Department of Labour investigated the problem of British Columbia loggers seeking employment in other war industries. After visiting various shipyards and industries and interviewing hotel managers, personnel managers and employment agency operators, he concluded that anywhere between 500 and 1000 loggers were "floating" around Vancouver seeking employment in other war industries, but mainly in the shipyards. Cited as reasons were the desire to be near families, to find easier work and have access to "the usual city attractions." In particular, rigging men and engineers were most likely to secure and do well at shipyard jobs. By securing such employment, a logger could also avoid the extra

costs of clothes, equipment, and transportation. Family men with city households would not have the extra charges of bed and board away from home.⁵

The following month, NSS representative, C.S. Henley met with representatives of the major industrial associations, including the BCLA. The Loggers Association put forward a series of recommendations calling for classification of industries in order of priority for labour, registration of all manpower, freezing men in particular industries (particular operations if possible), punishment for idleness through the establishment of labour battalions, and wage ceilings in the logging industry based on geographical divisions.⁶

By September it appeared the federal war bureaucracy was beginning to meet some of the industry's needs. That month, C.D. Howe, Minister of Munitions and Supply, officially declared log and lumber production an essential war industry. Elliott Little, Director of NSS, announced plans, in conjunction with industry leaders, to provide much needed manpower, especially in the year-around Pacific coast industry. The Department of Labour established an inventory of employable persons to aid in the transfer of workers to a region of acute shortage. A new set of NSS regulations under cabinet order PC 7595 provided a seven-day cooling-off period for any lay-off or notice of termination by the employee. This measure was designed to reduce the opportunity for employees to "shop around" for work at higher pay, and to end enticement by employers. It would also provide NSS officers with an opportunity to intervene and prevent a transfer. Together with the curtailment of less essential plants and a provision for assigning and freezing unemployed men to particular jobs, these regulations were in part intended to help find the estimated 110,000 workers needed by the end of 1942 to meet Canada's wartime lumber commitments.⁷

By the end of October 1942, the editors of British Columbia Lumberman, an industry trade journal, were growing impatient with the failure of the NSS to invoke all its special powers to provide men. The only indication of action had been a one-third wage

bonus to attract loggers to the remote Queen Charlotte spruce camps.⁸ In summing up the situation at the end of 1942, G.W. O'Brien, Chairman of the Board of the BCLA, reported that the manpower situation had become critical. Men were being lost to the armed forces, defence construction, munition factories, shipyards and to a successful fishing season. As well, the wavering manpower policy of the government, rumours of job freezing, a desire to escape income taxes, and a wide variation in wage rates across the industry had kept hundreds of men on the move. The Association itself had managed, through its own efforts, to stabilize wages somewhat, with the establishment of ceilings for each employment category in the three major areas of the coast forest district, east and west Vancouver Island and the mainland. Nevertheless, the drain of manpower to more attractive city-based employment continued.⁹

In February 1943, in a memo to the Timber Controller, the BCLA claimed it needed 3500 men by April, including up to 1000 fallers. The Association doubted that either the industry or the government would approve wages sufficiently high to attract men back. It suggested a plan to locate workers with woods experience in other industries, particularly in the shipyards.¹⁰ C.D. Howe agreed that British Columbia shipyards were overstaffed while the situation in the logging camps was acute. He suggested to Minister of Labour Humphrey Mitchell a plan of shifting men out of shipbuilding back to woodwork.¹¹ Mitchell's deputy, A. MacNamara, believed the BCLA figures were inflated and opposed a damaging reduction of labour in the shipyards.¹² Mitchell also reported back to Howe on the opposition of Austin Taylor and H.R. MacMillan, the dollar-a-year men in charge of shipping, to a transfer of men into logging. MacMillan in particular took the position that ships were more important than lumber.¹³ Official resistance, combined with the reluctance of shipyard employees to move, and complaints from the Boilermakers Union resulted in a grand total of 25 fallers and buckers from the shipyards being ordered to go logging in May.¹⁴ Black informed the BCLA he knew of only one or two such men who actually returned to camps.¹⁵ Outside the shipbuilding sector, the situation with respect to

loggers was little different. From a list of approximately 1700 ex-loggers provided by the Loggers Agency, the Unemployment Insurance Commission was able to find and interview 633. Of these 15 percent were already in camps, another 15 percent were intending to go or agreed to go, while 290 or 46 percent refused and had their present work permits revoked.¹⁶

From the point of view of the industry, then, the evidence suggests that wage and price regulation, competition from more attractive wartime employment, and the failure of federal government agencies and departments to give sufficient priority to log and lumber production created a situation of acute labour shortage and fluctuating crews. NSS regulations aimed at controlling job movement made little impact in the logging camps. Loggers continued to look for greener pastures. The wartime labour market presented real problems to lumbermen anxious to capitalize on the unprecedented demand for their products.

The task of the union was to harness a transient workforce and stabilize its membership and organizational structure, at least in several of the key operations, as a step towards organizing the entire coast industry prior to war's end and a possible return to depressed conditions. The forces of the undersupplied but fluctuating labour market worked both for and against the union in this regard. Certain structural changes that had been occurring in the lumber industry during the 1930s, and which accelerated during the early years of the war, worked more emphatically in the union's favour and would help in overcoming the problems associated with the over-dynamic labour market.

II

In 1935, the establishment of the Seaboard marketing group put an end to H.R. MacMillan Export's control over offshore lumber marketing and precipitated a new rush for timber. MacMillan suddenly found himself frozen out of the export business with very little producing capacity of his own. The formation of Seaboard helped launch

MacMillan's full-scale expansion into the production side of the industry. MacMillan's efforts over the ensuing years to assemble plant and log stocks with which to maintain his share of the export market initiated a new wave of expansion and concentration in the industry. In 1935, as well, Bloedel, Stuart and Welch merged all of its provincial holdings into one organization headquartered in Vancouver. The trade agreement worked out with the United Kingdom in 1932 brought dramatic increases in offshore exports and large-scale capital investment into lumbering areas like the Alberni Valley.¹⁷

Industrial consolidation went hand in hand with another trend—the diminution of the open log market. Already, companies operating in areas tributary to the west coast of Vancouver Island, such as Alberni Pacific Lumber and BSW found it necessary to run integrated operations. The shipping distance from east coast and mainland camps, and the relatively small west coast log market precluded the establishment of either independent mills or logging camps.¹⁸ BSW's east coast operation and those of other large firms such as Canadian Western Lumber were also integrated. With the proliferation of timber licences in the first decade of the twentieth century, however, many independent logging companies had been established on the mainland coast and eastern Vancouver Island. Prior to World War One, and into the 1930s, an open market for logs, the so-called Vancouver Log Market, existed alongside a smaller integrated sector. Even these larger integrated firms utilized the open market often as a means of preserving their own privately-held timber for future use.¹⁹

As companies such as MacMillan and BSW were pouring millions into new milling facilities, they could no longer rely on independent operators for their log supplies. There is some evidence that by the late 1930s, the number of major independent logging companies producing for the open market was dwindling. Certainly this appeared to be the case by the opening years of the war. MacMillan named nine companies, supplying him with a large proportion of his logs, that "logged out" between 1939 and 1942 as the best stands of high grade timber in the valleys and lower slopes of the coastal region were

depleted. To maintain log supplies, the large lumber companies acquired extensive tracts of timber through purchases such as that of the Crown granted Rockefeller timber on Vancouver Island by MacMillan, APL, Canadian Western Lumber Company (CWL) and the Victoria Lumber and Manufacturing Company. In some cases timber was acquired through the outright purchase of small logging operations, plant and timber supply together, even further reducing the number of camps selling on the open market.²⁰

The position of open market operators working Crown grant timber previously exempted from provincial log export restrictions was further damaged by the Timber Control's ban on fir log exports in 1941, and on hemlock and balsam exports in August 1942. The BCLA estimated the loss of the Puget Sound market cost these operators more than four dollars per thousand on their total cut. The reduction of open market logging was particularly pronounced amongst fir operators, those most affected by depletion of cheap accessible stands of timber. Independent logging persisted longer in the hemlock and balsam stands.²¹

An important factor which enhanced the expansion and development of the larger firms was their ability to afford better the application of more advanced logging methods and employ the talents of trained logging engineers. Since the 1920s, firms such as Comox Logging and Railway, BSW and Industrial Timber Mills (ITM) had been applying the principles of rational management to their operations in an attempt to increase production. BSW, which introduced power sawing into its camps in the 1930s, proudly claimed the distinction of being the first large-scale user of such equipment in North America. By 1941, the Bloedel camps worked almost exclusively with power saws. Paternalistic schemes, such as employee clubhouses, industrial councils, company insurance plans and the creation of logging communities were designed by these companies to neutralize unrest and create a more reliable and stable workforce capable of the teamwork required to maximize the utilization of improved production techniques on a year-around basis.²²

In logging, the trend toward concentration of production was quite marked. While in absolute numbers small logging outfits increased during the war, due largely to the proliferation of contract truck logging in areas of marginal access and profitability, their share of the total cut was minor. By 1943, the nine biggest operations, or 1.3 percent of the total, accounted for 43 percent of the total cut, while the next 34 largest, or five percent, cut 12 percent of the total timber. In the middle of the scale, 27 percent of the operators accounted for approximately 14 percent of the cut, while at the bottom end, 36 percent of the operators had only one percent.²³

With the shrinkage of the open log market, and the disappearance of cheap available stumpage, the smaller independent mills were thrown out of work as well. The average yearly number of mills that closed down between 1933 and 1942 was 130.²⁴ These factors were of even greater relative importance after the start of the war, when straight business failure would have occurred less frequently. As evidence of the serious plight of the independent operators, in February 1943, the Timber Controller announced a one dollar per thousand increase in the price of all logs cut by them for sale to log-buying sawmills, the increased costs of lumber production to be refunded by the government.²⁵ The trend, however, was apparently inexorable. By 1945, out of a total of 254 coast sawmills, 21 (or 8.3 percent) accounted for 51.5 percent of the total value of lumber production; 75 medium-sized mills, almost 30 percent of the total, had 27.1 percent of the value of production, while another 37 percent had product valued at 1.4 percent of the total.²⁶

It was quite clearly to the largest most powerful companies operating mainly with the best of the available fir timber, such as BSW, Elk River, Comox Logging, ITM, APL, Malahat Logging, Lake Logging, and Salmon River Logging that this trend toward integration of woods and mill operations most emphatically applied.²⁷ And notably, it was within the workforces of these large forest complexes that the IWA would make its greatest inroads in the early 1940s. Union pressure within these operations, short of signed union agreements, often led in the early years to improved wages and conditions designed to

undermine the union, and stabilize the workforce.²⁸ Such improvements also helped further to undermine struggling open market operators during a period of labour scarcity. The large integrated lumber firms, heavily capitalized through recent expansion and modernization of facilities, had, like the pulp and paper companies, a tremendous interest in maintaining uninterrupted production and a stable industrial relations climate. The British Columbia pulp and paper industry, with a ratio of capital investment per employee in 1942 of \$16,295, had moved much more quickly to establish a working relationship with its employees through their trade unions, the International Brotherhood of Pulp Sulphite and Paper Mill Workers and the International Brotherhood of Paper Makers. In the sawmill industry in general, with a ratio of capital investment per employee of only \$2895, the cost of labour instability was not so high. For the leading sector of the industry, however, composed of a few highly integrated operations, as with the pulp companies, labour relations stability was imperative. Initially stability was equated with the open shop and cozy agreements with company-dominated employee committees. Eventually, events would make the continuation of that system impossible to maintain. Stability would then have to be achieved through establishing a working, industry-wide relationship with the IWA.²⁹

III

The concentration of production, the demise of the open log market and the emergence of a group of integrated, modernizing, highly-capitalized industrial leaders, together with the labour supply conditions in the industry, by 1941-42 created an unprecedented structural opportunity for organizing woodworkers. The industry as a whole now became more vulnerable to attack through certain key companies. The wartime labour shortage, in theory at least, gave the IWA new leverage to organize amongst scarce and highly-valued logging and mill employees. In practice, in the logging sector particularly, the problem of a fluctuating workforce often hampered organizational efforts;

as not only the unorganized, but also key union people chose to go down the road rather than to stay and fight for signed union agreements.

The nature of the workforce in the woods worked both for and against the IWA. As Gordon Hak has ably argued regarding loggers in the Alberni Valley, "Their unique job culture and ethnic composition (largely Scandinavian) made them outsiders." The logger's world centred on Vancouver, where he often made his home, socialized and hired on, but it also "encompassed the entire coastal region." Historically, the union movement in the woodworking industry focussed on the logging sector where conditions were most unsatisfactory and where a particular job culture provided a basis of organization. Coast logging operations by the 1920s and 30s were mechanized, large-scale factory-like concerns which, on the average, employed considerably more workers than sawmill operations. There was a high level of cohesion and unity amongst coast loggers, based on common grievances arising from shared working experiences which formed the basis of a militancy and class consciousness. Traditionally, however, given the failure of the organized labour movement to establish itself in logging, the logger's "willingness to quit and move on was the only avenue of resistance" open to him. In fact, the very peripatetic nature of his employment could help the logger ensure a good reputation throughout the region and a certain degree of independence. These habits of individualistic resistance were hard for the IWA to crack, and persisted long after the "hardy and carefree" image of the lumberjack had lost any real basis in the actual relations of production.³⁰ They persisted in the absence of any other concrete defence against substandard wages, conditions and board, or the enmity of a particular boss.

Millworkers, especially those with particular skills such as sawyers, filers or stationary engineers, were more likely to be closely tied to the communities where they worked and lived. Moreover, to the extent that mill workers were also urban workers, those with higher skills and of European and Canadian descent in particular would have been subject to the forces of moderation and "labourism" imposed by the more complex

city environment. What Robert McDonald has ably argued for an earlier period probably still held true for the Vancouver mill operative at the end of the thirties despite the intervening years of depression. The skilled operative, often a family head who had

joined the Odd Fellows Lodge, owned or rented a small cottage in Mount Pleasant and voted in provincial and municipal elections lived in a very different social world than the single loggers for whom cheap hotels, 'skidway saloons,' shooting galleries, prostitutes and Sunday evening Wobblie meetings constituted Vancouver society.³¹

In addition, according to a study of the 1919 Vancouver working class, a high concentration of unskilled Asians in both the shingle and saw sectors tended to make the mill workforce in general not necessarily less militant, but more difficult to organize by white, skilled trade unionists. The more semi- and unskilled mill work became typecast as Asian work, the more white workers shied away.³²

In sum, the racial, cultural and linguistic complexity of the mill workforce, as well as its often urban character, tended to retard integration of union organizing across the forest industry as a whole, and reinforced a tendency to concentrate on the logging camps. But after 1940, the labour market in the woods made it even easier for a logger to quit camp to seek an individual solution to his problem rather than remaining and engaging in a collective and prolonged struggle for improved wages and conditions. A typical example of the problem occurred at APL Camp 1 in September 1940. The fallers and buckers there demanded a wage increase by circulating a petition. The crews left camp and held a meeting to elect a negotiating committee. When the committee called a second meeting to report on the progress of negotiations, they found the majority had deserted the cause and gone elsewhere in search of a better deal. As a result, the right to negotiate an agreement was lost.³³ The following spring, at a Bloedel camp, fallers making \$2.50 a day were working three weeks with the intention of going back to town as soon as they raised enough travel money. When organizer, Don Barbour asked them to stay and fight for better wages, they refused.³⁴

By the January 1942 District One convention, the problem of transiency had become so severe, a resolution was passed empowering the union to conduct a campaign of "education" in order to stop it. One delegate thought this was fair as far as the bigger camps were concerned, where a logger had a fighting chance to earn a few dollars and gain better conditions. But there were some camps on the coast, he pointed out, where it was impossible for any logger to stay.³⁵ Nigel Morgan noted the severity of the problem could be gauged by figures given by the Union Steamship Company to the Unemployment Insurance Commission. In 1941 that company carried a total of 12,000 passengers to fill 7000 logging jobs. Instructed Morgan, "that gives a better picture than anything else of what we are up against in trying to organize." Other examples given by the District Secretary where turnover had undermined consolidation of the union were at Camp 8 at Cowichan Lake, the APE operation at Alberni, and BSW's at Menzies Bay. In the latter case, the whole camp went out on strike to force the rehiring of two fallers fired, allegedly, for union activity. The two loggers came to Vancouver and took jobs demonstrating power saws at the Exhibition, while the other crews were hitting the pavement.³⁶

Another legacy from the days of the IWW and the first LWIU was the "syndicalist" tendency to try to build an organization exclusively around immediate grievances on the job. In the first year after the formation of the IWA, union organizers such as Hjalmar Bergren in the Lake Cowichan area, and John McCuish in the Queen Charlottes, faced the difficult task of convincing men steeped in the Wobbly legend to adopt the longer-range plan of establishing the union and negotiating signed collective agreements instead of resorting to a strike over every "two cent issue."³⁷

The union's lack of a systematic programme had been demonstrated by the 11 month strike at Blubber Bay, which drained its small resources. At the time there had been some debate within District One about investing so much effort in such a small operation, when the whole coastal industry was still to be organized.³⁸ In the aftermath of the strike, dues paying membership reached a low of 226, concentrated mostly at Lake Cowichan.

Out of a sense of frustration and desperation, Bergren assumed the District presidency at a small meeting in July 1938. In an effort to prevent what he saw as the very possible disintegration of the fledgling union in British Columbia, Bergren launched an effort at the second District Convention, in January 1939, to develop a concrete programme and plan of action. A one dollar a day increase and signed agreements would become the new aim throughout the industry. The convention of 60 delegates also pledged itself to industry-wide overtime pay, and elimination of piece work and the blacklist. With the help of the "Loggers Navy," consisting at the time of one vessel, the "Laur Wayne," an organizational programme would concentrate on key areas, namely the Queen Charlottes and Lake Cowichan, where the union already had a basis on which to build. A political action agenda was adopted which advocated low-cost housing, a shorter working week, unemployment insurance, better pensions and various other legislative improvements in areas affecting woodworkers. Following the convention, the District Council initiated "Green Gold," a series of weekly 15 minute radio broadcasts over station CJOR, financed by the manager of the West Hotel, to carry its new programme to loggers and millworkers in the Vancouver District. This innovation was the product of the newly-appointed District secretary, Nigel Morgan.³⁹

Coming from a lower middle-class background, Morgan emerged as a young socialist in the late 1930s. Moving from Galiano Island to Victoria, he joined the local CCF club and spent much of his time as an advocate for socialism. In 1936, he provided moral support for striking woodworkers at "red" Lake Cowichan. From this early contact with Bergren and others, he soon became head shop steward at a small Victoria mill and then District vice-president, before being appointed acting secretary of the District Council in March 1939. At the founding convention of the Canadian Congress of Labour in 1940, and again in 1941, Morgan would head the left-wing slate of nominees for Congress office against Aaron Mosher. Not a terribly great thinker or leader of men, Morgan lacked the "common touch" of Pritchett and had a greater tendency towards bureaucracy. More a

politician than a trade unionist, his activity in the labour movement quickly led Morgan to the leadership of the Labour Progressive Party (LPP), which he assumed in 1945. From that position he would continue to play an important role in IWA affairs up to 1948. While he lacked a background in the industry, Morgan's administrative and political skills were, nevertheless, a badly-needed asset on the District Executive in the early years.⁴⁰

The union's efforts were also bolstered at the beginning of 1939 when communist labour intellectual, Al Parkin, assumed the editorship of the Lumber Worker and set about the job of utilizing it as a vehicle to advance the District programme. John McCuish, an experienced logger from eastern Canada (deported from the United States for his part in the northwest lumber strike of 1935), joined the union as field organizer in 1938. He quickly became president of local 1-71 and a key figure in the organizational drive in the Charlottes, then "fleet-headquarters" of the Loggers' Navy.⁴¹

Despite the adoption of a constructive programme of action at the 1939 convention, little progress occurred that year. Assembled once again in convention at Vancouver in January 1940, delegates heard President Bergren call for a practical line of action to implement the programme by bringing it before the majority of workers as a means to organize. According to Bergren's analysis of the situation, locals were still struggling too independently. The old Wobbly tendencies had not yet been eradicated. "It takes organization to build organization," Bergren told the convention, "and without this necessary inner organization it's next to impossible to make any progress." It was necessary to wipe out the "imaginary lines" established by local union jurisdictions.⁴² To organize properly, the union had to adopt a District-wide approach with the actual forces in the field working "under a centralized leadership...having the full support and confidence of the membership." Towards that end two important recommendations were passed. First, all organizers and organizational activity would be under the direction of a centralized leadership, in this case the District Executive Board, which of course was controlled by the communist cadre. Each local was to lend full assistance to local 1-80 in establishing such

an organizational base in the Courtenay area.⁴³ Such a centralized leadership would then be in a position to place two organizers at Port Alberni and to make use of the Loggers' Navy organizers working predominantly on the Queen Charlottes. Secondly, the District Council was directed to petition the International Executive to hold a second referendum ballot⁴⁴ to increase the per capita tax from 25 to 50 cents in order to strengthen the International's ability to contribute to District One's organizing campaign. In addition, a recommendation went out to all British Columbia locals to authorize the District Board to issue a referendum ballot to increase District dues by 25 cents to \$1.50 per month.⁴⁵

Under the direction of the District Board, consisting of the District Executive and local delegates, a new approach would be undertaken with a view to organizing the entire industry around common demands to be won through signed agreements. But since the union did not have the strength or resources to go into every operation up and down the coast, it was necessary to focus on certain areas, and even at different times on certain operations in those areas. "It just reminds me," said secretary-treasurer of Local 1-71, Ernie Dalskog, a man with long roots in the woods, "of when a faller puts down a tree and drives in a wedge. The industry is like a tree and we will have to drive in a wedge wherever we can and by and by the tree will fall over."⁴⁶

The largest concentrations of loggers were on the Queen Charlottes and around Lake Cowichan and Port Alberni. As far as organizing the mills was concerned, Pritchett argued that it would be necessary to concentrate on certain big mills first; in particular the VLM operation at Chemainus, which was tied into the Cowichan Lake log supply, the huge CWL mill at Fraser Mills, as well as certain Victoria mills such as Lemon-Gonnasson and Cameron. On Vancouver Island efforts were aimed at the so-called "eight-camp group" which included the operations of the big Association companies such as BSW, CWL, APL, ITM, as well as Lake Logging. The idea was, as Dalskog noted, "to place our best men in the bigger camps, then the smaller camps will have to improve conditions or they will not have a crew."⁴⁷

Once the "best men" were placed in these strategic operations, it was necessary to build a broader organizational structure around them, without, however, reverting to a situation of total local autonomy. The sub-local structure was thus devised as a way both to create some permanent local structure and collective discussion of issues in the face of an extremely transient workforce and scattered, often isolated work sites; while maintaining District control through the local executive. It was a structure quite appropriately devised for an organizational period during which the union was attempting to win a membership base, bargaining agent status and signed contracts. By the end of 1940, Local 1-80 had three sub-locals in operations at Rounds, Ladysmith and Courtenay. In December, the structure was also set up in the Queen Charlotte camps whose 600 to 800 employees were all within the sprawling boundaries of the mainland logging local 1-71.⁴⁸

Throughout the year the District had encountered serious problems establishing a union presence in the face of continuous turnover. Contact with the Queen Charlotte camps was maintained through the "Laur Wayne" organizers. During 1940 they made three trips. The first one resulted in a wage increase of 50 cents a day. A second unsuccessful foray was aimed at consolidating the organization through a signed agreement. Camp delegates were elected to carry on negotiations, and the organizers left. But with the fluctuation in membership, the efforts of the committees were undermined and negotiations collapsed in all but one operation where the men won recognition for the right to bargain collectively but no signed agreement. On the third trip, the Loggers' Navy discovered that in two of the operations, two-thirds of the men were new.⁴⁹

In summarizing the problem on the Queen Charlottes in their officers' report to Local 1-71's annual meeting in December 1940, President John McCuish and Dalskog noted that due to fluctuation, the union had at one time or another had members in every camp. They urged, however, that only when union men stuck to the job and fought collectively for wages and conditions would gains be obtained. Toward that end, they recommended the establishment of sub-locals which would ideally meet on the same date

and conduct the business of the union simultaneously. Sub-local minutes would be sent to the local office, while in turn, local minutes and decisions taken in Vancouver would be relayed to the sub-local delegates. Pritchett summarized for the loggers' annual meeting the difference between a camp committee and a sub-local. In the camp committee you depend entirely on one man to do the work, he told the delegates, and fail to develop new leaders to organize the 30,000 woodworkers: "The sooner we have ten or fifteen Dalskogs, McCuishes and Bergrens, the sooner the Union will go ahead, and the sooner the members will understand how to negotiate contracts, how to go up against employers, and the strategy and tactics to be used."⁵⁰

The union's organizing problems, however, were not resolvable entirely through structural innovations. Centralized leadership through a complex District-local sub-local structure could not alone stabilize union membership in specific operations. That could only be achieved, the District officers believed, through the negotiation by these locals and sub-locals of signed agreements. In November 1940, Pritchett pointed out to the Local 1-80 annual meeting that total local membership had increased over the year by less than 200, from 650 to 840, despite the addition of 515 new members. The problem was quite simply that the organization established after step one—organizing the unorganized to the maximum extent possible—was not being consolidated and stabilized through signed collective agreements with seniority rights, which would go a long way to eliminating the "tramp logger" phenomenon. As well, Morgan pointed out to the same meeting, such agreements would give locals a means to combat discrimination and intimidation of union employees which often forced them to leave the job.⁵¹

Signed union agreements were, of course, preferable, but under existing labour legislation they were next to impossible to get. As Pritchett argued in December 1940, with Canadian governments pushing for employer-employee committees in order to establish company unions, just like the "4-L union" in the American Northwest during World War One, "if you demand a union agreement, you are immediately pushing off 50 percent of the

workers, which gives the operators the chance they are looking for, to divide us." The strategy to be pursued, according to Bergren, was to put a union agreement on the table, in order to place its future possibility before the membership, while being prepared to settle for an employee agreement with safety and grievance committees.⁵²

Pritchett, Morgan and Bergren clearly believed that a real organizational breakthrough for the IWA depended on, and would be preceded by, the successful negotiation of such agreements, union or no. This belief was based, in part, on their own experience on the British Columbia coast. But Pritchett, in particular, was no doubt keenly aware that the spectacular membership gains in the major American CIO unions in 1936-37—unions such as the UAW, UE and the Rubberworkers—came only after collective bargaining contracts had been signed. As historian Nelson Lichtenstein has argued of this organizational breakthrough, it provided a "protective shield" that gave rank-and-file workers a "sense of liberation from older factory hierarchies and a visible link to their more forceful shopmates." Signed union contracts were, according to Lichtenstein, "a powerful symbol of the fact that the supervisor and the foreman were not omnipotent and that the union cadre represented an alternative nexus of legitimate authority in the plant."⁵³

In Canada, the industrial unions, particularly in secondary manufacturing, were experiencing a period of record growth between 1940 and 1942.⁵⁴ In comparison, the IWA was still lagging behind, despite, and in part because of the labour shortage. Pritchett encapsulated the IWA dilemma in his speech to the fourth annual District convention in January 1941. The union was still plagued with a fluctuating membership because it had not yet consolidated its organization around contracts which would establish conditions such that the logger would not be prone to leave camp. But, a little further on in his speech, he asserted the only way to get better wages and conditions was to remain on the job. How did the union break out of this cycle of frustration and failure. Pritchett had the answer, and his awareness of recent CIO history no doubt provided it:

When we have got to the point where the employer will negotiate with us, we will then have consolidated our organization to the point where we can go ahead to the next step of increasing membership, raising wages, and improving conditions to a high level. Then we will be on a par with our American brothers with a minimum of 80 cents an hour, 90 cents an hour average.⁵⁵

To get such agreements in British Columbia, given an organizational core in a particular operation, two basic prerequisites were necessary. First, the ICA Act had to be amended to eliminate the restriction in section five denying bargaining agent rights to unions formed after 7 December 1938. Further, it had to provide for an efficient method of determining when a dispute existed through a system of secret balloting of employees, supervised by the Department of Labour.⁵⁶ Second, the union had to improve its negotiating techniques. Toward that end, the 1940 District Convention had elected to attain the services of the left-wing Pacific Coast Labour Bureau (PCLB) as economic researchers and advisors to help prepare negotiating briefs for union committees.⁵⁷ The PCLB undertook to prepare a booklet for the IWA, based on a similar one they had done for the Boilermakers, on how to negotiate a contract. Nigel Morgan, in particular, seemed to appreciate the possibilities of a systematic approach to collective bargaining:

We can never sit down with the boss and hope to get anywhere unless we have planned the whole thing out beforehand, as they do. When we meet a cunning employer, who has sat down with his lawyer beforehand and figures the whole thing out, he has us where the hair is short and he beats us down. We have to realize that we are up against a well-oiled machine and we have to be prepared.⁵⁸

Increasingly the union would engage the battle for trade union rights on the far-from-level playing field provided by the state. This battle would require well organized briefs laden with statistical and legal documentation and refined arguments that would have mystified many veterans of the lumber wars. While the local organizers continued to forego material comforts as they dogged the operators through the woods, the IWA would wage its struggle for signed contracts and union recognition before boards of

arbitration and conciliation, as well as within the legislative lobbies of the provincial and national labour movements.

Chapter Three

The Quest for Legitimacy: The IWA Versus the ICA Act

The IWA quest for legitimacy in the coast lumber industry quickened during the years 1941-43. District strategy was to force the major employers into a contractual agreement with the union as the key to an organizational breakthrough in the industry. The strategy of the industry was to resist the contractual recognition of the IWA as bargaining agent, using as its chief weapon the anti-union legal structures governing industrial relations in British Columbia. In order to generate broader moral support for their position, the lumbermen raised the spectre of communist entrenchment in the forest sector, the basic engine of the province's industrial production.¹

Anti-communist rhetoric served to justify existing labour statutes, the open shop and even the unfair labour practices of both employers and state bureaucrats. Much of this rhetoric drew sustenance from Party policy on the war, though it is argued here that the IWA trade union agenda had an integrity of its own. A brief survey of Party and IWA positions on the war prior to Teheran will serve as useful background to the following narrative.

I

In August 1939, soon after the German invasion of Poland, Stalin signed a non-aggression pact with Hitler guaranteeing the neutrality of the Soviet Union and postponing a German attack against it. The sudden "Imperialist War" declaration by Stalin terminated the period of the popular front against fascism. Under directions from the Comintern, the Canadian Party accepted the change in policy and adopted as its slogan, "Withdraw Canada from the War." The fight against fascism would be replaced by a fight against British and Canadian imperialism. In June 1940, the Canadian government declared the Communist Party of Canada illegal, and soon after internment of communists began. By the fall of 1940 over 100 were incarcerated.²

Added to their list of organizational problems and obstacles on the road to legitimacy was the District leader's affiliation with a now unlawful association, not to mention the stigma attached to Party policy on the war. In fact, as Whitaker shows, the repression of communists during the 1939-42 period was only a particularly "ugly chapter" in an "ongoing story" of anti-communism and repression of leftists which runs "consistently from World War I through the Great Depression to World War II and on into the Cold War years ahead."³ Communist trade unionists who had lived through the era of the black list would continue to function during the period of the "underground party" as well. Moreover, though the Party was technically illegal, it did maintain a legitimate face through the weekly paper the Canadian Tribune, the National Council of Democratic Rights, and through the views of such nationally recognized spokespersons as A.E. Smith, Dorise Nielsen, A.A. MacLeod, as well as others in various provinces.⁴

State repression of communists, while no doubt "ugly" during this period, was also conditioned by political reality. The main political thrust to the Liberal's anti-communist policy came from its Catholic Quebec wing, and was tempered throughout the period of illegality by concerns within the cabinet and the civil service regarding its negative political impact in English Canada.⁵ Of approximately 100 communists known to have been interned, 24 were from Quebec and only four from British Columbia.⁶ In addition, about one-third were left-Ukrainians, long-considered a "problem" by the RCMP, and particularly easy targets given their very visible presence in the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temples.⁷ The attack on communists in CIO unions, favoured by cabinet "hawks" like C.D. Howe (voicing CMA interests) was blunted by King's more "conciliatory" approach to industrial relations.⁸ By avoiding loud and direct attacks on Canada's war efforts, while sticking to the more legitimate agenda of obtaining formal collective bargaining rights, woodworker leaders were able to continue with their trade union project in the midst of the repression and controversy that swirled around the changing Party line.

This project was made easier after the German attack against the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941. Quickly, in line with Comintern directions, Tim Buck called for a "National Front for Victory" against the Nazis. Soon Canadian communists were amongst the most ardent supporters of the war effort. Continued pressure from Quebec delayed the release of interned communists, but by September 1942 all were free. King's problems in Quebec over conscription, and the influence on policy of Cardinal Villeneuve and Louis St. Laurent, insured the maintenance of the ban on the CPC, but could not prevent its legal reincarnation in 1943 as the "Labour Progressive Party."⁹ This was particularly so given the potential political advantage to be gained by the Liberal party from communist support of the government's war effort.⁹ Expectations within the prime minister's office of political support from a new, legal communist party were not misplaced. But, given the primacy of the particular trade union agenda of the District One leadership, general Party strategy on the war did not govern the tactics adopted in the woodworking industry, either before or after the invasion of the Soviet Union.

During the period up to June 1941, in accordance with the Party's characterization of the European conflict as an "Imperialist War," District One's communist leadership emphasized that the best line of defence for the working class was through the preservation of democratic rights and the attainment of a decent standard of living in Canada. Compulsory collective bargaining and signed union agreements were viewed as integral elements of this programme. There is no evidence, as far as the District leaders are concerned, of any strategy to "sabotage" the war effort, despite their opponents' claims to the contrary. Rather, the Party consistently sought to exploit wartime conditions to consolidate the union, as we have seen. In this regard, it is important to note, District One was quite in line with the approach of both communist and non-communist industrial unions in the still-neutral United States. Only in mid-1941 did CIO officials move towards a "no-strike" policy in an effort to maintain good relations with the Roosevelt

administration.¹⁰ No Canadian unions seriously entertained the suggestion of a no-strike pact with the anti-labour Mackenzie King government in 1940.¹¹

In 1942, with the besieged Soviet Union now part of the alliance against fascism, the arguments for compulsory collective bargaining changed; trade union tactics, such as the use of the strike weapon, did not. District One, as a CIO affiliate, was loosely connected through the International to the emergency no-strike pledge of the American unions—unions that had long since won the battle for legal recognition. This pledge was part of a deal with the National War Labor Board (NWLB) whereby a standard maintenance of membership formula would automatically apply to any union whose leaders “agreed to enforce the no-strike pledge and otherwise cooperate with the production effort.”¹² There was no question of District One leaders obstructing the production of war materials. But without the basic security of union recognition, an unconditional no-strike pledge would have been foolhardy, leaving the union at the mercy of the open shop operators. Thus, it was not adopted, in spite of urgings from Pritchett’s old comrade from the American longshoremen’s union, Harry Bridges.¹³

At the January 1942 District convention, the officers’ report was full of warnings concerning the dangers of world fascist domination. The attack on the Soviet Union had buried any hope that the war could end short of complete military victory. “It is now apparent that the fight is one for survival—for life and death—and that nothing less than an all out effort will be adequate,” the officers urged. Otherwise, the destruction of all progressive organizations, including labour unions, would likely ensue. The officers wholeheartedly applauded the pledge of Mackenzie King for all-out support to the democratic world front. To implement maximum efficiency at the point of production, the District convention passed a resolution in support of the Industry Council Plan first proposed by the CIO’s Philip Murray, and endorsed by the IWA International in 1941. But more importantly, the 1942 convention urged the federal government to enact a law to provide for the legal right to organize and bargain collectively. “The most concrete,

constructive and positive impetus we can give to the war effort to defeat the aggressors and defend democracy," the District officers instructed the convention, "will be to build our union and thereby collective bargaining relationships between the employers and employees." The question of the strike as an industrial relations weapon was not explicitly raised, but neither was the right to strike forfeited.¹⁴ Whether or not compatible with Stalin's call for subordination of all working class and national demands to the defence of the Soviet Union from its fascist enemy, the basic trade union position remained entirely consistent with that of 1939-40.

II

The first test of rank-and-file support for the union programme of signed agreements in a full-blown confrontation with a major employer (and the provincial Department of Labour) occurred at Lake Cowichan during the summer of 1941, just at the turning point of the war. The Lake Logging Company (Lake Log) had been operating at Rounds, near Lake Cowichan, since 1933. According to PCLB research, it employed between 275 and 300 workers in 1941, and was integrated with Crofton Export Company, which ran a booming grounds for Lake Log and some other nearby camps as well as a small mill. Lake Log was largely American-owned by the intermarried Rounds and Hunter families of Washington state and Kansas.¹⁵ By 1942, its operations had expanded to include the Hill Logging Company and Paldi Sawmill—a total of 1000 men in eight different operations. In 1946 it would be absorbed into the expanding Koerner enterprise, Alaska Pine Company, as Western Forest Industries.¹⁶ It was, in short, one of the bigger operations on strategic Vancouver Island.

For several years prior to 1941 Lake Log had followed the unusual policy of hiring employees blacklisted for union work by other Association camps. As Bergren reminisced much later, "these boys" had many years experience in the woods, and other things being

equal, would have been highly valued employees anywhere, especially during a period of acute labour shortage.¹⁷

With such a high concentration of union activists, Local 1-80 was quick to organize Lake Log. At the time of the 1941 dispute, the union claimed to have signed up all but a handful of employees. An employee committee agreement, signed in 1937, had been renewed in 1939 and contained grievance/arbitration procedures and provisions for a safety committee and voluntary dues check-off. Lake Log paid equivalent to the highest wage in the industry, and with the help of the union safety committee, maintained the lowest accident record in the industry. By 1940, Lake Loggers were also war workers, cutting timber for RCAF airplane hangars.¹⁸

In June 1941, after some months of negotiations, a 50 cent per day increase had been agreed upon and seven other clauses initialled. The company, despite its past policies and de facto acceptance of the union, refused to agree to formal union recognition, with accompanying seniority, leave of absence and union shop provisions. In the period since the 1939 agreement at Lake Log, the IWA had clearly become a threat to the coast industry in general. The company suddenly found itself as the weak link in the chain of major coastal operations. By August, the Lake Log dispute was being referred to in the press as "the test case of unionization of British Columbia lumber employees—threatening to alter radically conditions in the entire backwoods industry." Harold Hunter, the general manager, admitted that his company had union agreements with the IWA in Washington, but contended that such an agreement in British Columbia, being the only one, would put his company at a distinct disadvantage. Perhaps more to the point was District One's contention that "certain outside influences," namely the BCLA, were preventing the company from granting union recognition.¹⁹

With negotiations at an impasse, the sub-local president, William Sutherland, called a meeting for 18 June, where the members were advised by Nigel Morgan and Local 1-80 secretary Archie Greenwell, that a strike prior to compulsory conciliation would be illegal.

The loggers, though, voted 233 to 8 in favour of quitting work "individually" as a way around the technical legalities of the ICA Act. Morgan clearly acquiesced in this approach, but there is no evidence he "incited" the action as later alleged by the company and some loyal employees. Hunter himself addressed the protestors on 18 June telling them that they were free to try any other camp, so confident was he that they would soon return to the enlightened conditions at Lake Log. "The men stand on their legal right to quit," read Morgan's statement issued in Vancouver, "pending the company's admission that legitimate Unions have a right to be recognized under the laws of Canada."²⁰

If the tactics of 1941 had been borrowed from the arsenal of traditional logger practices, traditional grievances over food or lodging had not, by the union's own admission, caused the shutdown. The main issues were the collective and long-term ones of recognition, seniority and leave of absence, which were linked to one another as part of the union strategy of entrenching itself in individual operations. The union's legal rationale was not, of course, swallowed by the provincial Department of Labour, which regarded the walkout as a strike lasting from 19 June until 7 July, when the men returned to work pending reference of the dispute to a conciliation commissioner.²¹

Given the high level of organization in the camps affected, the commissioner, James Thomson, could not successfully play the game of allowing the company to dispute the representativeness of the existing bargaining committee. That situation did not stop Thomson from aiding the company and a minority group of employees in their attempt to discredit in other ways local 1-80's bid for recognition.

With the conciliation proceedings underway, two members of this minority group, Herbert Baxter and James Bailey, both ex-secretaries of the sub-local called on Minister of Labour George Pearson to express dissatisfaction with the manner in which the employees committee was conducting business. They expressed a desire that conciliation meetings should be transferred from Vancouver to Lake Cowichan where they and other workers would be able to make representations to the commissioner. Thus far, company officials

had objected to meetings being held at the Lake, presumably to make it more difficult for the union to call rank-and-file witnesses. But, as Thomson wrote to Lake Cowichan Provincial Police Constable Harold J. Parsley, "since I have advised them of recent developments in this case, they agreed to meet at Lake Cowichan or anywhere else which may be designated by me as most suitable or convenient for all concerned." Thomson decided then to move the hearings to the Lake and wrote to the Constable for help in finding a meeting room. While he acknowledged that he could not permit individuals or minority groups to substitute for elected representatives, he was at liberty to listen to representations by anyone outside of normal hearings. He wished the Constable discretely to let it be known he would be at the Hotel Lake Cowichan on 25 July where he could be reached by such individuals. In particular, he wished that the loading crew from which the representation had recently been made to the Minister "be given an opportunity to submit certain information to me which may have a very direct bearing on matters in dispute."²²

Prior to his trip to Lake Cowichan, Thomson appeared unaware of the connection between Baxter, Bailey and the company. Bailey, for one, while secretary of the sub-local, had been charged with mishandling local funds and barred for life from holding office in the union.²³ The root of this union action lay in his and Baxter's attempts to solicit support amongst the Crofton booming ground employees against the existing union leadership. In Thomson's estimation, union charges were not laid against Baxter since he was a more effective operator and was "fully aware of moves which have been made by those holding union office." But, after his hotel room interview with Baxter, Thomson also began to realize that the company itself was fully aware of this internal union dispute and was "encouraging certain of the employees who are opposed to the views of the majority of the membership to have someone representing our Department take a definite stand against the individuals holding Union office and their policy." That policy, Thompson noted ironically, had until quite recently been encouraged by company officials who rather prided themselves on the fact that "they were employing men...blacklisted for their activities in

every association camp in the Province." Thomson felt that the Department should not find fault with this practice, but he refused to be "jockeyed into a position where I would be paving the way for company officials to take drastic steps against certain individuals." The company ought to take responsibility "if their experiment had not worked out."²⁴

While Thomson's sentiments appeared admirable on the surface, he was clearly irked that Lake Log management had laid itself wide open to be picked off easily by the IWA at a rather crucial period in the development of industrial relations in the coastal woods. He obviously resented the assumption of the company that it could use a few disgruntled union members to manipulate the services of the Department of Labour. Importantly, in his meeting with Baxter, Thomson provided advice as to a better way to go about dislodging the current local leadership without any interference from outside parties. As he reported in his confidential correspondence to Pearson, he advised Baxter "to encourage those who were dissatisfied with the actions of their representatives and with the entire policy of the union, to solicit the support of workmen until they were in the position of having the majority." At that point "the question of changing the representatives and the policy of the Union would be simple."²⁵

If neither Thomson nor Pearson were very pleased with the management of Lake Logging, neither were they at all sympathetic with the IWA District One organization.²⁶ Out of Thomson's clandestine chats with dissident leaders emerged a lengthy and very precisely worded petition, bearing the names of Baxter and seven other employees. This document charged Morgan and Greenwell with "counselling, advising and inciting" the employees of Lake Log, "to take action contrary to the laws of British Columbia and conspiring to avoid the application of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act of British Columbia" in the settlement of the dispute.²⁷

As Thomson got nowhere with his conciliation,²⁸ the petition served as the centre-piece of the company's case against union recognition. As it turned out, the arbitration hearings, chaired by Dean F.M. Clement of The University of British Columbia, became

something of a rank-and-file rally when the sessions were moved to the scene of camp operations at a small school house. By evening, 78 loggers jammed into the one-room school. John Wigdor of the PCLB, who was representing the union, along with Nigel Morgan, recalled the scene:

In ten minutes people were hanging onto the window sills and Mr. Hunter and the Brigadier General (J.A. Clark, K.C. representing the company along with Hunter) and others insisted that to move to the cookhouse would be impracticable, but as the atmosphere began to get more suffocating and tempers rose in proportion the Chairman was finally prevailed upon to move to the cookhouse and I recall one of the crew, stating with a satisfied grin, that this represented already a minor victory, that the pressure of the rank-and-file already was beginning to be felt.²⁹

The session was finally attended by practically all 300 employees.³⁰

In this partisan atmosphere, the company's case promptly crumbled. Its seven employee witnesses, five of whom had signed the petition, stated under cross-examination that they favoured union recognition. One signatory of the petition said he did not know why he had signed and subsequently withdrew his name. Baxter himself asserted that his charge against the union leaders was an internal union matter which should never have been brought into the open.³¹ On the offensive, Wigdor put forward the case that the IWA fully recognized its responsibilities to its members and society at large and cited as evidence briefs presented to various government bodies on forest conservation, unemployment insurance, and workmen's compensation. In addition, federal order PC 2685 and President Roosevelt's 1941 Labour Day speech were cited in support of trade unionism as the "foundation of democracy" in the fight against fascism. The union brief concluded with a suggestion of the significance of this first provincial arbitration in a logging dispute, the award from which would set a precedent for future awards in British Columbia's most important basic industry. A favourable award would mean that thousands of woodworkers across the province "will recognize that a Board of Arbitration through a government-appointed chairmen had recognized their fundamental and legitimate right to union recognition."³²

In fact, the board, including union representative John Stanton, sought and found a compromise on the issue of union recognition. As a concession to the company, or the BCLA, the agreement would be with an employees committee, but would include an article providing for a union shop in addition to seniority and leave of absence provisions.³³ In the final analysis, the company would not be the first in British Columbia to sign a union agreement. But Morgan not inaccurately claimed the union shop recommendation, which was accepted by the workers, would have the same effect.³⁴ The company, by its own admission, did not strictly adhere to the union shop clause.³⁵ But that hardly mattered to the IWA, or to the Party. The goals at stake were much larger: to establish a plateau from which to continue to organize, a concrete basis for the policy of linking signed union agreements to a triumph over Hitlerism through greater industrial harmony and increased production, and a precedent for a more general recognition of the IWA as bargaining agent.³⁶

The victory at Lake Log was followed quickly, in early 1942, by major gains at the VLM plant in Chemainus, one of the biggest in the province and a key IWA target for years. Hjalmar Bergren had returned to full-time organizing after the 1942 convention agreed to place "Handsome Harry" Pritchett in harness as District President. Within a period of two or three weeks, Bergren signed up 90 percent of the crew: "the biggest and fastest organizational gain in the history of our union."³⁷ At Hillcrest Logging and BSW's Menzies Bay camps on the Island, significant inroads were made amongst the resident portion of the crews, largely family men, the majority of whom signed with the union for the first time. During the summer of 1942, Bergren shifted his headquarters to Port Alberni, and by November had signed up hundreds of new members.³⁸

But organizational breakthroughs could only be consolidated by signed agreements, and 1942 was to be a year of frustration in this regard. Unfortunately for the District One leaders, the big Association operators did not share their vision of labour legitimacy and cooperation in-war production. Lake Log was too unusual a case to provide a pattern for

subsequent disputes, where the union had a weaker hold. The real battle—with MacMillan Industries, BSW and CWL, where the job of organizing had not been completed and where the strategy of signed agreements attained through Department of Labour intervention was more relevant but more elusive as well—still lay ahead. A somewhat different corporate combination and new product lines provided the contested terrain.

III

In 1935, Canadian Western Lumber joined Seaboard. In response, H.R. MacMillan and E.B. Ballentine a plywood door manufacturer who had bought plywood from CWL and sold through MacMillan Export, combined to build the \$250,000 British Columbia Plywood plant, on the same site as MacMillan's Canadian White Pine complex in Vancouver. As plywood became a war industry, the plant was expanded four times between 1937 and 1942. By 1944, two million dollars had been invested in the mill, which utilized the highest grade fir "peeler" logs. Though British Columbia's plywood capacity doubled during the war, total production came from just four large mills, which included a second MacMillan plant built at Port Alberni in 1942. During the war, plywood production was the most technically advanced and fastest growing section of the lumber industry, and B.C. Plywoods quickly became the largest producer outside of the United States.³⁹

Plywood plants were run as three-shift continuous production operations. A disciplined and compliant labour force was essential to a smooth operation. Prior to 1939, MacMillan's employees were represented by a company-inspired Conference Committee.⁴⁰ The plant manager customarily attended all employee committee meetings.⁴¹ In the summer of 1939, in the midst of an IWA organizing drive, 51 IWA members were fired and replaced by boys employed at 25 cents per hour under Minimum Wage order Number 49, which permitted up to one-third of employees of any operation to be paid less than 40

cents per hour. In the fall, non-union men were hired to replace most of the boys. From 1939 to 1942, the company enjoyed a union-free operation.⁴²

B.C. Plywood was an obvious target for IWA local 1-217, as part of the push for Union recognition on the coast. By early 1942, the union, and the Party, had established a faction within the Conference Committee headed by 1-217 president, Bert Melsness and Bill Bennett. On 17 April, a work stoppage was called to force the company to make a joint application for a wage bonus to the RWLB. This application was quickly rejected. At meetings during late April and early May, the union increased its support, elected plant officers and a separate contract committee to draft demands.⁴³ The company took the opportunity on 4 May to lay off the entire third shift, alleging a shortage of peeler logs as the reason. Though there was a supply problem due to a severe shortage of loggers, the timing of the lay-off was no doubt intended to undercut the union's drive. An immediate work stoppage was called and a meeting addressed by Pritchett, Morgan and Melsness. The union demanded that seniority be observed, especially since some of the oldest and most experienced employees had been laid off, allegedly, to find work in the shipyards. After being addressed by the plant manager, the employees returned to their jobs. Since no agreement existed with the company on seniority, the employees Conference Committee was informed by James Thomson on 7 May that before they could legally take any further action, the employees would have to decide by majority vote that a dispute existed.⁴⁴

Despite efforts by the company to resurrect the Conference Committee, the latter was quickly being surpassed. On 7 May an IWA ballot on an application for conciliation passed 357 to 5, and an application made to Pearson. On 10 May, a mass meeting at Burrard Hall was addressed by Harold Winch of the CCF. The following day, employees voted 358 to 14 to oust the old committee and by a similar majority installed a new committee of five IWA members. The union calculated a total of 635 employees (including 185 females) in the plant, giving it a clear majority of those involved in any dispute or contract negotiation. The company alleged it had 723 employees, including all those laid

off. The union claimed a total membership of 491, and complained to Pearson that the lay-off was really a lockout—"rank discrimination" aimed at the employees desire to form a trade union. On 15 May, Thomson was appointed Conciliation Commissioner to "investigate" the dispute.⁴⁵

The IWA's numerical support at B.C. Plywood was not nearly as firm as at Lake Log, giving Thomson more leeway to manipulate procedures and stall for time in hope that the union's support might erode. In this regard he performed his task admirably, though all the while maintaining the appearance of fairness. In-plant votes were held on 20 May and 26 May giving sufficient majority for the commissioner to accept the existence of a dispute, but neither margin (327 to 86 or 347 to 92) gave the IWA the majority out of 725 needed to be elected bargaining agent. On 20 May, 155 employees of the 602 actually on the job did not vote. Many of these were women whom Myrtle Hubble, IWA rep at the plant, complained to Thomson had deliberately left the plant at three o'clock, prior to the vote, most likely under intimidation from management. The IWA rejected Thomson's suggestion that a joint committee of five IWA and two Conference Committee members be constituted.⁴⁶

In the meantime the company continued its efforts to prop up the Conference Committee. Relying on reports from members of this Committee, E.B. Ballentine complained to Thomson about the procedure for selecting representatives at the 20 May meeting. On 29 May, the day preceding yet another scheduled vote supervised by Thomson, the Conference Committee issued a notice charging that the two previous votes were inconclusive. It claimed to have worked out an agreement with the company embodying the union proposals plus extra benefits, such as paid vacation, which management was willing to sign with an association of its own employees. Thomson assured Ballentine that the RWLB would not view such a benefit as a pay increase. The IWA quickly countered with a leaflet advising that the union had contacted the RWLB and received advice that paid holidays would have to receive Board approval. These final

manoeuvres by the company did little to change the results. On 30 May, Thomson conducted a final secret ballot at the gate, the results of which were combined with a mail ballot sent to laid-off employees. Eighty-one laid-off employees were determined by Thomson to have quit, leaving a total of 644 employees in all, out of which the IWA polled a clear majority of 369, the Conference Committee 143.⁴⁷

Through the first two weeks of June, B.C. Plywood continued its anti-union tirade. Company lawyers wrote Pearson blaming his department for aiding the IWA in its effort to disrupt a long-standing relationship with its employee group. The company held two informal meetings with the Conference Committee at which it was agreed to shorten the apprentice period for women employees whom the company obviously perceived as a weak link in the union's solidarity. A notice publicizing this offer was posted by the company. A second notice accused the IWA of scuttling the deal by pointing out to the conciliator that the ICA Act prohibited an alteration of wages or conditions during proceedings. There was nothing in the Act, however, to prevent the company from carrying on such tactics aimed explicitly at undermining the legally-elected bargaining agents of its employees.⁴⁸

Given the company's attitude toward the IWA, the subsequent negotiations stood no chance of success. The company refused to agree to reemploy Melsness and Bennett and some other IWA members once the log shortage was solved. It continued to offer to accept all the proposed terms except for union shop, but would sign only with the Conference Committee employees. Thomson tried unsuccessfully to get the company to sign a contract with the elected committee, but one which did not name the union as a party to the agreement, as in the Lake Log case the year before.⁴⁹

An arbitration board was constituted late in July to hear the dispute, including questions of wages, discrimination against union members and union recognition. The majority award of Judge Bruce Boyd, Chairman, and R.H. Tupper, employee representative, submitted on 2 September, recommended another joint application to the RWLB, found no discrimination by the company and concluded that since the IWA "was

responsible for the genesis and continuation of this dispute," that no contract should be made between the company and local 1-217. CCF MLA A.J. Turner's minority report agreed with the others on wages, but found evidence of discrimination against Melsness, with five and one-half years service, and Bennett, one of the company's original employees, both of whom were particularly active in union organizing. Turner called for an end to "old fashioned anti-labour" attitudes characteristic of the large corporations in British Columbia and the Pacific Northwest, which were not conducive to harmony. He pointed out the inadequacies of the Conference Committee as a legitimate bargaining agency, and found no basis for the company's opposition to the IWA because of its present leaders or past history.⁵⁰ In releasing Turner's report, Pearson tried to assuage labour's feelings by acknowledging that in his opinion the time was ripe to consider amendments to the ICA Act to compel employers to bargain with majority-elected committees.⁵¹

The following day, MacMillan Industries placed a full-page advertisement in the Vancouver Province in an attempt to pressure its plywood employees into accepting the majority award. The timber bosses slammed the IWA International's original position on United States participation in the war, dismissed its membership claims, and proclaimed the fruitlessness of collective bargaining on monetary issues under war conditions.⁵²

The next day, the union held a meeting open to all employees where a motion was passed 357 to 5 to reject the award whenever a vote was actually conducted under government supervision. The meeting also endorsed Pearson's statements on amending the ICA Act, but requested him to force the company to bargain in this case while legislation was pending.⁵³ The ICA Act required both sides to conduct a secret ballot vote, which the government had the option of supervising.⁵⁴ District officials hoped to use such departmental supervision as a way of forcing the company's position. Pritchett wrote to Pearson on 21 September noting the urgent need for cooperation and harmony in Canada's war effort. In order to convince management of the Union's sincere desire to cooperate, Pritchett requested Pearson to appoint a commissioner to call a meeting of all employees

where representatives of both parties could explain the award and a secret ballot be conducted under the commissioner's supervision. If the employees then rejected the award, management, Pritchett hoped, would be willing to meet and negotiate with the elected representatives.⁵⁵

Pearson's memo to Thomson on the matter belied the good will of his earlier public pronouncements. He expressed concern that the employees' elected representatives had not yet properly conducted a vote, and rejected any departmental responsibility in that regard. "From the lack of action and the tone of Pritchett's letter it would seem to me that they have a not very firm hold upon the employees," he wrote to Thomson. "It might be wise for you to make a few discrete enquiries and we can talk before we meet Pritchett."⁵⁶ After consulting with Ballentine and Kennedy of B.C. Plywood, who apparently did not favour any further government intervention, Thomson met with Pritchett and conveyed Pearson's suggestion that the vote of the 20 September meeting constitute rejection, or, the employees committee could conduct a further unsupervised ballot.⁵⁷

It was clear that without the backing of legislative force, hinted at by Pearson, companies like MacMillan Industries would not budge from their traditional advocacy of the open shop. In February 1943, local 1-217 was still attempting to get agreement on a union contract but appeared to be losing some ground as only a slim majority of 239 to 198 voted against yet another proposed company agreement with its Conference Committee.⁵⁸

Simultaneously with events at B.C. Plywood, a similar confrontation with another major coast employer, Bloedel, Stewart and Welch, over the issues of discrimination and union recognition took place at Menzies Bay. By the early 1940s, BSW's production was centred on the Alberni area and the west coast Island camps tributary to it. The company had \$2.9 million invested in its west coast logging operations, or almost twice the \$1.5 million invested at Menzies Bay on the east side of Vancouver Island. The former operation normally employed 750 loggers, the latter 450. Its own mills at Great Central Lake and Port Alberni were supplied largely by its west coast camps. Menzies Bay, since

the mid-1930s, had been selling logs on the open market and was not considered by the company to be a viable permanent operation. Logs from that cite were not critical to sustaining the company's sawmills and were used to supply only part of the requirements of its Burnaby shingle mill.⁵⁹

The dispute at the Menzies Bay camps in 1942 illustrated well the importance to the IWA of achieving industry-wide bargaining. It also demonstrated once again the need for signed contracts to overcome the constant problem of a fluctuating workforce and union membership, and the necessity of a new legislative framework as a prior condition for any of these further gains. Once again the involvement of Department of Labour officials tended to undermine the efforts of the union in favour of the company and its loyal employees' committee.

Early in 1942, an IWA organizer in camp, Alex Armella, was dismissed by the camp foremen for "no good reason." Armella, who had been blacklisted by the Loggers Agency for his union activities at Rock Bay, was known by the foreman who wasted no time in blowing the whistle on him once he started actively organizing. A spontaneous strike by the rest of the falling crews resulted in his reinstatement by the flustered foreman, only to be followed shortly-afterward by the dismissal of Armella and the rest of the crew of three for incorrectly falling a tree. The employees, unschooled in the workings of the ICA Act, and lacking proper union direction, called a meeting by word of mouth to elect a committee and apply for conciliation. Though proper meeting notice was not given, thus invalidating both the committee selection and the application for a conciliator, the ubiquitous Thomson appeared on the scene in an effort to prevent the dispute from escalating into a union issue. At first, he noted in his report to Pearson, the employees' committee had been restricted to camp employees and the issue limited to the dismissal. Only after some delay were union officials contacted, and further meetings held leading to a broadening of the conflict. For this outcome, Thomson put the blame squarely on the

shoulders of management for providing "an excellent opportunity" for the employees to incorporate the larger IWA objectives.

In an effort at damage control, Thomson recommended that the Minister overlook the breach of ICA Act procedure and deal with the improperly elected committee in an effort to settle the issue of the falling crew's dismissal, rather than insist on another meeting with proper notice. In this case he felt he had a better chance of keeping the union out by speeding up the process, rather than by dragging it out. This decision was based on his observations of the nature of the workforce at Menzies Bay: "In our opinion they were quite sincere and very moderate in their statements." In addition, he noted that most camp employees were "Canadians who act in an entirely different manner with respect to a dispute of this kind to that which would apply in the case of a foreign element which, in previous years, was found to exist in logging camps." Thomson felt there was a real opportunity to keep the dispute local in this instance since "practically all the representations and discussions during our meetings was directed and controlled in its entirety by employees of the company." These men were no doubt "quite capable of presenting their case" and felt no hesitancy "expressing their views with respect to the relations between the employees and Mr. Tom Daly, Camp Superintendent."⁶⁰

Implicit in Thomson's analysis were some interesting assumptions that were characteristic of government labour relations officials of the day. Unions like the IWA could only really thrive in the absence of intelligent, articulate and competent local leaders. Canadian employees were more moderate than "aliens" and less likely to be attracted to the IWA. Larger issues such as union recognition or the rights of workers to organize and bargain collectively were not intrinsically of interest to the type of rank-and-file employee at Menzies Bay. That these moderate Canadian employees might embrace the IWA would not in the final analysis alter the department's view of the legitimacy of the union as bargaining agency. Such an outcome would only reinforce the notion of the union as an effective

outside agitator capable of upsetting employee relations, particularly where an unreasonable employer provided fertile ground

When the falling crew had been dismissed, the employees in fact had called in Hjalmar Bergren and local MLA Colin Cameron to assist in a settlement. But the reinstatement agreement of 6 March worked out with Superintendent Daly, and signed by the elected committee, contained two restrictive conditions. The only camp committee was to be a safety committee chosen by the men, the composition of which was to be changed each month. All future disputes were to be settled without outside interference at general safety committee meetings.⁶¹ It quickly became clear that personnel manager T.J. Noble regarded the elected committee's mandate as safety issues only, not other employee grievances.⁶² Moreover, the company appointed the first-aid attendant to act as secretary to the committee and proceeded to lay off all the signatories to the 6 March agreement, including the chairman of the committee, Armella.⁶³

It was apparent to the union that BSW had no intention of keeping the 6 March agreement, let alone negotiating an agreement with any committee, even the company-dominated safety committee. Bergren returned to Menzies Bay on 23 April, and posted notices for a camp meeting the next day. One hundred and thirty-nine of 315 employees attended. They elected a new grievance and negotiating committee with employee John Mulroney as secretary, and D.J. Donahue President, and voted to apply for conciliation.⁶⁴

On 28 April, T.J. Noble circulated a document addressed to Thomson of the Department of Labour, for members of the Safety Committee to sign in which they disclaimed any connection with calling or conducting the meeting of 24 April. Three members of the committee signed the letter. A fourth, Mulroney, refused having been elected secretary of the new grievance committee. In writing to Thomson, Noble claimed that Mulroney only accepted his position not realizing he was already on a grievance committee (that is, the safety committee), and not knowing of the existence of the 6 March agreement. Donahue, the new chairman, Noble claimed, accepted his office so as not to be

put in a difficult position with the men, but assured Noble that the 24 April meeting had been forced on the employees by Bergren. "It is now obvious that the union leaders do not want conditions in this camp to run smoothly," Noble wrote Thomson, "and intend to continue in their endeavour to stir up trouble." Thomson, who believed Noble, unlike Daly, was conscientious regarding labour relations, accepted his version of events and met the new local leaders in early May in an attempt, once again, to settle matters without the union.⁶⁵

In fact, contrary to Noble's claim, on 30 April Mulroney had written Nigel Morgan explaining Noble's efforts at discrediting the 24 April meeting in order to prevent the Minister of Labour from granting the employees' request for conciliation. Noble, he wrote Morgan, was circulating a document addressed to Mr. Thomson, "soliciting signatures of the 'safety committee' which he is wont to call the Safety and Grievance Committee—now that the company has a grievance; but strictly Safety when it affects the employees—saying we had nothing to do with the calling of the meeting on 24 April." Two of the committee members signed it, Mulroney wrote, but he refused. "If the company presents it," he wrote, "it is not legal in any way as we had no chance to discuss it in Committee."⁶⁶

After meeting with Mulroney and Donahue, Thomson reported back to Pearson on the results of his investigation. As the 24 April meeting had been improperly called, and lacked a majority of employees, nothing decided there regarding a new committee, the existence of a dispute or proposals for improvements in working conditions was valid, he informed the Minister. He noted Mulroney had voiced complaints regarding company interference with the Safety Committee and had asked whether it was authorized to act as a grievance committee. Thomson advised him that was an issue between the company and the employees, but that any further interference by the company with respect to the composition of the committee or in its meetings should be reported to the Department. Thomson also conveyed to Noble the committee's wish to use a recent camp agreement at Comox Logging Company as the basis for a new settlement at Menzies Bay camps.

Thomson felt satisfied that the sole cause of the dispute had been certain recent steps by management that had created "a considerable amount of suspicion in the minds of the employees...together with continual agitation by one or two Union organizers," aggravating a situation which "otherwise would have been forgotten entirely by the employees at Menzies Bay." Thomson was sure he had "set the employees' minds at ease" and felt that with careful handling it was not too late for the parties themselves to arrive at an amicable settlement." He assured Pearson that the attitude of Donahue and Mulroney "completely changed after we had explained to them fully their position." They apparently agreed in future to abide by the ICA Act and the 6 March agreement with the company and to await the minister's official decision on their application for conciliation before relating the substance of the meeting to the employees.⁶⁷

Thomson and Pearson, as it quickly became apparent, had misjudged the whole situation. The company, including Noble, was in no way prepared to deal with any committee elected at the instigation of the IWA. Mulroney had not been lulled into accepting Thomson's bland assurances regarding the possibility of an amicable settlement on the same terms as Comox Logging. No doubt with some assistance from Morgan, who apparently remained nearby in Campbell River throughout these events,⁶⁸ Mulroney drafted a statement which he delivered to an 18 May general meeting attended by 192 of 291 employees. In it he charged the company with holding back \$50 per man, or \$15,000 in cost of living bonus money, while making repairs all over the camp to evade taxes. He accused Noble with being hired explicitly to keep the union out of the Menzies Bay operation. The 6 March agreement, he charged, was never formally ratified but was merely a memo of agreement to be followed by a signed contract. Even then, the company took four days to draft their conditions which were designed to have the employees sign away their rights to outside assistance in bargaining. Since 6 March, the company had adopted a domineering attitude to the Safety Committee culminating in Daly's use of Provincial Police intimidation of the crew, to thwart a second attempt on 24 April to have a conciliator

appointed to review grievances. To top it all off, by 13 May the company had managed to lay off the last of six employees signatory to that memo of agreement.

This harangue was followed by a resolution, passed by a vote of 185 to 6, declaring the 6 March agreement null and void and resolving to forward to the company a draft agreement based on the Comox Logging agreement. This was to be accompanied with a request that company officials meet with the elected bargaining agency of the employees by 29 May and pay the appropriate cost of living bonus for May allowed under federal orders. Non-compliance would result in application to the Minister of Labour for a Conciliation Commissioner to hear the dispute, and to the RWLB regarding the bonus.⁶⁹

Meanwhile, Thomson, now busy at B.C. Plywood, was replaced by J.T. Place in response to Mulroney's application of 28 May for a commissioner to investigate the company's failure to negotiate. B.H. Goult, Secretary-Registrar of the ICA Act, was appointed to accompany Place to Menzies Bay. On 30 May, Mulroney, whom managing director S.G. Smith had given until that date to retract his 18 May accusations, was dismissed for making statements detrimental to the company. Mulroney complained to Pearson that his dismissal resulted from his attempts to organize the employees. Pearson supported the company's right to fire under Section Eight of the ICA Act for "proper and sufficient cause."⁷⁰

Place and Goult arrived at Menzies Bay on 5 June and met with members of the employees' committee and with Noble and Daly. Daly refused to meet with the committee as it was then constituted, which still included Mulroney as a member. To placate Daly, the officials, after studying the 18 May meeting minutes, decided that the election of bargaining representatives was improper, not having been conducted by secret ballot, though nothing in the Act stipulated how such representatives were to be elected.

Daly gave assurances the company would negotiate with a properly elected committee and would cooperate in any application for a bonus. The employees' committee agreed to yet another ballot but wanted Mulroney's dismissal made part of the dispute as

well. The commissioner would allow only those matters set forth in the original application. A meeting of employees was set for 8 June. Place and Goult acceded to the committee's wish for a scrutineer, but then granted a similar privilege to the company. When the committee asked to have two members address the meeting for five minutes each, the Department officials granted the same privilege to the company. Noble was appointed both scrutineer and speaker, though the company assured Place no other officers would be present. According to Nigel Morgan's official statement to the Department regarding ensuing events, Place and Goult permitted five company officials to sit in on the meeting. Moreover, without any apparent good reason, the total number of employees deemed eligible to vote was based on the payroll as of the 18 May meeting. The Lumber Worker charged this was a deliberate ploy by department officials who admitted prior to the meeting a majority would be unlikely on that basis. Indeed, of these 293 men, 44 had left camp, no doubt raising some concerns amongst employees whether they could poll the requisite 147 needed to uphold the existing committee.⁷¹

Place and Goult, in their attempt to accommodate Noble and Daly, had made it extremely difficult for the employees to cooperate with the so-called conciliation process. Mulroney was the employees' first designated speaker. He objected to the meeting being called, to the manipulation of the voting list and the refusal to make his dismissal part of the dispute. He quickly put a motion calling for the men to quit work for 24 hours in protest of the actions of the company and government, and to call in the IWA to assist in taking a vote at a meeting conducted by the union. Place, acting as chair, ruled Mulroney out of order. The motion was put again by union member Elliot and carried in a standing vote. Morgan contended the vote was 204 to 16. Goult, in his report to the federal Department of Labour, indicated there was some confusion among the men as to what they were voting on. Nevertheless, he agreed in his report with Morgan, that the men ignored Daly's requests to return to work the next day. Daly thereupon closed the cookhouse on 10 June and paid off the entire crew, most of whom dispersed. Seventy married men who were

resident in camp returned to work on the recommendation of the union, and on the basis of no discrimination for any actions taken.⁷²

BSW's Menzies Bay camps were not crucial to their overall operation. It was easy for them to dispense with an uncooperative crew, even given a labour shortage, as long as their west coast camps remained unaffected. The attitude of Noble, Daly and Smith had provoked enough loggers to choose the habitual protest option—down the road to the next job—to undermine the union's position prior to the 8 June vote. After Thomson's conciliatory attempts to establish the basis of a local, non-union settlement had failed, department officials dropped all pretense of fairness, making any self-respecting settlement next to impossible for the employees. The role of the state in this dispute is succinctly summed up in the line from the 1942 departmental report: "Due to the fact that there was no ratification of the bargaining committee by the employees, further negotiation was impossible."⁷³

In response, various IWA locals sent resolutions to Premier Hart protesting the role of Place and Gault, a new tactic followed up by personal letters to BC's recently-installed Coalition from citizens Nigel Morgan and Ernie Dalskog. Requested by Hart to deal with the IWA correspondence, Pearson replied to the Premier: "If you have no objection, I shall just let the matter be as it is. These people know very well that the conduct of their officials at Menzies Bay was disgraceful and they are only trying to cover themselves up by these resolutions. They are an organization that love to be worrying people." Hart, of course, had no objection.⁷⁴ Whether he could stop worrying remained to be seen.

IV

In its quest for legitimacy during the first three years of the war, the IWA encountered a difficult and tricky web of opposition to the simple objective of signed union agreements on basic wages and conditions. Toward the end of 1942, another branch of the state, the courts, was used both by the IWA and a major employer, to test the ICA Act with

respect to the rights of trade unions as bargaining agents. In both instances, the IWA ultimately ended up the loser. In one, however, the Red Band Shingle case, the union put a significant dent in the armour of the open shop.

The first case grew out of a dispute involving Canadian Western Lumber, the third of the big three timber holding firms in the province along with MacMillan and BSW. In addition to its giant integrated lumber, plywood, shingle and sash and door operation at Fraser Mills, CWL owned the Comox Logging and Railway Company, a tugboat company and various retail lumber yards on the prairies. Owned and controlled by a combination of English and Canadian capital, its directors interlocking with some of the largest financial institutions, mining, insurance and retail companies in the world,⁷⁵ CWL was and always had been a worthy opponent of the Communist Party and lumber workers' organizations.

The importance to the coast forest economy of the Fraser Mills operation, which employed over 1600 people, and memories of the successful 1931 Workers Unity League strike in which Pritchett had played a key role, made it a prime target during the IWA drive of 1941-42. At Fraser Mills, according to Jerry Lembcke, two leadership factions vied for control of the workers—a conservative “Old Timers” group with links to the IWA white bloc in Portland, Oregon, and the leadership of New Westminster local 1-357 loyal to District One.⁷⁶ At a union meeting on 10 August, attended by 573 employees, 568 voted in favour of a proposed agreement. As Pritchett admitted, this number fell short of that required for any action to be taken with regard to negotiation or conciliation.⁷⁷ Two weeks later, the turn out was better and by a vote of 876 to 3 a proposed working agreement was again adopted and an IWA committee of six, including Pritchett and Jack Greenall, IWA International Board member, was elected.⁷⁸

In the past, company management, headed by H.J. Mackin, had followed a policy of divide and rule by taking applications from individual groups of workers for wage increases to the RWLB. On 10 September, 400 employees temporarily refused to come in to work in protest against this procedure. The company agreed to a blanket application for

the entire crew, which was approved by the RWLB a week later in the form of a five-cent increase with a five-cent premium for night shift for all those not in the skilled labour category.⁷⁹

Judging from the secret report of a federal labour spy on an IWA rally held at New Westminster's Queen's Park arena on 4 October, this successful "protest" or strike action consolidated the position of local 1-357. The fact that 800 Fraser Mills employees attended a largely political meeting outside of work indicated a deepening of support for the union. Headline speakers included John Stanton, who spoke on the rights of labour in the United States, and Colin Cameron, who attacked the ICA Act as a major stumbling block in labour disputes. Pritchett, outlined the new situation at Fraser Mills. Negotiations for an agreement had reached a deadlock over the company's challenge to the legitimacy of the bargaining committee selected in August. The union had agreed to a company proposal that the Department of Labour conduct another ballot ratifying the Committee, but balked when Mackin had insisted, no doubt with the dissident "Old Timers" faction in mind, that nominations to the committee be reopened as well. The spy also reported the intelligence that District One, after consulting with provincial officials, was in the process of prosecuting CWL under the ICA Act, for refusing to negotiate with the elected committee.⁸⁰

The court hearings proceeded in late October. Union lawyer Stanton, in order to counter company objections to the legality of the actual ballot and the election of non-employees to the committee, called the provincial Deputy Minister of Labour, Adam Bell, as a witness. Bell testified that the department did not require any special form of ballot and that employees were free to elect whomever they wished to represent them. CWL personnel manager, under Stanton's questioning, reported that CWL employed no more than 1677, of whom 43 were in a supervisory capacity and thus were not eligible to vote. Eight hundred and seventy-six thus was a clear majority.

The company applied for dismissal of the union charges on the grounds that it was still willing to negotiate, but that the employee committee was elected improperly. Company counsel argued that only 494 of the ballots cast were valid in the election of the committee; the rest were spoiled for any of several technical reasons. Stanton argued correctly that the Act required no secret ballot at all and that such a vote had been held only as a formality. The official election of the committee, he posited, was accomplished through a show of hands preceding the secret vote.⁸¹ In his decision in early November, the judge dismissed the union's charges on the grounds that the company had still, in fact, been negotiating with the committee regarding its composition and legitimacy, while it was the employees who had broken off talks.

In January 1943, local 1-357 tried again to organize a vote to elect a bargaining committee. Pearson objected on grounds that, since the IWA had no status representing the employees, such a meeting had to be organized by the employees themselves. He tried to mollify Pritchett by suggesting he wait until after the next legislative sitting when he expected amendments to the ICA Act would make it easier to determine whether or not a dispute existed.⁸²

The second case brought before the courts in 1942 involving the IWA was initiated by Bloedel, Stewart and Welch. With shingle mills at Port Alberni (12 machines) and Burnaby (24 machines), BSW was the biggest shingle producer in the province at the start of the war. Its larger Red Band Shingle Mill, on the North Arm of the Fraser River just across the boundary from Vancouver, operated normally at one and one-half shifts, cutting up to 25 million feet of red cedar logs annually, out of a total provincial cedar shingle utilization of 300 million feet.⁸³

The economic life of a shingle sawyer or packer was precarious at best. Most were paid on a piece rate basis which fostered an individualistic outlook to work. Take home pay depended on the quality of the wood, efficiency of the worker and the reliability of the machinery, more than on the collective effort of the workers to win decent wage increases.

Maintenance and preparation was usually done without pay. Moreover, the 80 percent of industry production normally exported to the United States was under a quota system with heavy duties put on any shingles exceeding the quota. Thus mills were subject to frequent curtailment or closure. Employers found Chinese labour, often employed through the "Tyee" system, well suited to the relations of production prevailing in this industry. The high proportion of Chinese in the shingle mills presented a major challenge to IWA organizers. Only in 1944 with the employment of Chinese organizers and publication of a Chinese language bulletin, did the union begin to make significant inroads generally into this sector of workers.⁸⁴

The fact that the employees of the Red Band Shingle Mill, on 28 June 1942, elected a committee and proposed a union agreement covering union recognition, wages, hours and conditions no doubt caught the industry off guard. After the usual delays, on 13 October the dispute proceeded to a board of arbitration with Mr. Justice Robertson as chair. The employer's representative was R.V. Stuart, past-secretary-manager of the BCLA. Earlier in the year, at the instigation of the Association employers, he had set up Stuart Research Service as an industrial relations firm to serve the needs of the forest industry (see chapter four below). Herbert Gargrave, CCF MLA, represented the union. Counsel for the company immediately challenged the jurisdiction of the board, claiming there was, under the ICA Act, no dispute existing between the company and its employees. BSW applied for an injunction restraining the board from hearing the dispute or making an award, and asked for a declaration that no dispute existed, even though several similar disputes concerning union contracts had previously been heard by boards appointed under the Act.⁸⁵

There was little chance, indeed, that this board as constituted would actually recommend a contract with the IWA, a decision which would have been non-binding in any event. Why, then, did the company bother to drag the issue of the board's authority through the courts? In part, it was a response of the increasingly more organized

employers to the union's recently initiated court action against CWL. More generally, BSW had chosen this opportunity, at the height of the IWA's drive for signed union contracts, to challenge and, if possible, deny the right of the union to continue to make use of the existing inadequate industrial relations machinery in its campaign to organize the entire coast industry.

BSW's case rested on three points: 1) that there was no "dispute" as defined in section two of the Act; 2) that the union was a third party without interest in any dispute between the company and its employees; and 3) section five of the Act empowered the company to contract with elected representatives of the majority of its employees but not with their union since the majority were not members of the IWA prior to 7 December 1938.

The case was heard in lower court by Mr. Justice Coady, who dismissed the claim on 27 October, but skirted the issue of whether union recognition in itself was the basis for a dispute under the Act. Instead, he ruled that the inclusion of a proposal for a union contract, "where there are, as here, many matters set out in the proposed agreement" which were clearly matters of dispute, would not disentitle the union to the appointment of a conciliation commissioner or a board of arbitration. He left it for the actual board to rule whether under the Act the employees were entitled to a union agreement.⁸⁶

BSW was not satisfied. It wanted a decisive ruling to serve as a precedent on the issue of whether a disagreement on union recognition constituted in and of itself a dispute. It took the matter to the Court of Appeal of British Columbia where it received a definitive, though not unanimous, dismissal of its claim for an injunction.

The Chief Justice of British Columbia, D.A. McDonald, in his dissenting opinion, produced an amazing subversion of historical reality in deciding in favour of the company. McDonald contradicted Coady by agreeing with the company that the only matter in dispute was union recognition. His opinion that, in this case, union recognition was not a dispute, was based on what was undoubtedly a deliberate misconstruing of the events surrounding

the passage of the 1937 Act and its 1938 amendment. He argued that the original 1937 Act permitted all employees to bargain through duly elected representatives, either employees or trade union officials. The 1938 amendment, according to his version of events, limited the term of the 1937 Act by restricting the right to bargain through a trade union to those employees already organized at the time of its passage. Of course, in reality, the 1937 Act made no provision for trade unions as such to act as bargaining agents. After heavy lobbying from organized labour, countered by strenuous intervention from the industry (see chapter one above), the 1938 compromise amendment broadened the scope of section five by permitting trade unions organized prior to 7 December, to act as bargaining agents. McDonald ruled that since Red Band employees were not organized prior to 7 December 1938, under the Act "there is no declaration that it shall be lawful to conduct such bargaining through the officers of a trade union." Normally, if something is not lawful, it can be construed to be against the law, and that is the strict interpretation McDonald intended, based on his notion that the 1938 amendment took away a pre-existing right. Further, he found, that it was not lawful either, for employees or their elected representatives, to bargain with their employer "with a view to forcing him to make an agreement" with a trade union. Finally, no such alleged right of employees to so force their employer could be the basis of a dispute under the Act.⁸⁷

McDonald was supported in his reasons by Mr. Justice McQuarrie.⁸⁸ The majority of the Appeal Court, however, followed the reasoning of Justice C.H. O'Halloran and future Chief Justice Gordon Sloan. Sloan's logic was quite simple and flawless. He, as did O'Halloran, drew a sharp and important distinction in the wording of section five between the meaning of "bargaining" as negotiating, and "to bargain" as in to contract. While employees unorganized prior to December 1938 were required to "conduct bargaining" through elected employee representatives, rather than through a trade union as agent, it was bargaining in the sense of negotiating, not contracting that was intended. Nothing in the law prohibited the employees' duly elected bargaining committee from

discussing with a company the desirability of entering an agreement, or contracting with a trade union as a so-called third party. Sloan concluded his simple statement with the following argument. It was the privilege and right of employees to belong to a trade union. As well, it was lawful for employers to enter an agreement with such a trade union regardless of when it was organized. It followed from these two propositions, that the refusal of an employer to enter such an agreement upon request of his employees was a matter relating to the rights and privileges of employees, and therefore constituted a dispute under section two of the Act.⁸⁹

O'Halloren took the argument a step further. In the case of the Red Band Shingle Mill, where it was conceded that a majority of employees had voted for the union to represent them as party to an agreement, the judge found that the interest of the employees was the same as the interest of the union. The union could therefore not be construed as being a third party. Rather, the union was more appropriately described as the "collective or composite alter ego of the employees." Even if the definition of the term bargain were open to interpretations different than his and Sloan's, legal precedent provided that that interpretation should stand which was consistent with the smooth working of the system regulated by statute, and that interpretation rejected which would lead to uncertainty, friction or confusion. As well, any interpretation of section five had to be subordinated to its cause and necessity, and to that which was "consonant to reason and good discretion." The cause and necessity of the statute was the maintenance of industrial peace. Further, it was consonant to reason and good discretion that employees should form unions and such unions should contract with employers on their behalf. "In my view," he concluded, in direct contradiction of the chief justice and the position of BSW, "the statute does not prevent the Company entering into the proposed contract with the Union." It was, however, he added, up to the board to decide what course to recommend in this regard.⁹⁰

Though it had little immediate impact, the historical importance of the Sloan-O'Halloren decision should not be overlooked. As a statement from the highest judicial

body in the province more or less endorsing the legitimacy of union demands for full collective bargaining rights and pointedly demonstrating the ambiguous and confusing nature of the ICA Act and its discriminatory treatment of industrial unions, it served to help undermine the authority of the existing industrial relations law in the province. Moreover, the CMA journal, Industrial Canada, considered the British Columbia decision a matter of considerable importance with respect to dominion labour statute. This was particularly so, the CMA industrial relations department noted, since it had frequently been argued before federal conciliation boards and the courts that the question of union recognition was not a dispute as defined in the IDI Act. However, the dissenting opinions of the Chief Justice and Justice McQuarrie gave the editor hope for a different decision when the matter was decided definitively with respect to the federal law.⁹¹

Predictably, when the board of arbitration in the Red Band Shingle case reconvened in December, it found no reason why the company should enter an agreement with the union. As evidence of the increasing integration of the industrial relations battle being waged in the coastal forest industry, the arguments proposed by the two parties were almost identical to those presented the following month to a similar board also composed of R.V. Stuart and Gargrave, with Dean J.N. Finlayson as chair, hearing a dispute between Mohawk Lumber and local 1-357.⁹² The union argued in both instances that recognition would enhance the dignity of labour, allow employees to bargain more effectively without fear of reprisal, and create better more harmonious industrial relations. In both instances the company countered by noting that members of the employees committee were already union members who had access to union assistance and had, up to then, bargained with the company amicably and without fear of consequences. Because of the constant fluctuation of the workforce, the company counsels argued disingenuously, at some future time a new majority of employees might favour bargaining through an employees committee, forcing the company, in order to comply with section five of the Act, to commit a breach of any contract signed with the union.

In both the Red Band and Mohawk decisions the majority of the board accepted the company objections to the union's case and cited section five of the Act in support of its refusal to recommend a union agreement. In spite of the strong language of the Sloan and O'Halloran findings Robertson, in the Red Band case, found that there was "no express section in the Act providing with whom the Company shall enter into a contract." He continued, "the policy of the Act seems to have left the Company untrammelled in this respect." He and Stuart were of the opinion that the employees had not shown any sufficient reasons why the company should enter into a contract with the union.⁹³

Indeed, by the end of 1942 it had become apparent that provincial boards of arbitration, particularly where the IWA was concerned, would rarely, if ever, find any reason to recommend a signed union agreement in the absence of legislation so directing it. This failure of the state's industrial relations machinery to resolve recognition disputes to the satisfaction of both parties has been commented on recently by two historians with respect to the federal IDI Act and its compulsory conciliation provisions. In part, as Laurel MacDowell has argued, the conciliation process failed because "the very existence of one of the parties was not an issue for which there was a middle ground." In regard to federal conciliation boards, which in their adjudicative capacity were identical to British Columbia boards of arbitration, Jeremy Webber notes that "without the aid of standards declared by an authoritative body outside the bargaining relationship, it was difficult for boards to develop stable, well-accepted principles on which to base their awards."⁹⁴ In British Columbia, the peculiarities of the ICA Act, no doubt, contributed to the Canadian "malaise" of which Webber speaks.

No argument or statement of principles uttered before a board could be effective in the absence of a legislative framework embodying the principles of union bargaining rights. A law which made it clear that if an agreement were to be signed it would have to be a union agreement, would give the IWA a fighting chance to use its organizational efforts and economic muscle in certain strategic operations to put an end to the open shop in the coast

lumber industry. In August 1942, the union stepped up its education campaign among the rank-and-file by holding a referendum ballot in all camps and mills where it had union representation. As a step, ostensibly, to bring about harmonious industrial relations and an increase in war production through the establishment of sound collective bargaining practices, employees were asked to endorse the IWA as sole bargaining agent and to request the Department of Labour to bring in legislation providing for compulsory union recognition and employer deduction of union dues in operations with a majority of union support. In November, 103 delegates from 67 camps and mills assembled in an emergency conference at Nanaimo where they voted to support a call for a Canadian "Wagner Act" as a means to step up Canada's war effort.⁹⁵

At their annual convention in January 1943, District One delegates seconded their leaders' call for a labour Bill of Rights. With delegates from 25 British Columbia camps and mills either in the midst of, or about to enter negotiations, the convention endorsed the demand to amend the ICA Act to provide for compulsory collective bargaining with the organization of the workers' own choice, and for the proper machinery to establish that choice. Specifically the convention demanded elimination of conciliation, speeding up of arbitration, the outlawing of company unions, and severe penalties for employers engaging in unfair labour practices.⁹⁶ These demands clearly and explicitly addressed the frustration experienced by the IWA over the previous two years at the hands of the provincial labour bureaucracy, working in conjunction with anti-union operators. During the ensuing months, the union would become part of a much broader labour and political movement in support of reform of the country's labour law, and would encounter much more emphatic and organized employer opposition, as it moved toward the end of the open shop era.

Chapter Four

The Battle of the Charlottes: The End of the Open Shop

The final battle over the open shop was waged in the logging camps of the Queen Charlotte Islands, long targeted by the IWA as a key point in its organizing drive. Though the actual dispute involved only three operators, and fell under federal jurisdiction as involving a war industry, in fact, it became the final test of strength between the combined might of the province's forest industry and the IWA over the issue of industry-wide union recognition under the ICA Act. While largely ignored by writers of federal industrial relations history during this period, the British Columbia events of 1943 were an integral part of Canadian labour's struggle for a national "labour code."¹

I

When the IWA began its drive for signed agreements on the Queen Charlotte Islands in 1941, there were four companies with nine camps employing between 600 and 800 men involved: J.R. Morgan, Kelley Logging, Pacific Mills and A.P. Allison Logging. The companies logged the hemlock, spruce, balsam and cedar forests mainly to supply the raw material for the pulp and paper operations of the Powell River Company, at Powell River, and Pacific Mills at Ocean Falls.² Only 66 million of the 228 million feet of logs produced were high grade spruce suitable for aircraft. The lower grades of spruce were utilized in pulp production. Throughout the war, Pacific Mills' camp on the Queen Charlotte Islands produced mainly for its pulp and paper operation. J.R. Morgan also produced hemlock and low grade spruce for Pacific Mills and delivered its high grade spruce to Sitka Spruce Lumber Company in Vancouver for airplane lumber. Powell River Pulp and Paper, as it was organized during the war, could not continue its newsprint operation without the Queen Charlotte spruce supply. Kelley Logging, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Powell River, sold its entire cut to the pulp and paper company. Another Powell River subsidiary, Kelley Spruce, cut the high grade spruce for the Vancouver

market, and then after 1941, for the British Timber Control. The bulk of the Kelley Logging output was utilized at Powell River.³

During April of 1942, at the request of the British government, two officials of the provincial Department of Labour, were sent to make an investigation of the conditions in the airplane spruce logging industry on the Queen Charlotte Islands, and of the reasons for the serious manpower shortage there. It was the general consensus of opinion (amongst the 80 percent of Queen Charlotte Islands loggers contacted by the provincial investigators Whisker and Pearce) that the best stands of airplane spruce were held by non-producing timber holders, forcing the present operations to jump from one small claim to another. Moreover, most loggers reported that the existing logging companies were more concerned with the production of pulp than of spruce lumber. Pacific Mills had early in 1942 closed one of its two Queen Charlotte Islands camps and was preparing to move it to a fir and pulpwood operation on the mainland where there was no aero spruce.⁴

In June 1942, as a result of a conference between the British Ministry of Aircraft Production and representatives from the Canadian Timber Control to discuss an insufficiency in the supplies of spruce, a Canadian Crown company known as Aero Timber Products Limited was established for the sole purpose of increasing the output of the so-called sitka spruce logs.⁵ Sitka spruce, utilized in the famous "Mosquito" fighter planes, combined lightness and strength, making it, in many respects, better than any metal or alloy for airplane construction. It was better able to absorb anti-aircraft fire and it was easy on fuel. Furthermore, construction was rapid and repair simple.⁶ Aero Timber immediately acquired most of the assets and operation of Allison Logging Company as a production base. A Board of Directors was set up from among leading coast logging executives: Managing Director R.J. Filberg was Vice President of Comox Logging and Railway; Vice President was J.H. McDonald of B.C. Manufacturing Company Limited; S.G. Smith was Manager of BSW; and George O'Brien was President of O'Brien Logging Company Limited and Chairman of the Board of the BCLA. Also on the Board was Phil Wilson of

Merrill, Ring and Wilson, Ross Pendleton of APL and Percy Sills of Spruce Products Limited of Victoria. At its June general meeting, the BCLA agreed to help with Aero Timber's request for assistance in acquiring more men and equipment to beef up its new spruce operation.⁷

During the 1941-42 period, not only the existing log requirements of the pulp mills, but also a critical shortage of labour meant that Queen Charlotte Islands logging operations had remained predominantly pulpwood operations. From Aero Timber's point of view, crucial to the reorganization of production was first the creation of a greater supply of logging labour than had traditionally been available on the Queen Charlotte Islands under the normally unattractive working and living conditions there. Any attempt to resolve this problem, however, would ultimately involve the IWA, the only labour organization in the field with a claim to represent the loggers in the Islands' camps.

Despite an historic wage differential in favour of the isolated camps on the Queen Charlottes, loggers preferred working in lower coast and Vancouver Island fir camps. Travel time from Vancouver to the Queen Charlotte Islands was three to four days. Heavy rains and dense underbrush made the work more difficult, as did the heavier gear and rigging needed to log the huge timber. There was no hospital or medical services available, little fresh food, and, due to the isolation, no entertainment or social life outside the camps. Added to these negative factors, according to an IWA brief, was the unusually rough terrain, poor communications with the outside via mail and radio, and lengthy and sometimes hazardous travel periods to work each shift by boat. In order to attract loggers to the Queen Charlotte Islands, Department of Labour investigators Whisker and Pearce recommended a wage at least one dollar per day higher than in the best fir camps. They also recommended fare rebates for workers who stayed on the job, and proper refrigeration on boats carrying perishable food to camps. Whisker and Pearce believed that the operators' emphasis on pulpwood production might be undermining government efforts to attract workers to the Queen Charlottes on patriotic grounds. They suggested further

investigation of this issue. The investigators also concurred with a feeling amongst employees that public statements regarding troubled labour negotiations were making it difficult to induce new men to come to the Queen Charlotte Islands camps. They recommended steps be taken to end this publicity.⁸

This provincial report was filed only a few days after a report by federal Department of Labour investigator, R.G. Clements, on the unwillingness of idle loggers in Vancouver to accept employment in camps, especially those on the Queen Charlottes. Clements found that between 500 and 1000 loggers were currently in Vancouver seeking jobs in other war industries. The personnel manager for Pacific Mills, according to Clements, laid most of the blame on the federal order preventing operators from boosting wages.⁹ Despite the fact that pulp timber sold for two or three dollars below the price for Douglas fir, wage rates at Queen Charlotte pulpwood camps had almost always been pegged higher than at the most profitable fir camps on the coast. Though a rigging slinger and a choker, to cite only two cases, made 65 cents and 75 cents more each day than they would have in the highest paying fir camps, a serious labour shortage still persisted on the Queen Charlotte Islands through 1941.¹⁰

Patriotism aside, the dismal conditions on the Queen Charlottes and the inability of the operators to hold crews for any length of time was, of course, equally disturbing to the IWA from the point of view of organizing. During 1941 hard work toward negotiating a collective agreement was undermined by fluctuation and employer intransigence. That summer a conference of representatives from each camp was held, and a draft agreement, ratified by the membership, was proposed as the basis for negotiation in each camp. At A.P. Allison's, the most difficult of the Queen Charlotte Islands operators to crack in the union's estimation, 60 employees, including the staunchest union men, left camp when they encountered resistance to their demands. From that point on, until the Aero Timber takeover, Allison managed to keep the IWA at bay. Allison's success in maintaining the

open shop was likely one reason why it was targeted by Filberg and the BCLA directors for the takeover by Aero.¹¹

At Kelley's operation, everything was set to roll when nine of the best union men in camp packed up for Vancouver, leaving it to the District officers to start the process over again.¹² Compounding the problem of fluctuating crews, once it became known that the union was pressing for negotiations the operators clamped down on rights previously enjoyed by the union to hold camp meetings, consult with employees and have dues checked off monthly. From October until the end of 1941, union officials tried in vain through the Western Representative of the federal Department of Labour, F.E. Harrison, to initiate negotiations with Kelley and Pacific Mills. Both refused to meet. In January 1942, Harrison arranged a meeting between officials of all four companies with Pritchett and Morgan in order to discuss the union's proposals—a union agreement, productivity committee, transportation costs, wage bonus for staying the season, guaranteed day rates for falling crews, and overtime rates. After nearly a month had elapsed, the companies bypassed the union and circulated their employees directly with their draft of a proposed agreement. After several more meetings with Department of Labour officials, the union reluctantly agreed to drop union recognition in return for an employee agreement giving the employees the right to elect bargaining representatives at large. A subsequent Department of Labour draft agreement was then submitted to the employees by the department and was rejected by all camps but Allison's.¹³

On 15 April, District One held a remarkable conference at the Hotel Georgia in Vancouver to discuss the Queen Charlotte Islands situation. In attendance were delegates from other trade unions, "cultural and fraternal groups," provincial MLAs and members of the United Church of Canada. Pearson characteristically declined the courtesy, explaining to Hart that, "In view of the fact that I am not very sympathetic with this organization I have not replied as the invitation did not actually ask for a reply." The Labour Minister's penchant for legalism clearly extended to the details of etiquette.¹⁴

Having done its best to cultivate public opinion on the Charlottes question, in May, a union strike vote in all four Queen Charlotte Islands operations was approved 429 to 24. That vote sparked a meeting in early June held by Elliott Little, the Director of National Selective Service and Timber Controller A.S. Nicholson, with union and management representatives, as well as CCL and CCF officials, in an effort to resolve the dispute.¹⁵ The involvement of Little of the NSS at this stage is notable. Little was a "dollar-a-year" man drafted into the war effort from the pulp and paper industry. He was General Manager of Anglo-Canadian Pulp and Paper Mills and the Gaspesia Sulphite Company, and an executive member of the Canadian Pulp and Paper Association. His experience in industrial relations was formed in a capital intensive industry where more or less harmonious labour relations had prevailed since the reorganization of the conservative pulp unions in eastern Canada in 1933.¹⁶ Even in British Columbia, the International Brotherhood of Paper Makers and the International Brotherhood of Pulp, Sulphite and Paper Mill workers, under moderate leadership, had established good relations with the pulp companies by the early thirties, a situation which persisted right through the forties and fifties.¹⁷ Unlike many of his fellow members in the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, Little was a staunch advocate of improved industrial relations as a means to producing greater industrial efficiency. That meant, he told the CMA annual general meeting on 8 June 1942, recognition of deserving and responsible unions, collective bargaining in good faith, and plant production committees to utilize the resourcefulness and ingenuity of the man on the machine.¹⁸ The NSS, from its inception, had taken on itself the job of promoting the development of improved labour relations to further Canada's war effort.¹⁹

As a result of Little's intervention in the Queen Charlotte Islands dispute, five grievances were at least temporarily resolved through the establishment of an employer/employee committee, a fare rebate plan, proper refrigeration of food, improved medical treatment in camp, airplane transport to Vancouver in case of injury, and air

delivery of mail. While he fell far short of mediating a collective agreement satisfactory to the IWA, Little produced the first resolution of any sort since the union's proposals of the previous summer. Yet these were largely agreements on employee grievances uncovered by the provincial investigators earlier that spring and had little to do with any of the union issues put forward by the IWA. Following the grievance meeting with Little and Nicholson, the IWA applied to the federal government for the appointment of a conciliation board to deal with the main issue of union recognition and other matters of minor importance. Not until September was a panel selected, and it was January 1943 before sittings of the board got underway. In one of the early sessions in February, counsel for J.R. Morgan alleged that Little had told him during the June 1942 meeting in Vancouver, in the presence of CCL officials, that he would never ask the company to enter an agreement with the IWA.²⁰

Although Little's intervention had no direct benefit for the union, it did lay the groundwork for the reorganization of production by Aero Timber during the last half of 1942. And that development did, in fact, affect the prospects of the IWA on the Queen Charlotte Islands. In October 1942, Aero Timber signed a memo of agreement with Kelley, J.R. Morgan and Pacific Mills offering to pay these operators a bonus of \$10 per 1000 board feet for high grade spruce logs, on the condition that they, in turn, payed their camp employees a bonus of one-third in excess of their regular wages after 100 days employment, starting 1 October 1942. On 10 October 1942, the NSS published an advertisement in all the Vancouver dailies announcing the new bonus offer, free one-way transport for three months work, return fare for six months continuous employment, as well as a deferment from military service for experienced loggers working in aero spruce production.²¹

Early in 1943 Aero Timber entered written agreements with J.R. Morgan and Pacific Mills. These firms undertook to deliver selectively logged Aero Spruce grades to Aero Timber or its customers. Kelley Logging did not contract in writing, but from the

time of the agreement with the other two, delivered its high grade spruce logs in accordance with the crown company's instructions. On top of that, by the end of the year, Aero's own operations employed more spruce loggers than all the other Queen Charlotte Islands camps combined.²² But all was not clear sailing for Aero Timber and its allied companies. The issue of union recognition, soon to be addressed in well publicized hearings of a federal conciliation board, still hung in the balance, ensuring that conditions on the Islands would remain uncertain for some time to come.

The possibility of substantially increased earnings for Queen Charlotte Islands loggers (some fallers and buckers could now earn as much as \$32 per day),²³ the improved working conditions negotiated by Little, and the employment conditions attached to the bonus and fare rebate created the basis for the IWA to stabilize its organization and undertake a sustained period of negotiation. Since the Queen Charlotte Islands logging operations were classified as a vital war industry, industrial relations matters affecting these companies came within the jurisdiction of the federal Department of Labour, headed by a newly appointed minister, Humphrey Mitchell. Coming at a time when federal labour relations and wage control policies were reaching a state of crisis, any resolution to the Queen Charlotte Islands dispute would almost automatically have to be worked out in the context of a redefinition of federal policies and procedures with respect to industrial relations in general. As well, since any settlement at these spruce and pulp operations was of considerable concern to the major coastal timber operators, the issue of union recognition in this crucial war industry would also affect the course of industrial relations within the provincial jurisdiction.

By early 1943, the Queen Charlotte Islands dispute had been cast onto the larger stage of Canadian politics, at both the federal and provincial levels, as governments scrambled to respond to intensifying industrial unrest in the country's basic war industries, and to the concomitant CCF threat to the political hegemony of the Liberal party. At this

junction a digression is necessary in order properly to situate the IWA fight for recognition and collective bargaining rights within this broader political context.

II

In Ontario, and at the federal level, CCF stock among trade unionists began to soar after the Kirkland Lake gold miners strike of 1941-42 over the issue of union recognition. Since June 1940, when it passed PC 2685, the federal government had, in principle, endorsed collective bargaining through duly elected bargaining agents, and the freedom to organize in trade unions without employer intimidation or coercion. After December 1940, Canadian workers had lived under a system of wage controls, as well. What rankled the labour movement was the government's zeal in enforcing wage restrictions and its laxness in its promotion of collective bargaining rights, even in war industries directly under its management. This double-barrelled grievance led to outspoken criticism of the federal government by both the TLC and CCL at their fall conventions, and calls for a national labour code and repeal or modification of wage controls.²⁴ In the Kirkland Lake dispute, the government had expressly ignored both its own official policy and the recommendation of a Department of Labour conciliation board for recognition of Local 240 of the International Union of Mine Mill and Smelter Workers. In making the award, the board expressly questioned the appropriateness of trying to settle recognition disputes via the IDI Act, and suggested the broad question of collective bargaining be dealt with by parliament or cabinet. The companies did nothing to comply with the award, and the government did nothing to enforce it. The ensuing 11-week strike conducted in the dead of winter was lost by 12 February 1942.²⁵

The Kirkland Lake debacle galvanized national labour support for the issue of union recognition and produced unprecedented unity of purpose between the two national labour centrals for legislative reform at their 1942 conventions. More significantly, it pushed the

CCL into a more open and active support of the CCF as the political instrument to effect that change.²⁶

In two federal by-elections immediately following the strike at Kirkland Lake, strong labour support helped the CCF candidates defeat Conservative leader Méighen in South York, and challenge Liberal candidate and Minister of Labour Humphrey Mitchell in Welland over his handling of the recent labour dispute. MacDowell argues that after Kirkland Lake, labour and the CCF began to "share common political objectives" and cooperate on an organizational level. The CCF formed a Trade Union Committee to capitalize on the dissatisfaction of Ontario workers and at its fall 1942 convention the CCL recognized the CCF as labour's parliamentary representative.²⁷

With this clear political threat from the moderate left, and an election in the offing the following year, Ontario Liberal premier Harry Nixon was compelled to act. In the midst of the brewing national steel industry dispute over the federal government's wage control policy he took the opportunity to upstage the King Liberals by announcing at the 1942 CCL convention his intention to introduce a collective bargaining act.²⁸ The Ontario Collective Bargaining Act, modelled on the Wagner Act but with the addition of a Labour Court to enforce collective bargaining rights, duly passed in April 1943. The "dramatic series" of hearings preceding passage of the Act was designed to show the government's support for the rights of labour. It was too little too late, and Nixon's Liberals went down to crushing defeat in the August election. The CCF, with no members in the previous legislature, formed the official opposition to the new Tory government with 34 members, 18 of whom were trade unionists.²⁹

At the same 1942 CCL convention that welcomed Nixon's announcement, Humphrey Mitchell was roundly chastised. King's hopes were dashed that Mitchell, an old-line craft unionist, might build new Liberal bridges to the trade union movement.³⁰ Indeed, Mitchell had annoyed King by stalling on a proposed order sought by both the TLC and CCL extending the government's collective bargaining principles in PC 2685 to

crown companies such as the newly created Aero Timber. Furthermore, following a dispute with Mitchell, Elliott Little, who had gained the confidence of labour during his brief tenure, resigned as director of the NSS.³¹ The CCL claimed Little's 16 November letter of resignation had blamed Mitchell for the paralysis of the NSS. The B.C. Lumber Worker alleged that Little had been pushed out by Mitchell because of his attitude that labour must be enlisted as an equal partner in the war effort.³² Little's resignation further damaged the reputation of the King government in the eyes of Canadian labour leaders. In an attempt to shore up labour support, on 1 December 1942 King intervened directly in Mitchell's terrain to effect the passage of Order-in-Council PC 10802 providing for an extension⁸ of the principle of collective bargaining to employees working in crown companies.³³

As the steel dispute reached a boiling point in early 1943, King went over the head of his labour minister and became directly involved in an attempt to prevent his reactionary cabinet colleagues from "handing over the future of the country to the CCF."³⁴ The Barlow Commission, appointed to resolve an impasse over wages, in its January 1943 report had refused any adjustments or to declare steel a "national industry" for purposes of wage standardization. Thirteen thousand workers walked out in plants in Ontario and Nova Scotia. King immediately, in February 1943, referred the matter to a reconstituted National War Labour Board from which the unpopular Mitchell was relieved of the chairmanship. He was replaced by Justice C.P. McTague. King felt the Justice had a good appreciation of the dangerous link being formed between the CIO unions and the CCF. As labour's representative on the three member board McTague appointed a former counsel to the CCF and the Steelworkers, J.L. Cohen, thereby sending a positive signal to trade union leaders.³⁵ The NWLB was also now empowered to conduct general enquiries into labour relations matters.³⁶

In the final analysis, the board decision on the steel case failed to live up to the expectations King had raised in the Steelworkers union. But the April 1943 announcement

that the NWLB, under its new terms of reference, would conduct a full national inquiry into labour relations and wage conditions, helped mollify the Steelworkers' and CCL leaders. They anticipated that King, subject to the same political pressures as the Ontario Liberals, would soon enact similar collective bargaining legislation at the federal level. The hearings, conducted from April through June 1943, gave labour "a national platform" to make its case. In August, both majority and minority reports of the NWLB commission recommended to the federal government a new labour code to provide for compulsory collective bargaining, though the McTague majority report was decidedly cool towards the new "aggressive" industrial unions.³⁷

III

In British Columbia, after its dismal showing in the 1937 election, the CCF pulled itself together under the direction of a new, young and dynamic leader, Harold Winch. As the depression gave way to the war years in British Columbia, party fortunes shifted in accordance with a changed political economy. The reformist "little New Deal" of Duff Pattullo had long since faded, replaced in the popular mind by the images of the heavy-handed treatment meted out to strikers at Blubber Bay, and unemployed demonstrators at the Vancouver Post Office.³⁸ Under the impact of the war economy, the ranks of the unemployed shrank, and the trade unions gained new organizational strength. Both industrial and craft union centrals experienced marked growth, creating a more coherent political bloc in opposition to the established parties.³⁹ After 1937, Pattullo's tenuous political coalition of diverse interest groups quickly came unstuck. His inept handling and then postponement of the proposed health insurance bill alienated both labour and business support for different reasons. His legislative attempt to regulate the oil and gas industry, together with a rhetorical commitment to social programmes, further dismayed the business community and helped revive Tory hopes.⁴⁰ By the time of the October 1941 election, both opposition parties were gaining strength at the expense of the Liberals. Pattullo's

middle ground of reform politics, which he had defended firmly against conservative attackers as the best prevention against the rise to power of radical governments, was found to have shrunk considerably.⁴¹ The 1941 results cost the Liberals 10 seats and reduced them to minority status with 21 members. The CCF doubled their representation to 14, and for the first time polled the highest in the popular vote. The Tories rebounded to 12 seats from eight.⁴² A movement for a coalition government with roots in the political confusion of the early thirties suddenly revived within both old-line parties to assume the antidotal function against radicalism that Pattullo's reformism allegedly had served. The coalition idea quickly gained momentum under the pretext of wartime unity and stability. The die-hard Liberal, Pattullo, resisted, fearing the permanent demise of the Liberal party in British Columbia. His administration was uncerimoniously replaced by a new Coalition government led by Liberal John Hart. The CCF, having refused the offer to coalesce, once again formed the official opposition.⁴³

The Coalition government had the advantage of a recent election behind it when the national labour upsurge of 1942-43 hit British Columbia. Nevertheless, a clear danger signal was sent out in November 1942 in a Salmon Arm by-election. The seat, held for 18 years by the old-line parties, fell to the CCF with a doubling of its previous popular vote.⁴⁴ The government of John Hart was not oblivious, either, to developments in other provinces, where CCF support was threatening to topple long-standing political regimes. The new coalition would have to prove itself to an electorate growing increasingly restless from wartime sacrifices, and to a burgeoning labour movement being led by the militant CIO unions, the IWA, Mine Mill and the Shipyard Workers. The link between labour and the CCF in British Columbia was complicated by the strong role of communists in the industrial unions. Nevertheless, the government apparently felt that it could not rely on divisions of the left to carry it through the turbulent period of adjustment from wartime to post-war reconstruction.

During the course of the war, union membership in British Columbia rose from 34,000 to nearly 84,000.⁴⁵ As Table 1 demonstrates the number of disputes involving time lost in working days in British Columbia industries under both federal and provincial jurisdictions jumped over ten times between 1939 and 1943:

Table 1

Number of Time-Lost Disputes in British Columbia 1939-43⁴⁶

	<u>Disputes</u>	<u>Employees Affected</u>	<u>Time Lost in Working Days</u>
1939	4	822	13803
1940	1	204	8510
1941	8	1408	7594
1942	50	18804	35025
1943	43	21704	78129

Source: Report of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Branch (1943)

As in the rest of Canada, a growing number of disputes involved the issues of union recognition and discrimination for union activity. Out of 13 disputes under provincial jurisdiction involving loss of time commencing in 1942, at least six, and probably more, involved a union issue.⁴⁷ The provincial government could regulate only a part of the industrial relations picture during these war years, a portion which, nevertheless, included much of the lumber industry where the recognition issue was particularly urgent. Even still, as it represented the combined interests of capital in British Columbia, the Coalition could not sit idly by while industrial unrest disrupted, to an ever more alarming extent, the flow of goods and profits in the province. It was clearly time to bring the superstructure of labour law into line with the material reality of labour relations in the province, especially with respect to the lumber industry.

On 12 January 1943, a joint delegation of seven trade union centrals representing both TLC and CCL unions submitted a legislative brief to the provincial cabinet recommending changes to the ICA Act. Heading the list of demands was a call for

recognition of unions as legitimate bargaining representatives, irrespective of date of organization—collective bargaining with such unions to be made subject to law. Unfair labour practices under this proposal would be outlawed explicitly, arbitration of disputes speeded up, and a labour relations board with labour representation established to administer the act.⁴⁸

In the spring 1943 legislative session, the Hart government launched a broad programme of reform aimed at labour and CCF supporters, and at doubting anti-coalitionist Liberals who feared the death of liberalism in the province at the hands of the new Coalition.⁴⁹ Included in the reform package were amendments to both the Workmen's Compensation Act and the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. The controversial section five of the 1937-38 ICA Act was overhauled to provide automatic bargaining agency status to a trade union where a majority of those employees affected by a dispute were members. "Trade union" was defined in the Act for the first time as a national or international organization, or a local chartered branch of such an organization. Automatic recognition on the basis of membership applied only to trade unions. Any other organization required a majority vote of employees affected to determine bargaining agency rights. Moreover, the new bill made it illegal for an employer to dominate or interfere with the formation or administration of any employee organization. These provisions went a long way toward eliminating company unions, and were protested against vehemently by the CMA and, in particular, the president of Consolidated Mining and Smelting whose company had a long-standing company union scheme.⁵⁰ While the 1937 Act had made it lawful for employees to bargain collectively with their employer, no definition of collective bargaining had been provided. Importantly, the 1943 amendment defined collective bargaining as including negotiation of matters of employment relations for the purposes of arriving at a settlement. This provision would make it difficult for employers to argue they had fulfilled their legal obligations simply by sitting down at a table with union officials. Unions could now legitimately argue that bargaining, under the Act, involved the actual

signing of an agreement. These long sought after rights were, nevertheless, modified by some other, conditioning clauses.

For purposes of certification, a member of a trade union meant a person with three months continuous membership in the local union, and not more than six months in arrears of dues. This clause would continue to make certification difficult for the IWA where members tended to shift from one local to another.⁵¹ Refusal to enter into collective bargaining for more than 21 days was made an offence against the Act, but with a maximum fine of only \$500. An employer, or any employee, could, after the expiry of six months from the date of official recognition of trade union bargaining agency status, apply to the minister for an investigation as to whether a majority of employees continued to be members of the union. Bargaining rights would be automatically lost if such an investigation demonstrated less than a majority membership. Furthermore, the conciliation and arbitration provisions of the Act were left more or less intact, adjusted only by the empowering of the minister to by-pass the conciliation stage at his discretion, and by the imposition of a 14-day time limit for both parties to accept or reject an arbitration award.⁵²

The immediate significance of the amendment bill for the industrial unions still largely under provincial jurisdiction, such as the IWA, was unmistakable, as witnessed by the protestation of the BCLA, the B.C. Lumber and Shingle Manufacturers' Association and the CMA.⁵³ Nigel Morgan, in a feature article in the Lumber Worker, called it a "Bill of Rights" for labour paving the way for a "new deal" in the province's labour relations. From the perspective of his own union, in particular, given the strategy of signed agreements pursued since 1940, and the frustration encountered trying to win these under the terms of the 1937-38 Act, the 1943 amendment was a "'green light' for an all-out drive to organize the unorganized." The IWA was preparing to negotiate union agreements, or in the process of arbitration, in 29 operations, according to Morgan. It was to be hoped that the new ICA Act would facilitate the "quick settlement of these negotiations and result in peaceful and amicable adjustment."⁵⁴

In April, with the first-ever union agreement in the British Columbia lumber industry between local 1-363, and the small Batco Logging Company at Campbell River, followed by the certification of local 1-80 as bargaining agent at the Rounds camp of Lake Logging, the amended Act seemed to be producing the desired quick results.⁵⁵ But the IWA still had to make a breakthrough in the big Association camps and mills, and these operators appeared to be digging in for a last-ditch stand to keep the union out of their open shop industry. In a rather strange turn of events, the final test of strength as to whether the IWA would be able to use the new legal structure to win legitimate industrial relations status occurred in logging camps on the Queen Charlotte Islands, one of the few sites in the entire British Columbia lumber industry where the ICA Act did not apply. The Queen Charlotte Islands became the battleground to decide the meaning of the amended ICA Act—did collective bargaining mean and include the signing of a collective agreement with any democratically elected union, regardless of its political orientation or trade union programme?

IV

In February 1942, in response to the concerted and extensive efforts of the IWA to negotiate union contracts throughout the coastal forest industry, R.V. Stuart established Stuart Research Service Limited as the industrial relations agency for the industry. The IWA, with the support of the Pacific Coast Labour Bureau and lawyer John Stanton, was making increasing use of provincial boards of arbitration. It was necessary for the major operators to coordinate a consistent position on the provisions of the ICA Act, and on the IWA claim for legitimacy. Stuart, himself, served as the employer's arbitrator in two important cases in 1942 involving BSW and the Mohawk Lumber Company.

During 1942, Stuart also conducted negotiations with Elliott Little of NSS in an attempt to acquire a supply of skilled loggers from other parts of Canada.⁵⁶ Prior to the formation of Stuart Research, the Industrial Association of British Columbia acted for the

lumber operators in a public relations and lobbying capacity.⁵⁷ Labour relations, such as they were, were handled individually by each company, or each operation. By 1942, it had become necessary for the Association operators to adopt a more sophisticated and systematic, if not "scientific," approach to industrial relations. Stuart, with his 32 years experience in the industry, was clearly the man for the job. After a brief sojourn with the Canadian Puget Sound Lumber Company, Stuart had joined the British Columbia Forest Branch in 1914. He was employed there until 1927, largely in the area of logging operation inspection. In that capacity he gained a detailed knowledge of cost structures and wage rates prevailing in the different areas of the province. From 1928 to 1941, Stuart served as secretary-manager of the BCLA where he was constantly engaged in the preparation of statistics and reports dealing with labour and other costs, and their relation to log prices. He also acted as secretary-treasurer of the Logging Agency, Limited, the BCLA's hiring hall.⁵⁸ In short, Stuart knew the economics and the politics of the industry well—a knowledge that would prove invaluable in helping to formulate a common position on labour matters amongst a diverse group of companies of varying capitalization, sophistication and profitability. When the Queen Charlotte Islands dispute heated up during the summer of 1943, and it became clear that the future pattern of labour relations in the industry would be determined by the outcome on the Queen Charlottes, Stuart would emerge as the chief spokesman and negotiator for the coast operators.

The federally-appointed conciliation board in the Queen Charlotte Islands dispute was chaired by Justice A.M. Harper, with Arthur Turner representing the IWA and R.H. Tupper, the employers. They held hearings during the first five months of 1943. As a large part of the holdings of Allison Logging had been taken over by Aero Timber, the parties agreed to eliminate that company from the proceedings.⁵⁹ The union, at the start of 1943, had not yet made sufficient inroads into the camps of the new Crown operation to open up the question of collective bargaining there.⁶⁰ Involved in the dispute, then, when

hearings began in earnest, were four camps of J.R. Morgan, three of Kelley, and one of Pacific Mills, employing in all approximately 530 men.⁶¹

The employers' attorneys took the approach of trying to undermine the IWA's claim to recognition by attacking its legitimacy as a trade union. Little of substance was presented in argument other than accusations that the IWA, during 1939-40, had opposed aid to the allies at a time of great need; that it was a political movement hiding behind the mask of a trade union; and, to top it off, it had been suspended by the CCL.⁶² F.R. Anderson, lawyer for J.R. Morgan in this case, drew a distinction between responsible unions and those others, like the IWA, led by men such as Pritchett and Morgan, "earnest fools," elected in bad judgement by the rank-and-file woodworkers.⁶³ The question was, should logging operators be asked to enter into a contract with a union that lacked the basic legitimacy of recognition by the Canadian labour movement, and whose patriotic participation in the war against fascism was open to question.

In summarizing the union's case, John Stanton attempted to establish that "collective bargaining," as a legal concept, entailed bargaining with a democratically elected union of any description, and the signing of a collective agreement with that union. In addition to citing the principles contained in PC 2685 and PC 10802, and their application by boards in various recent disputes such as Kirkland Lake, Stanton also referred to the recently amended ICA Act. While neither federal nor provincial legislation compelled the signing of an agreement, Stanton admitted, short of such compulsion the law did everything it could to bring the parties together with a view to concluding an agreement. Was it not reasonable, he argued, that parties, "having conducted negotiation and reached agreement should consummate them in written form." Though, similarly, the American Wagner Act did not specifically require agreements to be signed, Stanton cited rulings by both the NLRB and the U.S. Supreme Court in which collective bargaining was found to include a signed agreement. Stanton then tackled the particular objections raised concerning the IWA.

District One's war record he defended by noting the lack of actual strikes in the province involving the IWA. The companies, the lawyer argued, were using evidence drawn from the American districts to impugn the record of the IWA in British Columbia. Pritchett, in fact, testified to his own active disagreement with the International vice-president regarding the union's position on American involvement in the war. Neither, Stanton claimed, could the companies prove the union to be an unfit bargaining agency with respect to the personal integrity of union officials. Nor was there any jurisdictional dispute, the Pulp and Sulphite Workers Union having testified as to their support for the IWA on the Queen Charlotte Islands. As for the red-baiting, Stanton eloquently (and prophetically) lectured the board:

If it should be established as a matter of principle...that the political beliefs of union leaders alone constitute legitimate grounds for a refusal by the companies to bargain collectively, then the whole principle of collective bargaining falls to the ground. It is obvious that the adoption of such a principle would lead to veritable witch-hunts, and that the views of union leaders would have to be examined in every case before agreements were signed. It requires no argument to show what an intolerable situation would develop in the trade union movement were this the case. It is noteworthy that in no law and in no decision of any arbitration board...is any distinction made between "good" unions and "bad" unions—i.e., unions which meet the approval of employers and unions which do not.

In actuality, Stanton showed in his crowning argument, that distinction was probably of less significance in this case than the employers, with all their political and principled posturing, had tried to maintain. He reminded the board that F.R. Anderson had admitted under questioning that, could the IWA have guaranteed a supply of men, the operators would have signed with the union as the "lesser of two evils." If the companies' economic self-interest dictated a settlement, "they would be quite prepared to sign with any union," Stanton proclaimed.⁶⁴

Stanton's summary brief, presented 19 May 1943⁵, is particularly interesting for two reasons. First, his arguments, and the points raised in defence of them, appeared quite explicitly in the Harper/Turner majority award in favour of the union. Secondly, his

assessment of the companies' anti-union sentiments as being ultimately conditioned by economic self-interest proved to be quite correct.

In the majority decision, Harper noted that over 90 percent of employees involved in the dispute were members of the union, and that collective bargaining and written agreements with democratic unions under their own selected leadership was the "best machinery for producing and maintaining a condition of harmony in industry." Since IWA District officials were elected on a democratic basis in convention, Harper found, it was the "character and reliability" of the union as a whole which had to be considered with respect to the value of contracts entered into by local 1-71, and no attack had been made on the members of this local by the companies. Moreover, since the federal government, under its emergency powers, had had full authority to suppress the utterances or actions of District One leaders, and did not do so, it was not the function of the board to judge their political views as a basis for denying collective bargaining rights to a large body of loggers. Harper concluded by citing PC 2685, and in particular its application at Kirkland Lake, as well as PC 10802, as justification and authority for his recommendation that the companies should enter an agreement with local 1-71 for a period of one year, the terms of which had been largely already settled through negotiation.⁶⁵

Termed by the Vancouver Province the first major victory of the IWA in British Columbia,⁶⁶ this decision caused considerable consternation in the industry (coming as it did only a couple of months after the amendments to the ICA Act). Negotiations with Aero Timber, Lake Logging, Industrial Timber Mills, Victoria Lumber and Manufacturing, Alberni Pacific Lumber and several other major operations, held up pending the outcome of the Queen Charlotte Islands case, would now proceed with new impetus.⁶⁷ Under the terms of the ICA Act, and despite the three month membership provision, the IWA pressed steadily forward with its certification drive.⁶⁸ By early August, the union could boast of provincial certification in 28 different operations affecting 14 companies including Lake Logging, VLM, Hammond Cedar, Shawnigan Lake Lumber, Hillcrest Lumber, Mohawk

Lumber, Pacific Mills, Kelley Logging and J.R. Morgan.⁶⁹ That Harper's decision quite deliberately incorporated the principle of union recognition found in the ICA Act was freely admitted by the Queen Charlotte Islands operators in their statement on the award. They did not take issue with that principle, and would comply with their legal bargaining obligations as they saw them, but continued to insist they would not sign working agreements with the IWA under its current leadership.⁷⁰

Two days after the Harper award was handed down, the IWA took its campaign for union recognition to the national stage. Nigel Morgan flew to Ottawa to present the union brief, prepared by the PCLB, to the NWLB (McTague) Commission on Labour Relations and Wage Conditions in Canada, and to meet with federal labour officials regarding the completion of a union agreement on the Queen Charlotte Islands.⁷¹ In his presentation to the NWLB, Morgan cited the IWA's performance as an example of responsible trade unionism in action. "Destructive" strikes of coal and metal miners, auto and steel workers were being provoked, the union's spokesman claimed, by anti-union employers. The Queen Charlotte Islands employers were taking advantage of the IWA's desire to avoid a strike to undermine the union's efforts at industrial peace through collective bargaining. He noted in particular the withdrawal of previously enjoyed employee rights in all Queen Charlotte Islands operations after IWA negotiators became involved. District One, Morgan estimated, had between 9000 and 10,000 members, but only one union agreement. With certifications increasing and negotiations under way in 29 different operations, the employers' refusal to sign with the union was creating a "serious crisis" in the industry. While British Columbia's new ICA Act had gone some distance in dealing with the problem, Morgan once again urged that "Canada needs a Wagner Act"—the aero spruce war industry being a case in point: "We have a peculiar situation in our industry and we cannot get anything at all. We hate to have a knock-down-and-drag-out fight. In Queen Charlotte Islands the operators came right out and said they would not sign anything, right in the face of the Arbitration Board."⁷²

On his return from Ottawa, Morgan extolled the work of the McTague Commission for carrying out a great national service in studying the grievances of labour, and predicted improved labour legislation at the next sitting of parliament.⁷³ With the authority of the ICA Act and the Harper award behind them, with national labour legislation pending and with several certifications in hand, IWA leaders felt a breakthrough was imminent. A victory on the Queen Charlotte Islands would put a large crack in the open shop policy of the Association operators, and perhaps open the way for the federal Liberals to enact a national code. All this they hoped to accomplish without striking and by working within the confines of the federal conciliation machinery. But the determination of events was not entirely in the hands of District One leaders.

By June 1943, the Queen Charlotte Islands dispute had been going on for well over a year. Through the course of the previous winter and spring, under the Aero Timber agreements, the workforce had been somewhat stabilized and consolidated. Sub-local organizations had formed in most camps resulting in improved bunkhouses, dry houses, new mattresses and other material improvements. As a result of this work, the membership as a whole began to take a keener interest in union affairs. Rank-and-file restlessness was threatening to take the initiative for militant action away from Morgan and Pritchett unless they acted quickly. At the semi-annual conference of local 1-71 in early July, delegates threatened to conduct a strike vote on the Queen Charlotte Islands if the operators failed to comply with the majority conciliation board award.⁷⁴

From the point of view of the Association operators, the Queen Charlotte Islands dispute, while not directly subject to the amended ICA Act, was their first clear opportunity to challenge its new principles. In their public statements they made certain to draw a clear connection between the provisions of the new provincial law and the dispute. The organized employers would take on the IWA in an area under the still relatively safe jurisdiction of federal law, where collective bargaining policy remained for the moment ill-defined, yet tie the resolution of the dispute to the new ICA Act. A victory over the IWA

on the Queen Charlotte Islands would weaken the authority of the provincial statute as it applied to various arbitrations then pending or planned by the IWA, as well as help undermine the passage of any new federal code based on similar principles. A loss would mean opening the gates to industry-wide bargaining under provincial jurisdiction or some new federal code. But the operators, too, hoped to settle the matter without resort to a costly and unpopular work stoppage.

V

Following the release of the Harper Award, George Currie, federal labour relations officer based in British Columbia, held three meetings with the two sides. Agreement was reached on the terms of a collective agreement. Though they continued to claim they recognized the IWA as bargaining agent, the operators balked at signing a joint agreement with the union. This position was encouraged by Currie as a possible basis for settlement. R.V. Stuart, in an attempt to link the Queen Charlotte Islands dispute to loopholes in the provincial labour code, announced that the reason the operators would not sign a contract with the IWA was that the union had not actually been certified by the provincial department of labour, in all the camps involved, under the new provisions of the ICA Act. Nigel Morgan quite correctly responded that when the federal conciliation board had been set up a year previous, the IWA had been required to provide proof to the federal Department of Labour that it represented the majority of workers. Provincial certification had nothing to do with acceptance of the Harper award, but was merely a smokescreen to obscure the fact that the dispute had been going on for over two years. Furthermore, Morgan noted that prolonged negotiations, stalling, and the operators' refusal to sign an agreement, were aggravating the labour turnover problem on the Queen Charlotte Islands and making it more difficult for the union to comply with the three month membership provision in the certification process.⁷⁵

At the mid-summer conference of District One on 4 July, after a glowing summary of recent organizational gains by the officers, a resolution on union recognition was passed asking the membership to prepare to take drastic action to enforce the Harper decision. On 15 July after a final attempt by Currie, local 1-71 announced it was applying to the federal department for a strike vote.⁷⁶ District and local leaders were reluctant to engage in a strike on the Queen Charlotte Islands. Many of them, as communists or fellow travellers, agreed in principle with official CIO adherence to the no-strike pledge (just then under attack by militants within the American labour movement).⁷⁷ In addition, much of District One's case in the Queen Charlotte Islands dispute, and for a national labour code, rested on somewhat questionable assertions of its largely strike-free record in British Columbia since 1939, despite provocations by the operators in the Charlottes and elsewhere.⁷⁸ A strike in a critical war industry over union recognition at this point would be a gamble for the IWA. Both the employers and the federal government knew that. Currie, to whom the application for a vote was referred, gave the IWA some extra time by noting publicly the difficulty of conducting a proper vote in the isolated northern camps of the Queen Charlottes.⁷⁹

Meanwhile, at a special meeting in Vancouver on 20 July 1943, 42 coast operators, allegedly representing 75 percent of the province's forest industry drafted a wire to Humphrey Mitchell in support of the Queen Charlotte Islands operators. The text of the wire and a list of the companies involved appeared in the Vancouver papers on 21 July 1943. The companies' proposal, the wire proclaimed, offered a sound practical plan for collective bargaining in the forest industry of British Columbia, and would ensure the continuation of the peaceful conditions that had thus far prevailed. The wire was signed by almost all the major coastal operators, most of whom were then individually facing a concerted IWA drive for certification and signed agreement under the provincial statute.⁸⁰

To counter the new offensive of the coastal operators organized under the umbrella of Stuart Research Service, the IWA sent a plea to Canadian trade unionists across the country. The trade union movement, the letter said, was faced with a serious challenge

resulting from the expressed refusal of 42 of the largest logging and mill operators to bargain collectively and conclude an agreement in accordance with PC 2685 and the ICA Act. Trade unionists were asked to protest this refusal to both federal and provincial departments of labour.⁸¹ A broad appeal for public support appeared in newspaper ads under the IWA crest appealing for resolutions, telegrams and letters to be sent to Humphrey Mitchell demanding the enforcement of collective bargaining principles in order to forestall the destructive strike being provoked by the Queen Charlotte Islands operators, with the backing of the 42.⁸² In late August, TLC president Percy Bengough and Aaron Mosher of the CCL both made representations to federal officials on behalf of the woodworkers union.⁸³

During the last part of August, Currie once again intervened to try to facilitate a settlement. Meetings took place with R.V. Stuart and Aero Timber President Filberg representing the companies, and the IWA. But with over a month having elapsed since the formal strike vote request, the workers in the Queen Charlotte Islands camps were growing perturbed, perhaps as much with the District officers as with the federal officials. The District Executive set an 8 September deadline for federal action on the vote, while Morgan tried to calm his membership with assurances that the federal department was making every effort to settle the dispute and avoid having to take a strike vote. In case a vote became necessary, the District would offer the use of the union boat in order for federal officials to reach the camps.⁸⁴

Based on his mediation efforts, Currie drafted a proposed memorandum of agreement for the two parties at the beginning of September. It included a union agreement covering the present pay scale for one more year, free transportation, overtime pay and labour-management committees. The operators' counter-proposal accepted Currie's memo, including recognition of the union as bargaining agent, but declined a "bi-lateral agreement" with the IWA which, they said, would only lead to further disputes. The IWA, of course, rejected this offer, and Pritchett was poised to fly to Ottawa within days if no strike vote

assurance was forthcoming. Because Deputy Minister of Labour, A. McNamara, was anxious to avoid a supervised vote which would in effect provide the government's official authorization to proceed with a work stoppage in a vital war industry, he quickly intervened by asking the companies to continue discussions with Currie.⁸⁵

The companies apparently had no intention of cooperating. In a new round of talks, they reintroduced, in a slightly revised form, a demand made during the July discussions designed, once again, to use the provisions of the ICA Act to undermine the union's position on the Queen Charlotte Islands. They wanted a new majority vote of employees, certified by the provincial Department of Labour, to determine the bargaining agency before they would agree to union recognition. Under the provisions of the Act, they would continue to recognize the bargaining agent only so long as it remained certified. As Nigel Morgan quickly pointed out, a new vote of employees could be called for by the employer every six months, according to the Act. A sudden influx of new members, or a camp closure could quickly terminate the bargaining relationship with the union, a situation hardly conducive to industrial stability.⁸⁶

This new proposal was clearly not aimed at bringing a settlement. The companies appeared determined to force the IWA into the position of having to conduct a strike vote. If the operators could stall long enough, winter curtailment of operations, and the normal fluctuation of crews might take the steam out of the union drive. The District Executive, of course, had no intention of complying with a provincial certification vote on the Queen Charlotte Islands as a pre-condition to a settlement, when the current dispute technically fell under federal jurisdiction, and bargaining agent status was clearly established. The membership would never have tolerated such a move, nor was the six month revote clause in the interests of the IWA in an area of still relatively high turnover. The next vote on the Queen Charlotte Islands would be a strike vote, plain and simple, whether supervised by the department or not.

Following the operators' new proposal, and with workers at Pacific Mills' camp already gearing up for a strike vote of their own, the District set the vote for 30 September, to be conducted by the sub-locals in the camps. The strike would commence the following day. Rumours had circulated about the possible appointment of an Industrial Disputes Investigation Commissioner. But Morgan feared he could not offer a mere possibility of further government intervention to the men as an alternative to the action they were already taking.⁸⁷

When Mitchell finally appointed Justice S.E. Richards of Winnipeg as Commissioner to investigate the dispute under PC 4020, it was too late to call off the vote. Nevertheless, the District and local executives requested the loggers to postpone strike action for one week, to 8 October. Any delay beyond that was impossible. On 1 October loggers in all Queen Charlotte Islands camps involved in the dispute voted firmly in favour of striking.⁸⁸

By this time industrial relations battles underway at several individual coast operations were becoming linked together. Between 20 and 30 arbitration board applications were on hold at the provincial department of labour awaiting the outcome on the Queen Charlotte Islands.⁸⁹ In those that were proceeding, the operators acted in concert with the Queen Charlotte Islands companies, attacking the IWA war record, its illegal strike at Lake Cowichan in 1941, and the political affiliation of its leaders who were viewed as outside agitators. In the Lake Logging hearings, the union was able to cite the Harper award as counter-argument. Farris, the company attorney, refused to comment but instead used Stuart's tactics, charging that union witnesses had confused their desire for collective bargaining with their desire for a union agreement. No valid dispute existed between the company and its employees, he pleaded. It was a union dispute being used by the union to strengthen its authority with its members, and to induce others to join.⁹⁰

The Lake Log majority award handed down on 1 October, took one more tortuous and incremental step toward legitimation of the IWA at Lake Cowichan. The agreement

would be between the company and its employees acting through their legally certified bargaining agency, local 1-80. It would be signed by the president and secretary of local 1-80 for the employees of Lake Log. For all intents and purposes there was little difference between the majority award and a union agreement. Employee response was favourable. The union viewed it as a union agreement. R.V. Stuart, however, with the Queen Charlotte Islands dispute in mind, commented that the award recommended an agreement with the employee, not the union.⁹¹

On Wednesday, 6 October, two days before the strike deadline, and without District or local authorization, 90 loggers at the Skedans Bay sub-local of Kelley Logging ceased work in an attempt to put pressure on the negotiations. Nigel Morgan admitted to the press that the walkout did not have District authorization, but explained that since the men had been waiting two years there was not much he could do about it. If nothing came from Thursday's meetings with Justice Richards that he could recommend to the men, the District officers would have to authorize the strike action agreed to already.⁹²

The day prior to the strike deadline, British Columbia's trade union movement took out large half-page advertisements in all the Vancouver dailies to prepare the public and the trade union rank-and-file for the impending showdown on the Queen Charlotte Islands. Asking the rhetorical question "Industrial Democracy or Industrial Feudalism, which is it to be?" the advertisement was signed by all the labour councils affiliated with both congresses, and by representatives from most of the province's major trade unions including the Street Railway Employees, the Fishermen, Boilermakers, Mine Mill, Shipwrights, Shipyard Workers, United Mine Workers, Cannery Workers, Fire Fighters, Hotel and Restaurant Employees, Moulders and Foundry Workers, Steel Workers and Aeronautical Mechanics. The unions denounced the current open shop drive of the BCLA and the British Columbia Lumber Manufacturers' Association, and the company union campaign of the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Association and others, which threatened to rob labour of the rights for which the present war was being waged. Labour

had accepted its wartime responsibilities in various ways, including restraint in using the strike weapon, the message read. The powerful industry associations on the other hand were openly defying the intent and spirit of provincial and dominion labour legislation, and encouraging the operators on the Queen Charlotte Islands to refuse to sign a union agreement. These so-called dollar patriots "running the vital aeroplane spruce industry, encouraged and abetted by signed statements of 42 other lumber operators," had now gone so far as to suggest a lock-out of their employees. "What of post-war policy?" the unions demanded. Were soldiers to return from battle to be thrown on the labour market at the mercy of open shop employers and company unions? Would "industrial democracy" be denied to them too? Would the lumber barons continue "to dominate...the political life of this province, in defiance of the laws of the country?" How much longer, as in the Queen Charlotte Islands dispute and numerous others, would the government of the province "allow the labour laws to be interpreted so as to defeat every labour act passed in the legislature?" How much longer would the "federal government continue to permit employers to refuse to bargain collectively in good faith and deny to labour its democratic right?" The ad concluded with an appeal to the general public of British Columbia on behalf of 30,000 workers employed in "our great basic industry—lumber."⁹³

On 8 October negotiations broke off. By the following day eight Queen Charlotte Islands camps were shut down with the walkout of over 500 loggers.⁹⁴ For some time, the prolonged process of negotiation, conciliation and investigation had provided a legal cover for the District Council's reluctance to strike during wartime. Morgan and Pritchett had long been committed to working within the industrial relations apparatus as the surest means of gaining legitimation for their union. But by the fall of 1943, with so many factors in their favour, winter approaching, and the local membership ready to seize the initiative, it was no time to adhere to the letter of the law. The strike was authorized finally on the basis of the union's own vote; a confrontation with the combined might of the coastal industry on the issue of union recognition. To reinforce that position, Morgan

notified a meeting of Vancouver Labour Council delegates that several hundred Lake Cowichan employees might also be on strike within a week.⁹⁵

Once the strike was underway, a strike vote was also conducted amongst the 1000 employees in the Aero Timber camps prior to application for a federal conciliation board in that dispute. Fifteen thousand dollars was quickly pledged to the Queen Charlotte Islands strike fund by IWA locals and other trade unions, including \$7000 from the Lake Logging sub-local. On 15 October it too voted 755 to 5 to strike in support of its own recent arbitration award, and in support of the broad demand for union recognition across the industry.⁹⁶

The Queen Charlotte Islands operators stepped up their own public relations effort with a newspaper advertisement claiming the strike was unnecessary, given their acceptance of union recognition, and illegal, since it came before a government supervised vote. The claim of illegality was weak, given government procrastination, as was the position of the operators in general.⁹⁷ A Vancouver Province editorial found that the operators did not have a good case in denying the union its legal rights in view of the Harper recommendation and the harm being done to an essential war industry.⁹⁸ Elmore Philpott's column in the Sun of 16 October went even further. The workers had been on strike for only two weeks, Philpott wrote, trying to break the two-year strike of the "reactionary" bosses against labour's legitimate rights. The Queen Charlotte Islands work stoppage was the most glaring example of the need for a labour code in Canada, something for which the Liberal rank-and-file were now clamouring, in order to hold the King government's declining popularity. The lack of such a code was the real root of over 90 percent of what were miscalled "labour" troubles in Canada, according to the Sun writer.⁹⁹

With support from the trade union movement as a whole, other IWA locals, and the establishment press, morale amongst the loggers remained high. Most of them stayed in the camps where they paid their usual charge for room and board, and had normal access to the company stores. Strike committees operated in each camp, and in at least one case,

according to the Lumber Worker, began a special military training programme to keep "the boys" busy.¹⁰⁰

Pressure on the Queen Charlotte Islands operators from the labour movement and a determined workforce was compounded by economic concerns over disruptions to production, not so much of aero spruce timber, but of pulpwood. The crown-owned Aero Timber Company itself was the main producer of logs for the aircraft industry, and its operations were still unaffected by the strike.¹⁰¹ Of the total of 6 million board feet of lost production in the Kelley and Pacific Mills logging operations during the strike, an estimated 2.8 million would have gone to aircraft production, the remainder to pulp. No precise figures were available for J.R. Morgan's operation but it sold all its hemlock and low grade spruce to the Ocean Falls mill, and only its high grade spruce to Sitka Spruce Lumber.¹⁰² Their role as important suppliers for the two highly capitalized pulp mills at Powell River and Ocean Falls, where stable labour relations were crucial to continuous production, prevented Kelley and Pacific Mills from engaging in a prolonged battle with the IWA.

In a 1945 NWLB appeal against a RWLB wage rollback for Queen Charlotte Islands loggers, Pacific Mills, Kelley and J.R. Morgan companies provided interesting information concerning their linkages with the pulp industry which give a good indication of the situation that applied in 1943. The Pacific Mills plant at Ocean Falls, employing 1200 workers, drew 70 percent of its log supply from the Queen Charlotte limits. Powell River, with 1400 employees, relied on Queen Charlotte Islands logging for all of its spruce logs and over 25 percent of its entire supply. Its newsprint operations could not continue without the supply of spruce from the Islands. In both cases, the companies alleged that compliance with the federal government's programme of increased spruce lumber production had seriously curtailed development of alternative logging holdings, making their operations rigidly dependent on supplies from the Queen Charlottes. A shutdown, particularly at isolated Ocean Falls where alternative employment was not easily obtainable nearby, would have meant possible further disruption after a return to work in replacing

dispersed mill hands. Moreover, the company's two converting plants in Vancouver which produced boxes, food packaging and shipping materials for a wide range of industries, were both totally supplied by materials from Ocean Falls.¹⁰³

The Queen Charlotte Islands companies, with the assistance of Stuart Research and the clout of the big Association operators behind them, had hoped to beat back the IWA without a strike through their manipulation of the federal and provincial industrial relations machinery. The well-publicized Kirkland Lake dispute had demonstrated clearly to Stuart the advantages of the wartime regime of compulsory conciliation in prolonging the negotiation process.¹⁰⁴ Once a strike was called, given the economic rigidity of the pulp companies, the continuing problem of attracting workers, lack of public support for the industry's bargaining position, and mounting political pressure for a national labour code, the Queen Charlotte Islands operators clearly had no chance of prevailing. By October 1943, it had become evident to the pulp companies that unionization had finally come to the logging industry, as it had to their mill operations during the 1930s. There was more to be lost through continued resistance than from signing a collective agreement which might bring a greater measure of industrial stability, at least for the duration of the war. Stanton's point made before the conciliation board had been quite correct—economic self-interest would, if immediate circumstances dictated, override the employers' anti-union sentiments.

The strike was relatively uneventful and ended quickly on 23 October. Kelley Logging, the Powell River subsidiary, was the first to capitulate. Thomas Kelley finally gave an ultimatum to the other companies—either sign a joint agreement or he would break ranks, a position which was allegedly conveyed to District One leaders via the Boilermakers' chief, Bill White. J.R. Morgan, with no direct corporate links to the pulp companies, was, according to union lawyer Stanton, "the hold-out artist."¹⁰⁵ The final one-year-agreement, worked out with assistance from Currie and Richards, and signed by all three companies, was based squarely on the Harper award, with one minor concession to the employers. The union, as party to the agreement, was recognized as bargaining

agent in all camps where it was certified by the provincial Department of Labour. In addition, the contract included seniority, leave of absence provisions, travel rebates, grievance procedure, binding arbitration of all unsettled disputes, joint production and safety committees. The current wage scale was maintained with the companies agreeing to join the union in any request to the RWLB for continuation of the one-third war bonus.¹⁰⁶ As part of the settlement, Pritchett, upon the request of Richards, signed a separate letter of agreement pledging the IWA to no strikes in the Queen Charlotte Islands operations for the duration of the war.¹⁰⁷ This added assurance of industrial stability in the pulp and aero timber sector was no doubt important sugar coating to the bitter pill of recognizing the IWA as bargaining agent. Spokesmen R.V. Stuart stated in his press release that the employers agreed to sign realizing the vital danger to the war effort was more important than their own private interest.¹⁰⁸

The IWA victory on the Queen Charlotte Islands opened the door to industry-wide bargaining rights. The Vancouver Sun, editorializing on the settlement, noted that it would go a long way to fixing a policy of labour relations in the lumber industry for the duration of the war, recognizing the right of workers to make collective agreements. The Sun predicted legislation to that effect at the coming session of parliament, but warned that industrialists would then have the right to demand from organized labour "more responsibility towards the job and toward industry generally."¹⁰⁹ The same day, Lake Logging Company signed a union agreement based on the majority arbitration board award.¹¹⁰

During the first week of November, the certification of local 1-71 as bargaining agent for 850 loggers in the nine camps of Aero Timber Products was quickly followed by a full union agreement, similar to that signed with the other Queen Charlotte Islands operators.¹¹¹ The provincial Department of Labour, that same week, asked the union if it would be willing to withhold the constitution of arbitration boards in the more than twenty disputes pending. The department had reason to believe, it wrote in its letter to District

officials, "that in view of the precedent established, the disputant parties would appreciate the opportunity of further negotiation with a view to settlement."¹¹²

During the final two months of 1943, in accordance with that understanding, Stuart Research entered into negotiation with District One officials for a blanket coastal agreement. A settlement was announced in December which covered 23 camps and mills and 8000 workers, including the operations of Bloedel, Canadian Western, Industrial Timber Mills, Alberni Pacific Lumber, Victoria Lumber and Manufacturing, Comox Logging and Railway and Mohawk Lumber. This first industry-wide agreement also provided for the automatic inclusion of additional bargaining units as the union brought them under its certification.¹¹³

IV

Following the signing of a coast-wide master contract, and with a federal "labour code" more or less assured, the District met in convention in January 1944, and for the first time formally endorsed the International IWA and CIO no-strike pledge for the duration of the war.¹¹⁴ There may have been inchoate rumblings of opposition amongst the rank-and-file which never surfaced at these gatherings. In several American CIO unions such as the United Rubber Workers and the UAW, rank-and-file opposition to the no-strike pledge had coalesced by 1944 in the form of strong debate, factionalism and a rising tide of work stoppages and wild cat strikes.¹¹⁵ No such disruptions occurred in District One of the IWA in part because of the organizational control exerted by the District Council and loyal local leadership. But the reasons go deeper than that.

Whereas the CIO had adopted its no-strike policy early in the war, District One had recently waged a successful strike resulting in a master agreement. In the United States, by 1944, the CIO strategy of accommodation with Roosevelt and the NLRB was breaking down under a determined right-wing assault from the business community. As the CIO's support for accommodation began to slip, its communist union leaders stood out all the

more starkly as strident "no strikers," easy targets for right-wing unionists such as those on the IWA International Board.¹¹⁶ In Canada, the authority of the King government with both labour and business had been recently consolidated with the implementation of PC 1003, the restructuring of the NWLB and the passage of wage-freeze order PC 9384. The CCL, for the first time, in the summer of 1944, gave conditional support to the no-strike pledge undertaken by many of its large affiliates. As its official organ, the Canadian Unionist in an editorial titled "No Strikes for the Duration," noted:

The adoption of the Labour Code by Order-in-Council P.C. 1003, and the establishment of the National War Labour Board, have considerably facilitated the settlement of disputes by providing machinery for the determination of bargaining agents, and also to expedite collective bargaining. In the circumstances, the necessity for using the strike weapon has been minimized to a considerable extent, and much more use might be made of the principle of arbitration...During this final period of the struggle, both employers and workers might reasonably be asked to make whatever concessions are necessary for maximum production.¹¹⁷

Canadian circumstances surrounding the policy of labour peace were quite different from those in the United States in 1944 and helped make its adoption in District One not terribly controversial even amongst loyal supporters of the CCF-dominated Congress. Moreover, as part of the union's strategy of consolidation after achieving the plateau of a master agreement, such a policy made eminent sense within the restricted wartime terrain of collective bargaining.

Chapter Five

Consolidation

The signing of a rudimentary industry-wide contract in IWA District One covering 8-10,000 workers in most of the larger operations on the coast was an achievement of major significance in the history of British Columbia labour. Yet it still remained to bring all those employees into the union, extend the contract throughout coastal operations, and strengthen its terms through negotiation before beginning the arduous task of organizing the largely untouched industry of the interior.

Recognition had been won, but full legitimacy required the consolidation of the union's bargaining agency status not only with the employers, but amongst the woodworkers themselves. Having established a working "industrial relationship" with Stuart Research, the union would now set about to fashion a more "mature" if not bureaucratic disposition towards collective bargaining and contract administration out of the "do-or-die" militancy of the previous years. Again, the discrete parameters of the trade union agenda, rather than Party policy would determine industrial tactics.

The new Wartime Labour Relations Regulations (P.C. 1003),¹ a contractual ban on strikes during the life of an agreement, government regulation of wage settlements, together with the dynamics of the union's own organizational agenda served as a more certain check on militancy in 1944-45 than did the LPP's "National Front for Victory" policy, or pious union pledges to refrain from striking. Furthermore, if militancy was on the back burner, it had more to do with events in the British Columbia woods than with the meeting of Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin at Teheran, and the subsequent policy of post-war accommodation between capitalism and socialism concocted by CPUSA leader Earl Browder, and applauded by Tim Buck.

Though neither the LPP's "collaboration" with King's Liberals nor "Browderism" determined the District agenda during 1944-45, they did provide a comfortable political climate within which union officials could pursue their programme of consolidation without

many contradictions. At the same time there is little evidence that Pritchett or others in the District leadership believed in Browder's vision of post-Teheran harmony in world affairs. It was not until April 1945 that the issue officially came before the District when British Columbia LPP leader Fergus McKean addressed the union executive on the Browderist post-war world perspective for labour under monopoly capitalism. That same month, however, French Communist leader, Jacques Duclos, with the backing of Moscow, attacked the American party and Browder for holding similar views. By July, Browderism was a dead letter in both the United States and Canada. In September, Nigel Morgan replaced McKean as British Columbia leader of the LPP after the latter's opportunistic repudiation of Browder and criticism of Buck. The provincial party quickly lined up behind Buck's new anti-Anglo-American imperialism salvos.²

Quite distinct from this political history, but running parallel to it, District One carried forward its programme of consolidation in preparation for a resumption of a more militant class struggle when conditions favoured it.

I

PC 1003, which in April 1944 replaced the ICA Act in British Columbia for the duration of the war, taken together with the federal wage-control structure, comprised the institutional framework for the IWA's policy of consolidation. PC 1003 went further than the ICA Act in explicitly outlawing all work stoppages during the course of an agreement, and directed all disputes through a grievance/arbitration procedure which was mandatory in every agreement. On the other hand, it relieved the IWA of the provincial Act's onerous three-month membership clause, thus opening up the possibility of rapid certification of several large operations, especially in the transient logging sector. The Lumber Worker estimated that PC 1003 made possible the immediate inclusion of an additional 4000 members.³ In March, before the federal order took effect, local 1-85 had already announced the certification of several BSW operations, including the mill at Port Alberni,

two Franklin River camps, and Camp 9 at Great Central Lake, possibly the largest certification ever made in British Columbia according to the local paper the Shop Steward. It noted that the difficulties in getting a majority with three months standing had been tremendous due to a large turnover, and apathy. Congratulations were given to sub-local officers and job stewards for their determination in carrying through the sign-up.⁴ Now, with PC 1003, the work of local officials would be that much easier, and certifications much more instantaneous following an initial membership drive.

Indeed, there was still much organizing to be done. At best, the initial master agreement covered one in three woodworkers in the province, and not even all those were members. A series of organizers' conferences was held in March, April and May of 1944 to review progress and adopt a strategy for the ensuing season. At Great Central Lake there were still several camps to be completed. Local 1-217, the Vancouver mill local, reported that three more mills were ready for certification, in addition to the existing five, as soon as PC 1003 took effect, though organization at 20 more mills had still to be started. With 40 operations in its jurisdiction in March 1944, the local held a membership of approximately 1000 out of an estimated potential of 4000. One of the main problems cited was difficulty in talking to the Chinese.⁵ The latter were concentrated particularly heavily in the shingle sector in Victoria and the lower mainland, but were also scattered throughout the milling industry. In May 1944, approximately one-half of 1400 shingle workers in the Vancouver area were organized. That month the District employed a special Chinese organizer, Roy Mah. The Chinese were by no means all anti-union, but apathy, problems in communication, and the "Tyee" system impeded membership consolidation at many mills. In Victoria, Mah reported between 200 and 300 Chinese members in the local. Of 60 employed at APL's still uncertified Great Central Lake mill, 30 were union members, and Mah hoped to sign the remainder. He emphasized the need for a Chinese-language bulletin on union activity, and for the union to address the problem of freeing the Chinese from the "Tyee" system which was the main issue amongst these workers.⁶

Pritchett reported a dues-paying membership in February of 10,735, though he estimated a total of 14,000 including those in arrears. As organization of the Courtenay-Campbell River area was fairly complete, organizer Don Barbour was moved to Vancouver as manager of the IWA hiring hall in an attempt to stimulate some interest amongst workers in union hiring.⁷ In the Vancouver logging local, 1-71, as of March 1944 Dalskog reported 2000 workers still to be organized. By May, with PC 1003 in effect in British Columbia, the situation was rapidly improving. Local 1-71 reported 15 new certifications, though many were for small non-association camps. At the same time, Morgan reported to the District executive a total of 83 operations under the master agreement, covering 15,112 employees, up by almost 5000 since December 1943.⁸ In general, the union strategy was to concentrate its still limited resources on the coast before looking to the interior, where, at any rate, a survey of the workforce, wage scales and conditions would have to be carried out prior to the start of intensive organizational work.⁹

The coast master agreement expired on 1 December 1944. In the meantime, the union's task was to bring as many new certifications under the contract as possible prior to its renegotiation. Because, under PC 1003, agreements could not be signed for a period of less than one year, the District executive voted to approach R.V. Stuart with a request for joint action to amend the order to comply with the requirements of the industry-wide agreement so that a uniform termination date could be obtained.¹⁰ At the same executive meeting it was decided to send international organizers McCuish and Greenall in to local 1-367 in the Fraser Valley where the union had a base of 750 currently organized. They were to conduct an all-out campaign to complete the organization of the remaining 1800 workers in that territory, and to call an area conference of representatives from all camps and mills to establish the most effective machinery for union work.¹¹ Within days, however, Greenall, a member of the LPP, had been fired by the International Director of Organization, George Brown, following investigation of charges made by George Mitchell, Stewart Alsbury and others in the anti-left opposition that Greenall had interfered in a local election by accusing

one of the candidates on the "white bloc" slate of being a "scab."¹² Organizing continued apace throughout the spring and summer months, despite continued harassment from the international officers.¹³ By July, local 1-71 announced itself the largest local in the International. Plans were afoot to send an organizer into the interior to begin a local in the Cranbrook area.¹⁴

Of course, not all was progress. In its first quarter with a permanent manager, the union hiring hall still managed to despatch only 178 men, as loggers continued to seek employment through the established channels.¹⁵ At the newly certified Mission Sawmill Co. in local 1-367, the crew voted to accept a wage rate below the War Labour Board ceiling.¹⁶ Nevertheless, at the year's second quarterly meeting in July, Pritchett was able to report well over 100 signed union agreements covering 20,000 woodworkers, and a gain of 1800 paid-up members in three months. Four recently appointed international organizers for the Fraser Valley, the interior, the Queen Charlottes and for the Chinese, brought the total organizational staff on the International payroll to eight. Meanwhile, at a meeting with R.V. Stuart and the federal minister of labour, with approximately 60 more operations in the process of being certified, agreement was reached on a uniform contract date for all contracts signed under the master agreement of 1 December. The District Board began planning for a contract conference in preparation for the 1945 negotiations.¹⁷ By September, the month of the proposed negotiation conference, reports from two of the newly appointed organizers were mixed. In the new Cranbrook local, 1-405 Langmead reported that the wage situation was chaotic. Any attempt to standardize rates through the RWLB would likely have to wait until district-wide negotiations were undertaken. Roy Mah, on the other hand, reported great success with an estimated 80 percent of the 2000 Chinese working in the coast industry organized. Three Chinese-language issues of the Lumber Worker had helped Mah in his efforts, particularly in locals 1-357 and 1-217. In the latter a Chinese member was elected to the executive. At Great Central Lake, a Chinese

shop steward was commended for his work amongst the Chinese employees in the Alberni area.¹⁸

During the two or three years prior to recognition, the District, with the assistance of the Pacific Coast Labour Bureau, had brought several cases of wage disparities between similar operations in close geographical proximity and employing similar job classifications to the war labour boards.¹⁹ The union had taken up these cases as part of its battle to win bargaining agency status and formal union recognition in particular plants and camps. After the attainment of the first master agreement, the District continued to address the problem of an industry-wide wage standard with respect to particular categories of workers, most notably women.

One important case concerned Hammond Cedar Company, one of the first mills certified under the 1943 ICA Act amendments, but a hold-out from the master agreement. Industrial Timber Mills at Youbou, on Vancouver Island, under the same ownership and management as the Hammond mill, was covered by the agreement.²⁰ Before signing with Hammond, the union was intent on enforcing wage rates comparable to those prevailing at Youbou. Hammond argued that despite common management the comparison was not valid between two different mills in different locales, the one (Youbou) cutting fir, the other cutting cedar.²¹ In December 1943 the union made application to the RWLB for wage increases for most of the occupational classifications at this mainland lumber and shingle mill of 420 employees and explicitly requested elimination of separate categories and wage rates for the 50 female workers. On 31 January 1944 the RWLB granted increases acceptable to the union and gave recognition to the principle of equal pay for equal work. Upon appeal from the company for reconsideration, the RWLB, on 13 March, upheld its original finding and direction, but later that month granted leave to the company to appeal to the national board. The NWLB lowered most of the basic wage rates under dispute so they were marginally below those at Youbou, but still considerably higher than what had prevailed prior to December 1943. The most important point of difference between the

company and the union concerned rates paid to female workers.²² On this issue the IWA scored an important victory for women employed at Hammond, and in the coast lumber industry in general. The Board found the company's evidence that female labour was less productive than male "insufficient and rather inconclusive" and awarded the women employees, who were for the most part engaged in common labouring jobs, the standard base rate of 65 cents after 12 months of employment, increasing in five-cent increments every four months from a starting point of 50 cents. This rate was a considerable improvement over the 40-cent starting rate rising to a ceiling of 55 cents after three months being offered by the company.²³ Despite the national board's reduction of the RWLB award, the union considered it had won a significant victory in principle, reenforcing the precedent already established by the NWLB in a case between UE and Welland Chemical Company. The award applied to the lumber industry the standard practice for compensating female wartime workers in the shipyards, aircraft industry and on the railroads.²⁴ Coming just prior to the 1945 District-wide negotiations, the decision of the NWLB provided an important benchmark for the negotiation of rates in mills employing female labour.²⁵ Hammond Cedar finally signed an agreement with local 1-367 in June 1945, eighteen months after the initial appeal to the RWLB.²⁶

In the months prior to the opening of negotiations, in addition to the Hammond case, stabilization of wages and adjustment of category rates were concerns in other operations as well. Train crews, slowly being displaced by truck logging as operators moved onto steeper grades and more inaccessible stands, were still an important component in the workforce of most of the major logging operations.²⁷ Historically, trainmen were at work longer hours than the logging crews which they transported to and from camp. A 10-hour day was customary, with no overtime provision. The union claimed that though trainmen were trained and licensed tradesmen with increasingly heavy responsibilities, their hourly wage rates had fallen distinctly behind those of logging crews. The union wanted trainmen's work to be based on a standard eight hour day, with appropriate overtime and

lunch-breaks, and an hourly rate set equivalent to that of the highly paid rigging crews.²⁸ From the Port Alberni local, 1-85, the District negotiating committee received demands from stationary engineers for proper recognition of the skill and qualifications necessary to attain a second-class ticket, in the form of an hourly increase of more than 25 percent.²⁹ Local 1-85 also recommended wage adjustments for eleven other substandard categories in Port Alberni's mills, based on the skill, responsibility or hazard attached to specific jobs such as carriage setters, electricians, green chain pull-off, first-aid attendant and tail sawyer.³⁰ These particular concerns were among a whole series of issues and demands that were grappled with by delegates from the eight British Columbia locals at the District Negotiations Conference held in Nanaimo in September 1944.

Some of the events of the first several months following the signing of the first industry agreement have been recounted in detail to demonstrate that the District leaders were concerned with more than just victory over fascism in this period. Speeches and resolutions on "production for victory" and solidarity with the cause of the United Nations were saved for the convention floor. Executive and quarterly council meetings were taken up with the more mundane business of the hiring hall, wage ceilings, negotiations with the war labour boards, worrying about sub-contractors and the like. In general, the business of the union was union business. That was even the case in the area of political action.

Following through with the 1944 convention resolution, the District sought to establish political action committees in each local and sub-local in order to agitate for particular legislative gains of significance to workers, and to press for a policy of supporting candidates of any party best representative of trade union interests. The latter came in response to the failure of negotiations with the British Columbia section of the CCF for a unity party of progressive labour and farmer organizations.³¹ In particular, the District Political Action Committee agitated for changes to the labour code, wartime wage controls, and to the master and servants act so as to permit check-off of dues; for unemployment insurance coverage for loggers, health insurance, old-age pensions,

installment tax payments; as well as the more general safeguarding of labour's right to organize, strike, picket and bargain collectively. The District Board affirmed the right of all union members to join any lawful political party and participate to the extent of accepting nomination for office. During 1944 political action committees were established in each of the eight local unions and in several sub-locals. The District undertook to send out political action bulletins on a regular basis dealing with such subjects as the labour code, wage control and health insurance.³² The extent of the political action programme in practice cannot be gauged from the enthusiastic pronouncements of District officers. Nevertheless, there is evidence that some committees, such as one in local 1-80, held meetings on the subject of labour's legislative demands.³³ The main effort was concentrated at the District level where the policy was to focus the struggle to further the interests of the working class in the parliamentary arena during a period when significant gains were not to be attained through collective bargaining. Beyond LPP rivalry with the CCF, intensified after the latter's endorsement by the CCL in 1943-44, the District's political action programme had legitimate trade union goals. Some of these such as amendment of wage controls, installment tax payments, and unemployment insurance for loggers, were attained during the war period.³⁴

II

While the main focus of union activity was on the coast, the war years injected new life into the stagnant lumber sector of the interior. District interest in organizing this industry was natural given its proximity, and the possibility that substandard wages and conditions there could act as a drag on the coast industry. Up to 1944 the interior had not been a major concern, but when International headquarters challenged District authority to organize the area, its significance was immediately heightened and union recognition there became a major issue during 1945-46.

Across the interior generally, the war years brought a tremendous growth in production. Log output nearly doubled, while on the coast it remained stable.³⁵ The most dynamic region was the Kootenays, where log output rose steadily from 136 million to 233 million board feet between 1941 and 1944. Prince George production was more sporadic, jumping dramatically in 1943, then falling back somewhat the following year. The Kamloops district showed flat but steady growth in output.³⁶

Just why the Cranbrook area was chosen as the first point of attack most likely relates to a basic history of working class solidarity in the area. The east Kootenays, as is well known, had a socialist tradition embedded in the coal mining communities of Fernie, Coal Creek and Michel. The development of these Crow's Nest mining towns gave rise to a vibrant lumber industry in the first decade or so of the twentieth century.³⁷ Cranbrook had, in the post-World War One era, been one of two interior administrative centres of the old Lumber Workers' Industrial Union along with Prince George.³⁸ During the first half of the 1930s, the communist-led Mine Workers' Union of Canada made inroads into Michel and Corbin as coal mining radicalism spilled over the Crow's Nest Pass from union centres in Alberta. Most notably, Michel sported a local "Karl Marx Park," scene of working class festivities on May Day, 1934.³⁹ Little can be said as yet, however about lumberworkers in the Kootenays during the 1920s and 1930s. According to the IWA's own historian of the day, Al Parkin, the relative dearth of large operations and the great distances between the small scattered camps and mills kept interior woodworkers unorganized and isolated from the mainstream of the labour movement. They failed to maintain "any semblance of unionism during the 1920-30 period." Not since 1923, wrote Parkin in his 1947 review of IWA achievements, when the IWW made its last stand in Cranbrook and Prince George regions, had the interior woodworkers enjoyed any form of union organization.⁴⁰ As a result they were ruthlessly exploited by the operators who were well organized into northern and southern interior lumbermen's associations. A nine hour working day was standard, wages ran far behind those on the coast and conditions in

logging camps generally remained primitive.⁴¹ As Parkin exclaimed, "Worst of all, men still packed their own blankets between jobs, twenty-five years after loggers on the Coast had forced the employer to provide clean sheets and blankets."⁴²

From very meagre beginnings then, in 1944, but building on a solid working class base, local 1-405 quickly grew in size. By the 1945 International convention it was listed as having 320 members, making it larger than 14 of the locals in District Five, and six of the locals in District Two.⁴³ The organizational gains made by the District Council in the east Kootenays acted as a catalyst. In the spring of 1945 the District Executive undertook to launch a major organizing drive across the interior. It recommended to George Brown, International Director of Organization, the transfer of three experienced coast industry organizers, Bergren, Mike Freylinger and Tom MacDonald, to various points in the interior as soon as possible given the extreme seasonality of the industry there.⁴⁴

It is at this point, that the main confrontation with the International Board occurred. George Brown made it clear that he intended to use the issue of the organizers as a means to further the International attack on what he considered to be the politically-dominated programme of the District Council. His aim was to weaken the District Council's hold in British Columbia by fostering oppositional blocs in the interior locals. As Brown told the 1945 International convention in defending his organizational strategy:

My reason for not sending them—and I made it perfectly clear, there was no attempt to beat around the bush in this matter in dealing with the British Columbia officials—was that I was not going to send these particular men into the interior, because it was unorganized territory; it was a part of the country where this Union question had not been raised before, and I wanted to get that section of British Columbia educated on a program of wages, hours and working conditions, and not on any program in the interests of any political party, regardless of which party that might be.⁴⁵

Brown further justified his move on the grounds that the three men he selected, Mike Sekora for Kamloops, Ralph New for the south Okanagan and Princeton, and Nick Kaptey for Kelowna, had all lived in the interior and allegedly had links with a lot of the people there based on language and nationality.⁴⁶ To facilitate International control over the

interior, the Department of Organization proposed six different locals based on areas established by the RWLB for determination of wage scale ceilings. The interior as a whole was divided by the board into north (Prince George) and south. The latter was sub-divided into five areas corresponding to which five locals were established: Kamloops (1-417), west Kootenay or Nelson (1-425), east Kootenay or Cranbrook (1-405), north Okanagan or Kelowna (1-423), and south Okanagan or Princeton (1-418).⁴⁷

British Columbia was already, in 1944, the second largest District in the International, close behind Oregon's District Five (the bulwark of conservatism in the IWA) and still had plenty of growing to do.⁴⁸ If the anti-communist International could gain control over the interior it could possibly capture a bloc of District One votes, and forestall a left-wing challenge to the International Executive from the combined forces of Districts One and the left-leaning north-west Washington District Two. By breaking the interior up into small locals, the International hoped to exert greater control over the membership,⁴⁹ a tactic used during the white bloc capture of the International from the left during 1940-41 under the guiding hands of Adolph Germer and the CIO.⁵⁰ Indeed, since Harold Pritchett had been permanently barred from the United States, and the 1941 International convention had passed its famous motion banning Communist Party members from the union, the main hope of the left wing in the IWA rested on organizational gains to be made in British Columbia.⁵¹ After the breakthrough on the Queen Charlotte Islands in 1943 there was clearly good reason for the new regime in Portland to be concerned.

There were two levels of dispute between the District and the International in regard to Brown's actions. At the political level, there was the question involving his assumptions that LPP politics took priority over, and skewed, the execution of a proper trade union programme. Questioning the integrity of the British Columbia leaders thus provided him with justification for disregarding the recommendations of the District Executive, something for which he was roundly condemned at a special District Council meeting in May.⁵² The more substantial issue involved the abilities of Brown's men to do the job,

and the extent to which intra-union politics was going to interfere with the broader District programme of consolidating its hold in the interior prior to the 1946 industry-wide negotiations.

The District Council took the high road in this regard. When a recommendation came to the Executive from elected officers in Kamloops to use some of the District funds now being set aside for organizational work in the interior to oppose Brown's appointees, the District Executive took the position that rather the money should be used to take up the slack and repair the weaknesses that Brown's policy imposed on the interior.⁵³ Under the direction of the District Council, and with the aid of the International negotiating fund, the PCLB undertook a wage survey of the entire interior region in preparation for industry-wide negotiations.⁵⁴ The District threw its weight into the battle for the eight-hour day for interior workers, as government hearings got underway in a number of centres. And during the summer of 1945, Ernie Dalskog was sent into the Prince George area in a newly-purchased District car in response to calls for organization there.⁵⁵

Like the east Kootenays, the Prince George district had a militant working class disposition. Between 1919 and 1922, the Lumber Workers' Industrial Union had made considerable organizational inroads in the logging camps, though it was stymied by the more conservative farmer-loggers and the paternalism of the mill operators in the small centres along the rail line. A declining economy, combined with internal union problems sealed the fate of the union drive by 1924.⁵⁶

While trade unionism did not revive in the moribund forest industry during the 1930s, there was a significant Communist party presence in the area amongst the unemployed prior to the disbandment of the Workers' Unity League. After that, local militants became involved in a variety of political organizations in the area.⁵⁷ As Gordon Hak observes, during the 1930s "the communists found their strength among the same group of people that had been attracted to the Industrial Workers of the World and the Lumber Workers' Industrial Union ten years earlier." Its constituency was the immigrant

population from Scandinavia and eastern Europe. "Had there been any substantial activity in the East Line forest industry," Hak observes, "communists would have been aggressive union organizers..."⁵⁸ The local CCF, on the other hand, represented farmers, small businessmen and railway workers with steady jobs.⁵⁹ The region was a natural one for District Council One.

During the dismal 1930s, two of the dominant operators in the district consolidated their position by absorbing some of the weaker ones. By 1939, Roy Spurr and Don McPhee controlled the three largest operations, Sinclair Spruce, Eagle Lake Sawmills and Longworth Lumber, accounting for 60 percent of the district's production.⁶⁰ With the revival of the forest economy during the war, expectations of the workers began to rise. Conditions in the camps had improved with the shortage of men, but the example of the IWA on the coast raised even greater expectations in an area where conditions, wages and hours were still substandard compared to the coastal industry.⁶¹ According to local historian, Ken Bernsohn, one worker at Sinclair Mills with IWW experience told the men: "Boys, you don't want the Industrial Workers of the World. What you need is a responsible union that management will respect, instead of making the bosses worry about revolution..."⁶² Until 1945, District One was unable to oblige. But, that year, when the RWLB refused wage increases to employees of both Eagle Lake and Sinclair Mills, both groups invited the IWA in to organize.⁶³ Ernie Dalskog made rapid progress. By early July he had five operations ready for certification.⁶⁴ By the end of the month, local 1-424 was chartered with over 350 members and newly-elected officers. Dalskog reported that though camp conditions were terrible, the wage question and hours of work were the main issues. Though the largest mills were organized, there were many smaller ones remaining. Because of the vast area involved, Dalskog recommended an additional organizer.⁶⁵ By the time of the 1945 International convention in November, 1-424 had become the largest interior local with 450 members, over 100 more than the combined membership of Kamloops, Nelson, Princeton and Kelowna.⁶⁶

In Kamloops, Sekora had made some headway, signing 179 members in spite of a particularly strident anti-union group of employers.⁶⁷ The two Okanagan locals, where New and Kapte had been assigned, had only 90 members between them. By 1946 the two had been collapsed into one local, and with help from District organizer Mel Fulton, membership had increased to over 300.⁶⁸

Without much hope of penetrating the regions of the interior with a more solid working class base and tradition, George Brown and his anti-communist cohorts had chosen to concentrate their efforts in the weaker, conservative areas of the Okanagan and Kamloops, with rather little success. In the Okanagan valley, the economic importance of the fruit growing industry, a major consumer of wood products, had served to depress forest industry wages, particularly in the Vernon-Kelowna area where the woodworkers were the lowest paid of all the interior sub-districts, in both milling and logging.⁶⁹ The employment of Japanese labourers deported from the coast helped the operators in this regard.⁷⁰ Along with the mill operators, the fruit growers put up a strong opposition at the hearings concerning the implementation of the eight-hour day, saying it would raise the price of box shooks and reduce production.⁷¹ Despite similar opposition from operators in the Prince George area, as a result of hearings held throughout the interior in which the IWA was actively involved, the Board of Industrial Relations cancelled a regulation permitting hours in excess of eight per day and 48 per week without premium pay.⁷²

The campaign for the shorter work day was closely tied into the District's negotiating strategy of working to equalize conditions between the coast and the interior.⁷³ A victory on hours of work also helped speed the District on its way toward the unification of negotiations throughout the interior. The main mechanism used to prepare the ground for unified negotiations was the comprehensive wage survey of all northern and southern interior regions conducted by the PCLB during the summer of 1945. The objectives of the survey, according to a memo from the National Labour Bureau, (the parent company of the PCLB), to Claude Ballard in June 1945 was twofold: to obtain a picture of the wage

structure in the interior industry; and to prepare all relevant data which might assist the union in its forthcoming negotiations with both the interior operators and Stuart Research. Out of these negotiations, according to the Labour Bureau, would come a joint or unilateral application to the RWLB for equalization of interior rates across the region, and the eradication of the difference between coast and interior rates.⁷⁴ In this respect the interior survey project would provide a striking counterpoint to the ineptness of the International's strategy of splintering the interior up into several small locals. That strategy played right into the hands of the southern operators association which persisted in its insistence that negotiations be conducted at the level of each operation.⁷⁵ Such a procedure would have made equalization of rates next to impossible. While George Brown pursued his political agenda, District Council One set about using collective bargaining as a tool to consolidate its organizational hold in the interior by wiping out wage differentials and closing the gap between the interior and the coast. The long-held District strategy of signed union agreements as a prerequisite for completing the task of organization was once again put into play.

With the wage survey completed, delegates from six interior locals, along with international organizers and District Executive members met in a Wage and Policy Conference in Kamloops on 23-24 September 1945. The purpose of the meeting, according to Pritchett's opening remarks, was to establish unity of effort among all interior locals in the drive to obtain contracts. He emphasized the necessity of agreeing on uniform wage demands to be negotiated through a centralized bargaining structure, with the aim in mind of lifting as many jobs as possible out of the common labour classification. Based on the PCLB survey, a subcommittee met and then submitted to the conference ceiling rates for each occupation considered necessary to the industry regardless of whether that occupation was listed on the RWLB schedules for the north or south. In addition, a basic rate for common labour of 67 cents was set across the interior. It was agreed to adopt the

1945 coast agreement, with some minor points of difference, as the basis for an industry-wide collective agreement.⁷⁶

The District brief, drafted in conjunction with the PCLB, was submitted to the RWLB in October.⁷⁷ However, through November the Southern Interior Lumbermen's Association, affiliated with the CMA, continued to resist centralized negotiations. Talks proceeded on a plant-by-plant basis with little success reported at Penticton, Lumby, Cranbrook and Eagle Lake Sawmills at Giscome.⁷⁸ The District Executive recommended that locals propose interim agreements to expire 15 March 1946 in conformity with the coast agreement, and apply for conciliation and arbitration in each case as negotiations became deadlocked.⁷⁹ The stage was being prepared for a province-wide confrontation with the industry in 1946 which, it was hoped, would result in one master agreement for all British Columbia woodworkers.

As District One delegates headed to the International convention in Eugene, Oregon in November 1945, they had only three interior agreements in hand.⁸⁰ Nevertheless, by adopting a strategy of tying organizational gains into the real industrial relations struggle for better wages and conditions, a struggle over which the District still maintained a large degree of autonomy, the District Executive was able successfully to counter the attempts of George Brown to drive a wedge between it and the interior woodworkers. The District had established a firm hold in the most significant interior lumbering centres, Prince George and the Kootenays, areas with a history of militant trade unionism. The International was left to try to tap into the much more conservative and less dynamic lumbering area of Kamloops and the Okanagan, with few positive results.

III

As pointed out in chapter two, the economy of the wartime lumber industry, in particular the labour market, provided both opportunities and obstacles to union organizing. Similarly the mixed performance of the industry during the 1939-45 period provided both

opportunities and obstacles for the IWA in consolidating signed contracts with real economic gains. A proper analysis of the demands put forward by the union during this period of consolidation, and of the actual settlement reached in renewal of the collective agreement, needs to be placed in the context of the industry's performance during the war years. A brief review follows.

During the first two years or so of the war, through 1941, lumber production on the coast hit record levels, topping three billion board feet for the first time, as both the Canadian and British markets absorbed as much as could be produced. In 1941, British orders were cut in half, but exports to the United States more than doubled, offsetting 65 percent of the loss. Nevertheless, the total coastal cut dropped from 3.32 to 3.26 billion feet. In 1942, it dropped another half a billion feet, and a further 200 million in each of the following years. The timber cut for the 1942-44 period was actually below that of 1936-38, and about the same as 1926-28.⁸¹

The reasons for this reduction in cut are many and varied. For one thing, the boom in exports to the United States was shortlived, covering only the 1941-42 period of war-preparedness and the immediate post-Pearl Harbour escalation of military activities. In 1943-44, exports dropped back to 1939-40 levels and below.⁸² In part, this drop was related to an increase in British requirements for 1943, and the imposition of strict quota allocations imposed by the Timber Control.⁸³ But in total, demand from these two key markets in the 1943-45 period was down considerably. Secondly, what demand there was seriously taxed the existing manpower supplies of the industry. Canada's war effort drew more and more men from the industry into active service in the closing years of battle (see chapters two and four above). Thirdly, because of the nature of its markets, the British Columbia industry experienced much greater dislocation as a result of the war than did the industry in Washington and Oregon. Historically, British Columbia lumbermen had been much more dependent on offshore sales than their United States counterparts.⁸⁴ That tendency intensified during the 1930s under the trade agreement with Britain. From 1933-

39 over two-thirds of the production of coast sawmills was exported, compared to less than 10 percent for Washington and Oregon. As a result, the loss of overseas trade during the war hit British Columbia producers much harder. Of the over 30 overseas destinations to which the British Columbia coast industry was shipping in 1939, only 11 were active markets in 1944. In particular, the loss of the European, Central and South American, Indian and Japanese markets made a big impact. The Canadian and American markets took up some of the slack, but even then domestic prices were fairly rigidly controlled, and were considerably lower than US prices.⁸⁵ The following chart indicates that British Columbia production declined steadily from 1940 to 1944, losing a full 20 percent from the wartime peak. Production for each of the last three years of the war was below that for each of the three years preceding the war. In Washington and Oregon production figures followed a different pattern, climbing to peak in 1941, but staying significantly above pre-war totals until slumping in 1945. Fourthly, the traditional American market for unmanufactured logs, which historically helped to keep log prices in British Columbia buoyant, was curtailed by the Timber Control in the interests of Canada's war effort.⁸⁶

As an indication of the difficulties the industry as a whole was facing, in order to stimulate production in particular on the part of the smaller, non-integrated operations, the federal government, beginning in 1943, took several measures either to reduce taxes or increase prices. After meeting with representatives of the various branches of the industry in Vancouver, Timber Controller A.H. Williamson announced a special depletion allowance of between one and two dollars per thousand board feet for tax purposes. In order that this tax break would be of some significance, the price of all logs was raised one dollar per thousand, with a special increase of \$4.50 for peeler logs used in plywood, of particular importance in the war effort. The ceiling prices on lumber were kept in place, but the government undertook to refund the increased cost of logs in order to maintain the standard profits of log-buying mills.⁸⁷ That arrangement lasted until August, when the government, under prodding from Williamson, recognized the contention of the industry

Table 2

Comparison of Lumber Production and Exports

Year	<u>British Columbia (Coast Only)</u>			<u>Washington and Oregon</u>		
	Production MBM	Exports MBM	% of Prod.	Production MBM	Exports MBM	% of Prod.
1937	1,826,000	1,197,000	65.6	9,064,421	640,584	7.1
1938	1,845,000	1,274,000	69.1	7,139,463	308,095	4.3
1939	2,025,000	1,483,000	73.2	9,008,803	447,402	5.0
1940	2,049,000	1,395,000	68.1	9,743,813	433,043	4.4
1941	2,025,000	1,217,000	60.0	11,586,183	251,753	2.2
1942	1,834,000	1,025,000	55.9	11,456,348	202,020	1.8
1943	1,584,000	908,000	57.3	10,891,510	132,058	1.2
1944	1,627,000	938,000	57.7	10,672,173	180,685	1.7
1945	1,620,000	948,000	58.5	8,261,542	278,010	3.4
1946	1,685,000	936,000	55.5	9,750,606	305,837	3.1
1947	1,983,000	1,312,000	66.2	10,807,811	756,220	7.0

Source: Forest Industrial Relations Brief to Conciliation Board, 8 August 1949, Pritchett Papers, box 7, file 1.

that lumber prices did not constitute a factor in the cost-of-living structure. The subsidy was discontinued and coastal lumber producers were allowed to increase their prices up to a maximum of four dollars per thousand in the underpriced Canadian market.⁸⁸ The new ceiling prices would benefit all operators, both independent and integrated.

In spite of these measures, overall lumber production in the Vancouver Forest District declined by 225 million board feet in 1943, while the total value of lumber produced in the province dropped by over \$600,000.⁸⁹ In April 1944 Williamson once again tried to stimulate log production in the declining independent logging sector by announcing a \$1.50 per thousand increase for open market logs.⁹⁰ The BCLA claimed the

boost was insufficient to establish an appropriate relationship between log and lumber prices.⁹¹ In order for manufacturers to absorb the increased log costs without piercing the newly established domestic price ceiling, the quota structure for lumber sales was adjusted to allow a five percent increase to the supposedly more lucrative overseas markets.⁹² Given the difficulties in reaching these markets this was a rather hollow gesture. Neither overall production nor overseas shipments responded to these changes in 1944 (see Table 2 above). But the cumulative effect of the 1943-44 price increases on the coast helped boost the total provincial value of lumber production from \$66 million to \$81 million in 1944. For various reasons, however, this jump did not represent a corresponding jump in profits on an industry-wide basis.

First of all, the industry, as an essential wartime industry, was subject to an excess profits tax as a means of enforcing wage and price controls, and preventing profiteering at the expense of the federal government, the chief procurer of war materials. For example, during 1942-44 H.R. MacMillan Export paid an average excess profits tax of \$525,508 per year. Total taxes in 1945, the last year of full excess profits tax, were \$2.49 million on a revenue of \$9.89 million.⁹³ Canadian Western Lumber declared in its financial statement for 1944 net earnings of \$2.52 million, and net profit after taxes of \$235,407. Its excess profits tax for 1944 was \$1.47 million, though up to 20 percent was refundable and became part of earnings.⁹⁴ Under the Excess Profits Tax regulations, the basic period for determination of standard profits was 1936-39 which the industry claimed was not the most favourable one for it.⁹⁵ In recognition of the complaints of the industry the federal government granted a special depletion allowance for 1943. (Similarly, for the 1940 taxation year, a special allowance of one-third the cost of standing timber cut had been granted.)⁹⁶ While there is not a complete picture for the industry as a whole of the effect of taxes on wartime production and profits, an indication can be gleaned from the intensity with which lumbermen, during 1944-45, lobbied for a proper and permanent timber

depletion allowance such as had been introduced in the United States under the so-called Bailey amendment of February 1944.⁹⁷

The case for such an allowance was based on the argument that timber holdings acquired in previous years were seriously undervalued, and a proper revaluation should have been permitted for taxation purposes. Looking only at the years from 1942, when detailed figures were first published, through 1945, the average stumpage price per thousand board feet received on government timber sales in the Vancouver Forest District increased between 35 cents and \$1.05 per thousand board feet (see Table 3).

Table 3
Average Stumpage Price Per Thousand Board Feet
Vancouver Forest District Timber Sales

	<u>Douglas Fir</u>	<u>Cedar</u>	<u>Spruce</u>
1942	\$2.29	\$1.95	\$1.58
1943	2.47	2.28	2.89
1944	2.44	2.82	2.14
1945	2.64	2.79	2.63

Source: "Reports of the Forest Branch (1942, 1943, 1944, 1945).

The increase was much more dramatic on the larger more desirable tracts already held privately since well before the war. Stumpage values were considered a cost of production and so helped push up log and lumber prices. For the larger timber-holding companies, cutting stands purchased years before at rock-bottom prices, this so-called increase cost was not an actual cost at the time of cutting and so they reaped the benefit of their early acquisition. Nevertheless, that part of profit based on stumpage values was treated as part of general revenue and taxed accordingly, rather than as a non-taxable capital gain as the industry would have liked. The only depletion allowed was on the actual cost of timber when it was bought. The industry argued that since timber cut would have to be replaced at

current prices, a full depletion allowance based on replacement costs should have been permitted.⁹⁸ In fact, there was an incentive for timber holders to sell standing timber en bloc in order to realize the full tax-free capital gain, and then purchase tracts at higher cost in order to get the full benefit of a higher capital cost allowance when timber was cut. The sale, in the spring of 1944, of Victoria Lumber and Manufacturing Company to E.P. Taylor, and of Canadian Forest Products with its vast Nimpkish Valley holdings of four billion feet of the finest virgin timber on the Island to the Czechoslovakian Pick-Bentley partnership, were both precipitated by the existing taxation/depletion allowance structure. Profits made on the sale of this timber far exceeded what could have been earned by cutting it. The purchasers, on the other hand, could base depletion on the new market price paid, making lumbering operations much more profitable. The substantial wartime timberland purchases of MacMillan, BSW and other large concerns were certainly facilitated by the existing taxation arrangements.⁹⁹

While some operators sold out their stands to realize profits, others continued to log their stands to full capacity to meet war demands with the resultant loss of profits to income and excess profits taxes. There is adequate evidence, however, to state with some certainty that several major logging operators were not producing to capacity. Norman Lee, former Inspector of Taxation for the dominion government in the Vancouver Forest District told the Sloan Royal Commission in 1944, some of the larger firms were holding back "in order to conserve their timber for future use in the hope that the taxation situation after the war will be more favourable to them."¹⁰⁰ According to an NSS expert on the coast industry who reported to Director F.W. Smelts in March 1945, "the reason for the small output of logs in comparison with the large number of men employed, is not due to the poor quality of the men, but rather to the fact that the big operators, at least, are deliberately working such stands of their timber as are most inaccessible, and most uneconomical to work. The reason for this of course, is obvious, and lies in price ceilings and excess profits taxes."

For this reason, Smelts, after meeting with both IWA and industry officials, dismissed the BCLA claims of drastic shortages of qualified efficient labour in the woods.¹⁰¹

In the course of the meeting with IWA leaders, Jack Greenall reported to the NSS officials that several union men at CWL's Fraser Mills operation had already complained to the Timber Controller with respect to a threatened shutdown of the mill. They accused CWL of "deliberately aggravating the log shortage by their methods of logging; they claimed they were passing good stands of timber and logging timber not of the best quality."¹⁰²

All of this evidence supports the argument that there was a deliberate production slowdown in the industry, especially in 1944-45, on account of excess taxation and insufficient allowance for depletion. The marked increased value of production from 1943 to 1946, at a time when total cut remained stagnant, reflected in part the increased costs of logging poorer quality and more inaccessible stands of timber. While some of the larger concerns benefitted from the wartime conditions through the buying and selling of timberland en bloc, for many operators federal tax regulations retarded rather than encouraged expansion of production.

A production slowdown was not the industry's only response to the taxation/depletion problem. Beginning in April 1944, shortly after the termination of the 1943 depletion allowance, the BCLA took the leading role in planning a dominion conference of forest industry associations in Winnipeg. The aim of the conference was to address the issues of the federal tax structure and timber depletion allowance with the mining and oil industries as models.¹⁰³ The Winnipeg Conference, held in May, gathered together 15 industry associations from the British Columbia coast and interior, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes, as well as the pulp and paper industry and the Canadian Lumberman's Association.¹⁰⁴ Consensus was reached on a proposal similar to the Bailey Amendment of annual valuations of the cut removed from each operation and a tax-free allowance to provide the difference between acquisition and

replacement costs. Moreover, a new association of associations was formed, known as the Permanent Committee, and later the National Council of Forest Industries, to continue to represent the industry's case to the federal government.¹⁰⁵ The BCLA endorsed a two cent per thousand foot levy on member companies if needed to assist in the lobby effort.¹⁰⁶ The British Columbia industry associations agreed to an initial contribution of \$4000.¹⁰⁷ The BCLA's L.R. Andrews took a leading role in the fall of 1944 in preparing the brief for presentation to the federal government in January 1945.¹⁰⁸ But no action was taken through the course of 1945, and by 1946 the excess profits tax was in the process of being dismantled.¹⁰⁹

In addition to problems with markets and taxation, the industry also suffered from a reduction in productivity linked to problems in the labour market. While the NSS tried to deflect industry complaints regarding manpower by pointing to an intentional slowdown by several large firms, that device did not obviate the very real pressures that war exerted on the supply of experienced and skilled labour. During the course of the 1946 contract arbitration hearings, both the industry and union spokesmen agreed that despite technical improvements such as the power saw, trucks and tractors, productivity declined during the war years. In other words, from the point of view of the industry, a disproportionate amount of the increased value of production was due to increased costs, and a disproportionate percentage of increased costs due to inefficiency rather than to an actual increase in wages paid. According to Stuart Research, labour costs per thousand feet of logs produced in British Columbia increased by 107 percent between 1939 and 1944, while total log production was actually lower in the latter year than in the former. The average cost of production rose from \$4.74 to \$8.70 per thousand. A similar increase was reported in the manufacture of lumber. At the same time the average weekly wage in the industry increased by only 52 percent. Thus, Stuart argued, a substantial portion of increased production costs was due to inefficiency.¹¹⁰ Stuart pointed his finger at a "very substantial upgrading of job classifications," at the same time as the quality of labour to fill those jobs

declined.¹¹¹ The union researchers agreed that wartime conditions such as job upgrading, a high percentage of overtime, and the Queen Charlotte Islands bonus, had caused overall productivity to decline.¹¹² They might also have mentioned that union organization and the signing of collective agreements permitted employees collectively to work at a more reasonable pace, without fear of employer reprisal.

Other difficulties arose which were related only indirectly to wartime conditions. One of the most critical production bottlenecks was in the area of falling and bucking. According to information given by veteran logger and union organizer Ernie Dalskog to the Regional Director of NSS at a meeting in March 1945, the shortage was not entirely due to enlistment. Over the past decade few men had been trained for that kind of work which required a "very strong constitution." As earnings depended on the amount of timber felled, "young fellows do not find it attractive. It tears down a man very rapidly. Very few have gone in for that kind of work recently and the older fellows are getting worn out." According to Dalskog, most of the falling was done by either Scandinavians or people from the Balkans, "and with no immigration they are not getting these people for the woods."¹¹³

Industry efforts to overcome this bottleneck through the introduction of power saws were not terribly effective as of 1945. Existing equipment still proved to be costly, heavy, cumbersome and unreliable, particularly with the lack of trained operators available, giving little consistent benefit in the way of reduced costs. Some companies tried to convert their falling crews into subcontractors who would become responsible for purchase and maintenance of equipment, a move the union resented strenuously.¹¹⁴

To sum up then, the economic condition of the industry as a whole in 1944 was by no means uniformly sound. After the initial wartime boom of 1940-42, a series of factors conspired to curb production and profits. Some companies with accumulated surpluses and large timber holdings were not terribly disturbed by this trend. Nevertheless, several of the largest operators in 1942 had considered the threat posed by the IWA serious enough to install R.V. Stuart as industrial relations representative for the industry, and to put up

\$10,000 each to get his agency off the ground. Some firms, such as MacMillan's, opened up industrial relations departments of their own as well.¹¹⁵ While the IWA was busy consolidating its hold over the industry's workforce, Stuart Research set out to sign up as many of the coastal operators as would join. So concerned were the large firms to present a solid front to the IWA that Stuart offered to waive the subscription fee in order to get companies to join. In fact, so general was the desire of the companies not to be "whipsawed" and to establish a successful industrial relations arm for the industry that no one took Stuart up on the offer, even though, according to J.M. Billings, the smaller operators "yelled like hell."¹¹⁶ By 1945, 123 companies had signed up with Stuart.¹¹⁷ The rapid consolidation of the industry behind Stuart Research Service was facilitated not only by the fear of taking on the IWA independently in the increasingly more sophisticated arena of contract negotiation and arbitration. It was also an index of an industry far from bullish on its prospects under the conditions of wartime markets, taxation, price regulation, and costs of production. Thus, when the union and Stuart Research met in 1945 to renew the master agreement, the industry was not in a mood or a position to give much away in terms of wages. Huddled together under the protective umbrella of Stuart and behind the leadership of a few key integrated giants, the industry, having just lost the first round of the industrial relations battle, was not prepared for further concessions, particularly monetary ones. On the other hand, the signing of a master agreement, while a major concession after over 20 years of resistance,¹¹⁸ promised a certain degree of industrial stability. As the BCLA directors reported to their 1944 annual meeting, "the initial agreement brought about little in the way of changed conditions,"¹¹⁹ but provided the standard grievance/arbitration procedures which would prevent work disruptions over minor disputes. Lumbermen could now turn their attention more fully to fighting with the government (at times with union assistance) over the terms of wartime production, and to the business of selling lumber. The objective conditions of the industry coincided with the IWA's post-recognition agenda of consolidation, resulting in a temporary truce in the hard-fought industrial relations war.

IV

The draft agreement adopted by District delegates at the Nanaimo negotiations conference in September 1944 must be interpreted in light of the limitations imposed by government regulations, by the economic condition of the industry, the primacy of war production and the union's overall agenda of consolidation. In this context, what would appear to be the key demands, a modest eight cent per hour increase with a 75 cent per hour minimum rate and reduction of job classifications, union shop and check-off, and premium pay after 44 hours per week, were not put forward as issues over which the union was prepared to fight the employer to the point of job action. They would be pursued as far as possible, but, in the final analysis, negotiations on these issues during wartime were really with the state rather than with the employer.¹²⁰ According to the advice of the PCLB, the RWLB, under PC 9384 as amended, could grant a wage increase where it was considered fair and reasonable, if the increased scale did not exceed August 1939 wages by more than the maximum cost-of-living bonus accumulated since that date. But since in almost every IWA operation the wage hike, including cost-of-living bonus since August 1939 had been equal to or greater than the amount of the maximum cost-of-living bonus, the IWA, like most unions, was unable to proceed under this provision. Neither could the union, as a whole, hope to win an across-the-board concession on the basis of a gross inequality or injustice.¹²¹

The demand for a 44-hour week, according to Marcuse of the PCLB, depended, under PC 9384, on the employers' agreeing to the adoption of an Incentive Production Bonus Plan, to be administered by a joint labour-management production committee, that would ensure no increase in the established unit production costs as a result of a reduction in the regular work week.¹²² "The workers may have all the moral and ethical arguments in the world," Marcuse advised, "but against the inflexible restrictions of the Wartime Wages Control Order, PC 9384 they have been shown to be generally unavailing,"¹²³ even

though 32 collective agreements in British Columbia already provided for 44 hours or less with time and one-half for overtime.¹²⁴

At the Nanaimo conference, Morgan spoke of the need to adopt a "practical" programme, one that "we will not have to back down from." On the question of hours of work, he noted, some operators were trying to shorten their hours of operation anyway to preserve stands of timber "pending removal of the present scale of taxes." The union did not necessarily support such a procedure considering the important task of producing lumber for post-war construction. At the same time Morgan acknowledged a demand in many operations for a shorter week. The compromise recommended by the District leaders was that in view of the vital need for increased lumber production to rebuild devastated countries, "we can hardly campaign for less production now but rather for production committees and premium pay for Saturday afternoon and Sunday work." This position translated into a rather ambiguous proposal calling for regular hours of work consisting of six consecutive eight-hour days, with time and one-half paid for any time worked in excess of 44 hours. This proposal, by accepting 48 hours as the regular work week, undermined its own provisions for overtime after 44 hours. Moreover, very little serious consideration was given to the proposal for production committees which, as written, asked only for agreement and support in principle from management, without any commitment to establish the machinery or timetable for their actual implementation. The IWA, having just recently won recognition, and having as yet still only a tenuous hold in many operations, was not in a strong position to push for industry-wide adoption of a joint production committee scheme.¹²⁵

In sum then, the demands for an across-the-board increase in wages, and a reduction in hours, even given the support of scientific facts, were not central to the collective bargaining process in 1945. Central to the programme proposed by Morgan were stabilization of wage rates, strengthening the vacation clause and seniority provisions, a second-shift differential, a medical insurance plan and a number of proposals that would

enhance the recognition and legitimacy of the union. As the negotiating agenda unfolded, it came to focus on items that required, and were amenable to joint union-management cooperation, either in making presentations to the NWLB, or in administering the agreement across the industry, rather than in areas of confrontation and potential conflict. Consolidation was the name of the game in 1945.

In such an atmosphere, contentious issues such as the union-shop and check-off, which by definition had priority of place on the union's long-term agenda, had to be kept in the forefront in the interests of future negotiations, while at the same time downplayed in the interests of gaining a settlement. In order to achieve this balancing act, the District officers masterfully orchestrated the business of the Eighth Annual District Convention, held 6-7 January in Port Alberni, by shifting the union's focus from industrial to political action. As the officers told the delegates, the employers were failing to live up to their side of the wartime bargain by flatly refusing the union shop, which the District required in order properly to discharge its heavy responsibilities under the proposed agreement—elimination of strikes, enforcement of safety conditions and acceptance of arbitration awards. "Everything humanly possible must be done," the officers urged, "to include the just demands of our membership in the 1945 industry-wide contract." This could best be accomplished by way of negotiation, and, if necessary, conciliation, "mobilizing full public opinion in support of our just proposals and adhering strictly to our no-strike pledge to the nation."

The no-strike pledge was thus duly affirmed by resolution number one of the convention. However, because, as Ernie Dalskog noted, labour never discards a weapon without another to take its place; resolution number two instituted a campaign in the woodworking industry of "non-partisan political action" in order to honour the no-strike pledge and "go forward to shorter hours, higher wages and better conditions" by defeating the "anti-labour reactionary tory coalition in the upcoming federal election." These two resolutions established the basis for the third which successfully buried the union shop

proposal for 1945. Whereas the 20 September 1944 negotiations conference, as well as the third quarterly District Council meeting adopted the union shop as the union's main demand, the convention endorsed this position and resolved to instruct the District Officers and Council to do "Everything they can to win support for the union shop from governments, the public, other trade unions and progressive bodies, and from those employers willing to accept labour as a partner in industry." In order effectively to carry out such a campaign, the delegates passed resolution four endorsing Canadian labour unity amongst all CCL and TLC affiliates. Flowing out of labour unity and a concerted legislative lobby, other resolutions pledged to amend the federal labour code, amend PC 9384 by establishing a 65 cent minimum wage, remove wage inequalities resulting from the freezing of wages, establish equal pay for equal work and proper shift differentials, and lift restrictions on paid vacations. Finally, resolution seven called for the District Council, in conjunction with other unions, to initiate a campaign to win support of the general public, the cabinet and the legislature to amend the masters and servants act with respect to the automatic check-off of dues.¹²⁶

It is of course questionable how much faith the District leaders actually put in a political action programme as a substitute weapon to win what in other periods would be collective bargaining demands. Almost immediately after the convention District One withdrew from the CCL Political Action Committee over the reversal of its non-partisan approach. (Under Congress policy political action committees were not to make independent recommendations on local candidates, a ruling the District leaders viewed as aimed at precluding the support of LPP or independent labour candidates against the CCF.)¹²⁷ Nevertheless, in principle, the convention programme gave recognition to the industrial relations reality of the day, while at the same time allowing the union to maintain an aura of militancy. In fact, industrial relations had been made a political issue and it would take a political fight to break the stranglehold of the state on collective bargaining.

That fight would occur after the war. Nineteen forty-five was a time to strengthen, in less confrontational ways, the position the union had already attained.

As negotiations proceeded through the winter and spring, the District Executive and Council continued to pay lip service to political action, at the same time moving to work out an amicable settlement quickly and quietly. Even conciliation, which had been discussed at the convention, was now to be avoided. Having yet thoroughly to organize the industry, and without the ability to strike, the executive considered it a risky proposition. Not only might their contracts be considered terminated with the breaking off of negotiations, but also the union leaders felt that by going to conciliation a considerable time would elapse before any satisfactory agreement was reached—time that might be used by certain employers, and union members opposed to the District leadership, to undermine the gains already worked out through negotiation.¹²⁸

The union's bottom line was modified to suit the situation and now consisted of renewal of all exemptions from the overtime clause, maintenance of membership, RWLB ceiling rates for all job categories, two weeks vacation after five years (currently one week), and the further negotiation by a joint industry committee on a medical scheme.¹²⁹ By March, Pritchett reported to the District Council meeting the attainment of nine of 15 demands originally drafted by the Nanaimo conference. Some of the other main issues would have to await changed legislation, he reminded delegates.¹³⁰ At the same time Marcuse submitted the joint Stuart Research-PCLB report on a Medical-Health-Life Plan to be incorporated as a supplement in local agreements. The report, which grew out of meetings between Pearce and Billings of Stuart Research and Pritchett, Dalskog and Marcuse for the union, was a recommendation only and presumed a fuller series of meetings to work out technical details, manner of implementation and a decision on the carrier of the plan.¹³¹

Without union security local delegates still overwhelmingly approved the settlement. Even white bloc delegates voiced qualified support at this point. Alsbury of 1-357 and

Lloyd Whalen of 1-217 both agreed that negotiating the union's main demands was difficult in this situation. But Alsbury felt the union should hold out for another 30 days and put on a campaign to get men into the union as he feared a falling-off of membership over the union's lack of success. The Trotskyist CCFer Whalen feared the no-strike/political action strategy had weakened the union, but nevertheless spoke against the "whispering campaign" and non-payment of dues in defiance of the District leadership. Wilf Killeen of local 1-80, a vocal supporter of the executive, felt the agreement was worth signing, even if just for the proposed medical scheme. Jack Lindsay of 1-357 noted that for a partially organized group the IWA had made huge gains.¹³²

Through April, Morgan worked on the RWLB schedule of ceiling rates for adoption by Stuart and the union, in order to bring all workers up to the board's established maximum for the woodworking industry.¹³³ Pritchett participated in a series of meetings with R. V. Stuart, Humphrey Mitchell, and provincial labour minister, George Pearson, at the end of which both ministers endorsed the contract, including the somewhat contentious issue of two weeks vacation with pay for five-year employees. Pearson undertook to promote its endorsement by the RWLB whose ruling was requested by a joint letter from Stuart and Pritchett representing 123 companies and 25,000 employees covered by the master agreement. At the same time negotiations were proceeding in several operations for adjustment of ranges up to the newly-established ceiling rates. All agreements would be effective as of 15 March 1945, and would include any increases in wages then under negotiation. In view of the successful and amicable settlement, Pritchett suggested to the executive acceptance of an invitation of the Employers' Committee, given through Stuart, to hold a Midsummer Picnic jointly sponsored by the employers and the union, and further suggested a Midsummer Dance to coincide with the picnic.¹³⁴

Was there really reason to celebrate? In actuality, there was. Given the very skeletal nature of the first master agreement, it was appropriate that a second contract would be aimed at filling in some of the gaps. In view of the limitations imposed by the economic

conditions of the industry as a whole, and state regulation of monetary items, the 1945 settlement was a considerable accomplishment and very much in line with the union's strategy of consolidating its position after winning recognition.

An analysis of the settlement reveals some respectable achievements, even in the area of monetary gains. According to union estimates, wage adjustments up to ceiling levels resulted in an increased wage bill to the industry for 1945 of \$680,000. Considering that the total wage bill for the logging and lumber sectors was somewhere in excess of \$50 million for 1944, this figure would have represented an overall increase in wages of just over one percent, in itself not a terribly impressive achievement.¹³⁵ Nonetheless, on top of that the union received a shift differential of 5 cents per hour on the second and third shifts, and the implementation of a regular eight hour day/48 hour week for certain maintenance and mechanical categories hitherto limited to a nine-hour day/50-hour week. An industry-wide health and welfare scheme was not part of the final package, but some of the larger operators did introduce schemes of their own for which the union claimed some credit.¹³⁶

The most significant monetary gain embodied in the paid-vacations clause was finally won only after a joint application to the NWLB for exemption from its so-called Decision Bulletin 17 (DB 17) which imposed severe limitations on any vacation clauses negotiated after 15 November 1941. As a result of DB 17, under the first master agreement, employees, after one year's continuous service (300 days), were entitled to one week's vacation with pay for and during the following 12 months service. In other words, no vacation time could be accumulated or taken during the first year of employment. This limitation particularly affected millworkers, and the more settled or married loggers prone to work steadily for one outfit. In July 1945, with the war in Europe over, the NWLB, in response to a joint application on behalf of 123 employers and the union, overturned a ruling of the RWLB and granted one week's vacation for the first year's work, and two weeks after five years (or pay in lieu of, where production would be lost because of the two week absence of key men). With this latter condition the union was in full

agreement.¹³⁷ The imposition of DB 17 on the 1944 agreement had caused considerable disgruntlement amongst union members. In the mill sector, approximately 27 percent of employees in 1945 were in their first year of employment and thus not eligible for any vacation.¹³⁸ Morgan had made it clear to the Nanaimo conference that during 1944 "vacations with pay has been the most vexing of problems we were faced with."¹³⁹ According to the industry's brief to the NWLB "both Mr. Pritchett and Mr. Stuart" felt that failure to alter the 1944 agreement would be "very disturbing to the employee."¹⁴⁰ Vacations was a big issue for the average worker and success on this item an important gain for the IWA.

A second category of gains made in the 1945 settlement involved the reinforcement and extension of the legitimacy originally won with the attainment of union recognition, through the designation of a union role in the administration of the agreement, often jointly, with management. A joint Safety Committee with equal representation from each side was to be maintained in every operation with 25 or more employees, to enforce the regulations of the Workers Compensation Board. Union representatives would be compensated for time spent in safety meetings. The union camp or mill committee in each operation was given the joint responsibility, along with the company, of establishing the basis of departments for seniority purposes. (Incidentally, the probation period for entitlement to a seniority ranking was reduced from 40 to 30 days). Any employee elected as official representative on behalf of the union would be granted leave of absence by the company without loss of seniority.¹⁴¹

Both the 1944 and 1945 agreements, as required by the federal Wartime Labour Relations Regulations, contained provisions for the final settlement of disputes—in other words a grievance and arbitration procedure. As in many labour-management agreements reached during this period (1944-48) such a mechanism for final settlement of disputes served the union as a minimal trade-off for a management rights clause and for language restricting strikes during the term of the contract. These contractual innovations were

intended to introduce a kind of "rule of law" into industrial relations in place of rule by force.¹⁴² The 1945 agreement introduced yet another dispute settlement mechanism, called "Right of Reference," which was intended to prevent grievances from arising by arriving at mutually agreeable interpretations of the agreement where there was conflict or ambiguity. Either party had the right to refer a matter of interpretation to a Joint Industry Committee, and have the reference accepted by the other party. In the context of the war, the union very much regarded this committee as a kind of district-level joint production committee, inasmuch as it was designed to resolve local disputes quickly, without any disruption at the job site. Unlike the production committee proposal put forward by the Nanaimo conference which called for committees in each operation, the Joint Industry Committee consisted of three representatives selected by the District negotiating committee, and three selected by the employers. It was to meet monthly and recommend interpretations of the agreement on matters arising from local disputes.

Taken together, all of these various additions to the master agreement, along with the joint representations to the NWLB, and the joint consideration of an industry welfare scheme, more firmly entrenched the IWA as the industry bargaining agent for woodworkers. But out of the 1945 agreement there emerged more explicitly than ever, a "down side" to this steady march toward union security—the first signs of the bureaucratization that commentators knowledgeable in the affairs of the IWA have pointed to as an important factor in the internal difficulties the union experienced in the immediate post-war period.¹⁴³

The Joint Industry Committee met for the first time in June 1945. Guidelines were immediately established for proceedings. Observers, or those called in by either side, were to be limited in number, as too many observers or witnesses, it was felt, tended to delay the reaching of decisions. The party or parties most directly concerned with any dispute would be allowed to sit in at the meeting, but voting would of course be restricted to an equal number of committee members from each side. And Stuart proposed that the same men

should be kept on the committee as far as reasonably possible. Pritchett was most enthusiastic to endow the committee with binding authority. He suggested that "once the Committee had made its decision, unless some reconsideration was asked, that the decision should be considered the policy for future, and that both Company and Local Union officials be notified." J.E. Jones from the industry side, somewhat concerned about the local autonomy of those he represented, suggested that "while decisions made by the Committee might be made policy for future, it should not be tied too closely to individual operations." It was finally unanimously agreed that the Committee would have no power of enforcing a decision, its function to be to examine cases in dispute and make recommendations for consideration. However, once District representatives on the Committee had given their unanimous endorsement to a particular interpretation of the agreement as recommended policy across the industry, it would have been next to impossible for local officials to proceed with a grievance running counter to the District's position.¹⁴⁴

Union participation on the Joint Industry Committee was a delicate matter. If the officers were going to take part in a process at the District negotiating level which was aimed at resolving locally-based disputes as a vehicle further to entrench the union in its contractual relationship with the employer at the expense of what Stanton refers to as the "member-leader linkage," at the very least it should have taken care, in the process, properly to defend local interests.¹⁴⁵ A careful analysis of cases dealt with during the summer of 1945 indicates that District leaders were rather more interested in having a part to play in contract administration than they were in fighting for the rights of the local employees involved.

Two disputes arose immediately dealing with Sunday work. The contract stipulated that "those employees who, of necessity, work on Sunday shall take another day of the week off."¹⁴⁶ A dispute arose at CWL's Fraser Mills plant as to what portion of the crew this section covered. The Committee adopted the position that it should not attempt such a

determination. Instead, it unanimously agreed that "of necessity" be defined as work that could not be done except on Sunday without serious inconvenience to the company and production. Of course, it was left to the company to determine the definition of a serious inconvenience. No joint deliberations between management and the local mill committee were considered appropriate.¹⁴⁷

At MacMillan's Canadian White Pine mill, another problem arose concerning Sunday workers in the event of a statutory holiday falling on their day off. The contract failed to provide explicitly for this situation. More specifically, millwrights who, of necessity worked Sunday with Monday as their day off, felt that in the event of a statutory holiday falling on a Monday, they were denied the benefit accruing to ordinary employees who got the bonus of two days off in a row. In such a case they felt they should receive the following day off as well as their regular day. The Joint Industry Committee, on which the union was represented by Pritchett, Dalskog and 1-217 president D.S. Watts (representing the local involved) recognized the right of employees to the same amount of time off, but did not acknowledge in any way the specific grievance of the millwrights. Employees were given no discretion as to how they were to be compensated. Instead it was recommended as policy for the entire industry that the employer should sometime within the ensuing thirty days, grant the employee concerned a rest day to make up for the holiday that fell on his day off.¹⁴⁸

During the NWLB vacations-with-pay hearing the industry spokesman argued that the five-year men in the mill section comprised 33 percent of employees and were usually in key positions. To give a second week's vacation en masse (as was the usual practice for vacations) would necessitate closing the mills down for a second week during the summer. This second closure would throw between 60 and 70 percent of the crew out of work without pay, and would hurt production. Both the union and the companies agreed during negotiations that, particularly when lumber production on the west coast was a vital necessity from every point of view, both civilian and military, it was important that the

agreement contain a provision that an extra week's pay could be given in lieu of the second week's vacation.¹⁴⁹ Nothing in the agreement stipulated how such a decision was to be made, leaving it then, by virtue of the management rights clause, to the companies to determine. In August 1945, local 1-357 asked for an interpretation as to whether it was a negotiable point between the company and the local whether a five-year employee received the time off or extra pay instead. The main mill operation in the local, Fraser Mills, had an unusually high proportion of five year men—563 out of 1227. In a vote of employees on the issue, a majority might easily have voted for the second week off, in spite of possible loss to less senior workers. At the very least, in light of the 1945 District demand for joint plant production committees in each operation, it was reasonable for the local to support some genuine in-plant consultation on the question. Instead, the Committee unanimously recommended that the company "acquaint Union representatives with the reasons for making the decision in respect to vacations for five year employees prior to posting notices dealing with the same thus giving the union an opportunity to make suggestions should the Union request a meeting for this purpose."¹⁵⁰

A final case to demonstrate the point that union involvement on the Joint Industry Committee tended to produce a bureaucratic disposition towards local issues involved a matter of interpretation on the night shift differential raised by both locals 1-80 and 1-357. Some employers had taken the position that the differential did not apply unless the night shift was operating on production; yet in mills and camps with no night shift operation there were steady crews of engineers, maintenance men and mechanics employed on the second and third shifts. The locals took the position, which was quite legitimate given the wording of Article III b,¹⁵¹ that these men were entitled to the differential. Rather than support this interpretation, the District representatives gave their unanimous support to a Committee decision to refer the matter to the RWLB for a ruling. Now it was quite possible that given disagreement on the issue the board would have been called in to rule ultimately. Nevertheless, though expedient, it was not terribly conducive to good relations

with the local members nor to the maintenance of a militant on-the-job posture to refer the matter from what was rapidly becoming one level of bureaucracy to another, run by the state. A policy of consolidating organizational gains did not necessarily have to entail total collaboration on the Joint Industry Committee in dealing with fairly routine matters of local industrial relations. No doubt this tendency toward centralization in contract administration was reinforced by conditions in the logging sector where it was often very difficult to keep grievance committees in the camps intact. During subsequent negotiations several cases would be cited where committees disbanded and "for long periods bargaining or grievance procedure was impossible."¹⁵² There was probably less excuse for this trend in the sawmill sector. Rather than promote strong shop-floor grievance committees as the backbone of local organizations, District leaders persisted in a policy of centralizing control from above, which may have been appropriate for an organizational phase, but which ought to have been relaxed and power disbursed during a phase of consolidation.¹⁵³

The strategy adopted by the District, of consolidating its local organizations around a signed industry-wide collective agreement, resulted in a situation where the real class struggle in the industry was displaced from the camps and mills and moved into the board rooms of the wartime industrial relations apparatus. In 1941, at the Lake Log arbitration, the worlds of the rank-and-file and the industrial relations bureaucracy briefly crossed paths. But even in that context, the workers' substantive role was as a noisy and boisterous audience, rather than as key actors in the drama. By 1944-45, the locus of power in the union was clearly centred at the District level. This structure was a direct outcome of the decision to go the "Wagner Act route." That strategy proved very successful in the short-term, but left the rickety structure of District One, without strong roots in many of the local job sites and occupational categories, vulnerable to attack. It is of course true that centralized District control also tended to keep power in the hands of the LPP cadre in the District. But that cadre also had loyal members and followers at the head of most, if not all of the locals. Given more time, a more truly representative, democratic

and decentralized system may have developed. The IWA, as an industry-wide organization, was very much a hot-house growth, produced by wartime market conditions. During 1944-45, no doubt, more might have been done to try to create viable local structures, as well as to accumulate members, certifications and signed agreements. That it was not had less to do with communist "democratic centralism" than with a fairly common CIO strategy—a successful one at that—of organizing and structuring the union around an industry-wide collective agreement negotiated and largely administered by the District Executive.

Chapter Six

1946: Negotiations

Since the mid-1930s, with the rise of the CIO unions and their legitimation through the Wagner Act, British Columbia's organized woodworkers had struggled in conjunction with North America's industrial proletariat to achieve the basic labour goals made possible by the New Deal era. After 1937 in British Columbia, the decades-long fight against the blacklist, open shop and swashbuckling, freewheeling capitalism of the "lumber barons" had been channelled into new and increasingly bureaucratic structures: a continental industrial woodworkers union and a state run industrial relations apparatus. The halcyon days of the second LWIU, when squadrons of loggers did direct battle in the backwoods of Vancouver Island with company stooges and scabs, gradually gave way to the slow, painstaking process of building and consolidating the British Columbia District in the more sophisticated world of labour, government and industry bureaucrats. But were these older, more "syndicalist" traditions "superceded and transformed," as Larry Peterson has argued with respect to North American communism's relationship with industrial unions? In the case of the IWA, the process of absorption of these older practices was more dialectical than in Peterson's general model for North America. These earlier forms of working class activity remained alive and ticking within the breast of the District One rank-and-file, and important aspects of its leadership. In British Columbia, the synthesis between the political and the economic had an outcome more akin to Peterson's European model, in which the marriage of party and union structures and personnel reoriented the entire structure of the party toward industrial action, so that "the economic structures of the Party threatened to engulf, even to replace the political apparatus...."³¹

The synthesis through which the trade union became the major vehicle for the political expression of Party policy produced few significant contradictions with the world of industrial relations, during a period when political activity was defined generally in terms of an alliance with New Deal liberalism and the construction of a broad anti-fascist

coalition. This characteristic was particularly marked in British Columbia where there was a very specific congruence between District One's industrial relations and political agenda. In sum, the "communization" of labour unionism, to use Peterson's concept, remained to a large extent invisible so long as the political battle accommodated itself to the basic structures outlined by Rooseveltian liberalism, which, from the perspective of District One leaders, extended into Canada and British Columbia during the Mackenzie King era. As Joseph Starobin has written, "for the first time in 75 years, left wing unionists had been able to integrate their trade union activity with the political movement which had given them their original impetus."² As long as the politics of industrial relations could be worked out within the mainstream political structure, communist labour leaders could carry their members without stumbling over basic contradictions between trade union and political goals. By 1947, this happy coincidence was no longer possible. The events of 1946 helped shove the politics of industrial relations into a confrontational mould.

I

By 1945, the New Deal era had run its course. As the war ended, strident voices within the more right-wing sections of the American industrial capitalist class and government departments began calling for an assault on labour at home, soon to be matched by a more assertive anti-communist approach in foreign policy.³ Both these tendencies would quickly find their echo within government and business circles in Canada and British Columbia. The process of post-war reconversion and political realignment, together with the emergence of a new phenomenon on the world stage, hegemonic American imperialism, quickly drove a hard wedge into the industrial union movement and between the political and industrial agendas of communist-led unions especially. The dilemma that very starkly faced many communist union leaders, as the crucial 1946-48 period bore down on them, is eloquently stated by Starobin, ex-CPUSA member turned academic, in American Communism in Crisis:

But if the Communist party were to demand of its members things they could not do as unionists, then it could easily be accused of wanting to use the union for ulterior purposes. The pro-Communist left had either to try to win support on the merits of the argument and abide by the decision of the majority if such support could not be won, or to provoke a bitter, fratricidal battle in which it was strong enough to make a fight but not strong enough to win. If it abided by the relationship of forces, it could retain trade union positions... But if it made a fight to politicize its union positions, the left wing would be returning to a syndicalist conception, the notion that the Party and the union were interchangeable and indistinguishable. With such a concept, the left wing of the mid-forties had hardly a better chance of maintaining itself than its predecessor had. To adapt itself to the separation between Party and union meant to follow the logic of the success of the unions which had become autonomous and institutionalized forces within the society, whatever the private views of their pioneering, crusading founders. Many a left wing unionist in fact accepted the compulsions of this institutionalization as a matter of day-to-day practice.⁴

With respect to the case under study here, Starobin's analysis may underestimate the degree of integration reached between Party and union already by 1944, an integration muted by a broad political consensus, notwithstanding the internecine skirmishes between communists and social democrats. This broad consensus would begin to break down and skirmishes turn to battles when the pioneering and crusading founders of District One jumped on the anti-imperialist band-wagon set rolling by William Z. Foster and Henry Wallace in the United States. To use Starobin's phrase again, the logic of their own success dictated a more cautious adherence to the compulsions of an institutionalized trade unionism, the apparent object of their struggle since 1937. But the syndicalist and revolutionary "beast" that still lived at the very heart of the original vanguard and their loyal followers, pushed District One up against and then ultimately through the very limits of that institutionalization. Eventually, even the continentalist approach to industrial unionism out of which that institutionalization had emerged was called into question. This path was a very dangerous one to tread at a time when most woodworkers who had waged the war against fascism at home on the production front, and those returning veterans who swelled the ranks of the post-war workforce, would have only a limited tolerance for talk of class war and international crusades against fascism, imperialism and anti-communism.

With the end of the war in Europe, American policy makers moved quickly to release themselves from the entanglements of the Soviet alliance. The development of the atomic bomb, the control of which Truman would not agree to share with the Soviet Union, ensured not only victory in the Pacific without Russian aid, but also gave the President a powerful diplomatic weapon for use in stabilizing the peace in America's interests.⁵ As the Soviets proceeded to consolidate their position in Eastern Europe, the United States, under Truman's direction, moved quickly onto its cold war footing. As expressed in Winston Churchill's Fulton, Missouri speech of March 1946, this position consisted of an Anglo-American anti-Soviet alliance outside of the UN and under the security of the bomb.⁶ While Canada still waffled, post-war economic pressures and the pattern of economic and military cooperation with the United States during the war were quickly moving it towards full integration with American international aims. King, never high on the UN as an instrument of peace, and preferring a policy of demobilization and disengagement, received a rude awakening when the Gouzenko revelations of September 1945 forced his hand.⁷ In February 1946, the Canadian government announced an agreement by the Permanent Joint Board of Defence, to extend the wartime defence alliance with the United States into the post-war period.⁸

In the midst of this realignment of international political forces, the Soviet Union provided no firm direction to the world communist movement until September 1947, largely because of the participation of the European parties in coalition governments. Then, with the formation of the Cominform, Stalin announced the period of the two camps.⁹ Long before that, though, Duclos had delivered his message to the American communists resulting in the reconstitution of the CPUSA under the leadership of William Z. Foster who had worked as an industrial organizer within the trade union movement since the early 1920s.¹⁰ Foster undertook with zeal the task of cleansing the party of its Browderist heresy. No more talk of alliances with progressive branches of the capitalist class. World politics was fast being polarized between "the reactionary monopolists" and the

revolutionary forces led by the Soviet Union, Foster told a rally in September 1945. The job of American communists, he wrote in February 1946, was to lead a broad coalition of democratic forces within the country, "to pull the teeth of American reaction" in order to stop the drive for world domination of American imperialism. This great coalition, led by the trade unions, would ultimately culminate in the creation of a third party movement. Starobin notes that the seeds of a misguided sectarian departure from the well-trodden path of the political mainstream, which proved so successful for the communists over a period of ten years, were already germinating at this early date.¹¹

In the judgement of ex-Party member Norman Penner, the LPP, because of its physical and ideological proximity to the CPUSA, began its departure from the national unity tactic of Browderism before most other communist parties.¹² During the dramatic UAW strike at Ford's Windsor plant in November 1945, Tim Buck delivered a remarkable speech in Toronto, issued soon after as a pamphlet entitled "'Atomic Diplomacy'—a threat to World Peace." In this pamphlet the LPP leader excoriated the Anglo-American plot to restore reaction through intervention against the democratic masses in Europe, South America, Indonesia and China. The aim was to establish American finance-capitalism in a position of dominance in the post-war world, with Britain as its junior partner. The government of Mackenzie King, according to Buck, had aligned itself on the side of reaction in international affairs, and this position was supported in its domestic affairs by its actions on behalf of Henry Ford at Windsor. For Buck, as for Foster, the trade union struggle at home "for jobs and security with a democratic labour code," was part of a larger people's struggle all over Europe and Asia for freedom from reaction. "In defeating the Fords of Canada," Buck intoned, "we shall help prevent the rise of new Hitlers anywhere in the world."¹³

This theme, drawing together the trade union struggle for very narrowly prescribed collective bargaining gains, with a much broader national and international people's movement of liberation from the yoke of American imperialism, was given heavy emphasis

in the LPP's draft policy resolution published for pre-convention discussion in April 1946. Emphasized as well was the attempt to turn Canada into a "cockpit of World War III," a development which would end by subjugating the country's democratic institutions, including the trade union movement, to the "triumph of North American fascism." The subordination of both Canada's economy and national sovereignty to Anglo-American imperialism called for a broad people's movement of workers, farmers, small businessmen, veterans, professionals and housewives led by the Canadian working class. In this people's movement, the trade unions, which the LPP clearly regarded as its main organizational instrument, having been strengthened by the war, were taking a leading part "by advancing their programmes of legislative reforms, wage increases, the shorter working week and the curbing of monopoly prices." Beyond that, Canadian labour was fighting for these objectives "in fraternal solidarity with labour in all lands, united in the great World Federation of Trade Unions." The Canadian workers were to lead the struggle since they were the best organized of the anti-monopolist forces and because their condition as wage earners brought them into "the sharpest opposition to the policies of the monopolists—particularly now, when the whole struggle to determine the direction of Canada's post-war policies is expressed in the wages struggle."¹⁴

In the absence of any strict guidance from Moscow as to the new political line, the Canadian and American parties appeared to be advancing in lock-step. In retrospect the 1946 wage struggle across North America did little to halt any drive for world supremacy of American monopoly capitalism. But in the heady days of early 1946 in Canada, the left wing of the industrial labour movement was definitely feeling in an aggressive position of strength. The new direction being charted by Tim Buck to a large extent grew out of the militancy of the communist-led unions, fuelled, it must be said, by the pent-up demands of their rank-and-file, and in turn struck a responsive chord amongst them.

II

The last part of 1945 saw District One gearing up for its first set of post-war negotiations. A comprehensive survey of wages and conditions in the various regions of the interior was undertaken in an effort to incorporate the negotiating programme there into a broad District effort led by the stronger coast locals. A festering battle for certification at Sitka Spruce Lumber in Vancouver, going on since mid-1944, against attempts by the company to install an affiliate of the so-called Amalgamated Union of Canada, came to a head in October when the provincial government refused to prosecute the company for giving support to a company union.¹⁵ As similar efforts were being undertaken to reorganize a company union at Consolidated Mining and Smelting in Trail, a plan was hatched to make the Sitka case the "spearhead" of organized labour's attack against company unions in Canada. The plan called for a joint presentation of the case by Pat Conroy of the CCL, Harvey Murphy of Mine Mill and Pritchett.¹⁶

Negotiations for a first agreement at Keystone Shingle and Lumber in New Westminster went to conciliation when the company refused to sign without deletion of the entire hours of work article from the master agreement. When the conciliation board acceded to the company position in June, the crew rejected the award. The dispute dragged on toward the end of the year, when the company lowered the pay scale of nine employees in contravention of an April directive of the NWLB.¹⁷ With industry-wide negotiations approaching, the District Council decided Keystone was a crucial test of its resolve to fight for the 1946 demands. A strike was called on 28 November, supported liberally by District funds. It ended on 22 January 1946 with the signing of the 1945 coast master agreement.¹⁸

At the January District Convention in Vancouver, where the programme for 1946 collective bargaining was approved, the resolution calling for the establishment of a Fighting Fund based on voluntary contributions of one day's pay argued its urgency inasmuch as both the Ford strike in Windsor, and the Keystone strike in Vancouver

showed that reactionary interests supported by the federal government were planning to drive wages down in the first major post-war round of negotiations.¹⁹ Though minor instances in themselves, both the Sitka and Keystone episodes reveal that District One was coming to regard itself as being at the very eye of the storm, if not spearheading the way in the looming post-war confrontation between the Canadian labour movement and monopoly capital, over the issues of union security and the removal of federal wartime controls.

Indeed, the peaceful wartime atmosphere of industrial cooperation was already being purposefully poisoned by the business press in British Columbia, most notably by the influential periodical, Western Business and Industry. In a continuing diatribe beginning in August 1945, labour's major post-war demands, the union shop, check-off, the 40-hour week and increased wages were all linked directly to communism's totalitarian mentality, and domination by a Moscow leadership intent on undermining capitalism's post-war economic prospects. They would create conditions for the election of a leftist government to be supported by funds from the union check-off. In particular, employers were urged not to be afraid to undergo a strike to halt the march to union security.²⁰

That kind of anti-communist critique, taken together with the more specific confrontations in the lumber industry—the NWLB directive rolling back the wage bonus and travel allowance for Queen Charlotte Islands loggers, and the runaround being given union negotiators in the interior locals by CMA representative Ruddock—contributed to a perception of building reaction and provided a fertile local context for the incorporation of the new Buck-Foster line into the IWA's trade union agenda (see chapter five above). An important aspect of that line, as it was interpreted by the IWA, was a strategy of using the trade unions as collective bargaining agents to push for aims that previously had been viewed as part of the political action agenda of labour. Indeed, if in the 1944-45 period many collective bargaining items had been shoved into the arena of political action in the interests of industrial peace and consolidation, in the immediate post-war era, the broad programme of political and social reform which had formed the basis of the wartime

political action agenda, was now being brought to the negotiating table. Recent electoral setbacks for the left in British Columbia and at the federal level no doubt contributed to this development.

The Wages and Contract Committee report approved by the Ninth Annual Convention of District Council One was breathtaking in its scope and audacity. The temper of the meeting was indicated by the political nature of the many resolutions that preceded any substantive discussion of District collective bargaining issues. Indeed, the first 12 resolutions put on the floor addressed major national or international questions such as imperialist armed intervention in China and Indonesia, fascism in Spain, international control of atomic energy and so on. In their report to the convention the officers noted that 1946 would require "the raising of the understanding of our membership, owing to the necessity of the entire trade union movement carrying on a consistent political struggle for jobs, labour and social security legislation, for International cooperation of the United Nations, to avoid a third world war." The federal government was blasted for shirking its promises with respect to reconversion and post-war rehabilitation by throwing the entire project "into the laps of private enterprise." The programme of the capitalists had recently been made amply clear: remove price controls and smash wage standards on the pretext of international competitiveness. "Big Business" had spoken very frankly. The officers urged, "Let us speak with equal frankness." The report from the wages and contract committee did just that.

The programme being put before the convention, the committee asserted, could only be implemented as part of a joint struggle with the unions in the basic industries of British Columbia and throughout Canada. The objective would be for the entire trade union movement to adopt and join in a concerted effort to obtain these demands for all working people. Furthermore, the committee wanted the delegates to be aware that the attack from the reactionary monopolists against which this programme was intended to defend Canadian workers, was but part of an international capitalist assault against common people

and the labour movement: "The intervention in China and Indonesia is reactionary monopolist and cannot be separated from the position that the reactionary monopolists are taking in our own country against the working people...." That position was exemplified in particular by events at Windsor, the CMA's approach to bargaining in the interior, and the general effort to use the reconstruction process to destroy the trade union movement and lower general standards. Against that initiative, the IWA was urged to look forward to securing the peace by fighting for the CCL programme of full employment and other basic living conditions. Only by increasing the purchasing power of workers was full employment a possibility. More to the point, the war had been fought for the principles énonciated in the Atlantic Charter: freedom of speech and worship, freedom from want and fear. To obtain these the convention was asked to approve three basic demands: a 40-hour week, a 25-cent per hour increase, union shop and check-off; and to seek the support of farmers, small businessmen and people in communities generally whose economic welfare would be affected by the struggle.

In order to implement the programme, the committee recommended that the IWA institute a nation-wide campaign, similar to that of the CIO in the United States, "to get the other trade unions to go along with our union for the same demands and enlist their support in our struggle." A strike vote, the committee recommended, should be held immediately to be used whenever necessary, a strike fund of a day's pay per member set up, and the entire programme submitted to local meetings for approval.²¹

In rising to support the report of the committee, President Pritchett declared, as if in defence of this rather ambitious, if not audacious proposal: "It is quite energetic and not the least fantastic. The time has come when we should call a spade a spade, and leave this Convention with no confusion whatsoever." Pritchett drew very heavily on the lessons of the Ford strike, "one of the greatest struggles in the history of the labour movement," to which District One had subscribed \$26,000 of the \$47,000 raised through the British Columbia Federation of Labour. Though at the time of the convention, arbitrator Ivan

Rand had not yet handed down his award, Pritchett passed his judgement on the CCL's role in the affair. "Due to hesitancy in (the) leadership of Canadian labour to rally the movement on the pretext of a lack of authority," he predicted, "the results of the Ford strike will not come up to expectations." His reference, at least in part, was to the action of Pat Conroy and the CCL National Ford Strike Committee in quickly thwarting the attempt of the local joint policy committee to rally CCL unions behind a one-day nation-wide sympathy strike on 12 November 1945. The IWA was prepared to carry on the fight started by the Ford workers. But first, it was necessary to get the strike vote and raise an emergency strike fund. "We can then go to the International officers of the C.I.O. and the C.C.L. leaders and say, 'The woodworkers are prepared to lead the struggle for the adoption of the aims of the Atlantic Charter'." More specifically, in the event that, as it had been rumoured, A.R. Mosher was about to call a special conference on wages and contracts, the IWA would then take the programme adopted by the convention and present it to all CCL affiliates seeking their full endorsement.²²

It is evident from these January proceedings that District One did not view its imminent confrontation with the lumber operators as any ordinary job action. Rather, this conflict was to be the spearhead of a concerted effort by Canadian labour to secure its wartime gains and extend them into the period of post-war reconstruction of Canadian society. On a larger scale it was to be part of the international struggle against rising American imperialism and reactionary monopoly capitalism. Never before in the short but tumultuous history of District One had its trade union agenda been so explicitly linked to the broader class struggle in Canada and throughout the world. It is particularly noteworthy, in view of the conventional wisdom concerning communist-led labour unions, that this development occurred in the absence of any specific directions from Stalin. District One was not being pulled by strings from Moscow. The pull if any came more from the CPUSA, as well as from an independent reading of events unfolding across North America, Europe and Asia which indicated the need for a dramatic shift. The push came

from within the union ranks where woodworkers expected the union to make demands commensurate with their wartime contribution and their faltering economic position, and to utilize whatever strategy was necessary to win them. Moreover, District One was pushed along this new path by a trade union logic peculiar to the new political conditions. If indeed the political framework of New Deal industrial relations was breaking down at war's end, it was illogical to carry on as if nothing had changed. In that context it made some sense that political questions would become an integral part of the trade union agenda. One of those questions, "what was the new industrial relations structure to be?" preoccupied both the IWA and the coast lumber operators during the 1946 contract dispute. It is as an event that did much to define the post-war nature of class relations in British Columbia that the 1946 strike has its broadest historical significance.

III

In mid-January, District One, as required by contract, notified the coast employers' bargaining agent, Stuart Research Service, of its intention to open negotiations to amend the collective agreement, the term of which ran to 15 March.²³ At that time, negotiations had been proceeding haltingly in the interior. It grew increasingly likely that they would eventually run parallel with industry negotiations on the coast in an effort to win an industry-wide settlement throughout the province.²⁴

Following Pritchett's scenario, during the month of January the locals ratified the wage and contract proposals. Strike ballots were readied and the so-called District Fighting Fund was established on the basis of voluntary contributions of one day's pay per member.²⁵ As District One readied itself for action, a massive strike wave in the United States, kicked off by the UAW strike against General Motors in November 1945, reached its peak. By the latter part of January, GM workers "were joined by hundreds of thousands of steel, electrical equipment and meatpacking workers" in what Nelson Lichtenstein calls "the largest strike wave in American history." Although the CIO brass,

still hungover from its long experience with New Deal tripartism, shied away from a direct political confrontation with Truman, these strikes, as Lichtenstein describes, were ultimately political. Their aim was to win significant wage increases while at the same time putting enough pressure on Truman's administration to preserve the wartime price apparatus, the only way to ensure meaningful economic gains. Twenty-five cents an hour became the accepted demand amongst many of the large American unions. By the end of February, a pattern increase of $18\frac{1}{2}$ cents per hour had been set by steel, and conformed to in settlements in the auto, oil rubber, electrical and meatpacking settlements.²⁶ According to Lichtenstein, the strike settlement of 1946 in the United States was a "pyrrhic" victory merely giving industry a weapon to use against price controls, finally removed in November. Nevertheless, in the heady days of the winter and spring of 1945-46, the American CIO strikes provided a model and an inspiration for CIO unions in Canada, and dovetailed nicely with the post-war communist perspective on politicizing the trade union agenda.²⁷

At the end of January a conference of all the major Canadian CIO unions was held in Toronto, where it was decided that a national campaign in line with the IWA programme would be launched immediately, and efforts made to include all CCL unions. Mine Mill stalwart Harvey Murphy, a leading figure in the provincial LPP, reported to the 4 February IWA District Executive meeting on the Toronto conference. He noted that while price ceilings were being raised, wage control order P.C. 9384 still held the lid on workers' paycheques. Sounding an old syndicalist note, Murphy urged that the miners, railway and woodworkers must lead the struggle against the wage-price policies of the federal government, and put the full support of his union behind the IWA demands.²⁸

In Hamilton, a cauldron of labour unrest during 1946, the Steelworkers, Electrical Workers and Rubber Workers unions formed a local wage policy committee which set 25 cents as the basic demand. But, as an indication of the limits to coordinated action posed by splits in the labour movement, the USW balked at the 25 cents, and in February refused

to cooperate with the local committee at all, due mainly to the attitude of Charles Millard and other national Steelworker figures toward the communist UE.²⁹

On 10 February, Nigel Morgan, British Columbia LPP leader and ex-secretary of District One, addressing a membership meeting of the party welcomed the coming wage conference of the CCL unions and pointed out that only a powerful coordinated national movement could assure victory. He presented the main resolutions adopted by a provincial LPP trade union conference which called for the by-passing of PC 9384 and for labour to develop the wage struggle to such a level that the main sections of the labour movement, CCL, AFL and independent unions, would enter the fight in a united and energetic way.³⁰

The Executive Council of the CCL met during the second week of February to consider the establishment of a national wage policy. But the CCL was not about to endorse a wave of political strikes against the government, particularly one being pushed by the likes of Pritchett, Murphy and Morgan. That position was reinforced at the same meeting when Millard's charges against LPP member C.S. Jackson, vice-president of UE, were tabled for investigation by a sub-committee. Jackson, alone among members of the CCL's National Ford Strike Committee had enthusiastically supported the proposed nationwide one-day strike, predicting at a Market Hall meeting "a spontaneous show of support across the country."³¹

The CCL executive nevertheless pledged to support "to the utmost of its ability" the efforts of constituent unions to obtain a general wage increase to ensure every worker a higher standard of living, and a reduction in hours to 40 or less with no reduction in pay. The wage policy was expressed in general terms, according to the Canadian Unionist, so as not to interfere with the rights of affiliated unions to establish their own policy. The CCL wage policy concluded by advocating an increase in production of consumer goods, and the maintenance of price controls.³² This policy was not, of course, a programme for nation-wide coordinated job action, though locals were urged to discuss it and "see to what extent they can embody it in their own immediate wage programme." Rather it was struck

as a political action programme which formed the basis of the Congress' annual memorandum to and lobby of the federal government in April.³³ The CCL was careful to distance itself from any planned nation-wide industrial action.³⁴ It did, however, set up, at the behest of the more militant CIO unions, the National Wage Coordinating Committee which met in April to draft a uniform policy for all CCL affiliates, and to hear reports from individual unions. Full reports were given by the IWA, Mine Mill, USW, UE and UAW. Pritchett informed his District Council on 14 April that "from this discussion it was evident the situation was favourable for a concerted national campaign in Canada around the first week in May." Word from International headquarters in Portland indicated a strong possibility of a strike amongst American west coast woodworkers around that time as well. Of course, he could not say that coordinated action would occur on a certain day, as unions necessarily had different demands and policies to apply to particular situations, but it was possible to say that "the situation in Canada is shaping up very nicely. We also realize that it is not going to be the IWA alone who will be able to smash through P.C. 9384, but it will take such mass concerted action to be successful." The CIO movement in the United States, Pritchett explained to the council, also linked its wage campaign to a fight for price control. On that question, he was certain the union could gain broad public support: "We will have to involve as many as we can in this fight along with us."³⁵ In an effort to coordinate the work of the major British Columbia unions, District One also initiated, in March, an informal conference of delegates from the seaman, fishermen, metal miners, street railway and longshore unions, and was working to establish a permanent coordinating committee.³⁶

While the broader picture was apparently falling into place, District One itself was humming with activity. The strike vote authorizing the District Council to call out the membership in the likely event that the IWA's demands were not met was coming in heavily in favour during early February. The 1946 programme reportedly had served to strengthen the union's position in plants at Fanny Bay and Port Alberni where organization

had fallen off during the latter part of the war.³⁷ George Mitchell of the New Westminster local, not great friend of the District executive, reported membership growing by leaps and bounds. Locals 1-80 and 1-217 reported enthusiastically that they had run short of strike ballots.³⁸

While negotiations for a 1946 contract had not yet begun on the coast, a tentative settlement was reached in Prince George based on the 1945 coast agreement. It was scuttled before the RWLB had a chance to consider it, when the union demanded the right to open the agreement for renegotiation on 30-days notice. With the southern interior operators still resisting an industry-wide settlement, and with the coast situation coming to a head, the District wanted a free hand to bring the whole interior region into the fray. Moreover, federal price controls had been relaxed during the course of the RWLB deliberations. Accepting a wage scale for Prince George under PC 9384, while prices on some 300 items were being hoisted, ran counter to the overall District wage policy for 1946.³⁹

The strategy for the interior was neatly summed up by International Board member Dalskog who, because of a shortfall of funds coming from the International, was put on the District payroll and paid out of the Fighting Fund account, to carry out the work required to unite the interior with the coast under the 1946 programme. Dalskog told a negotiation strategy meeting that since the interior lumbermen had been stalling on negotiations, and with the 1946 contract coming up on the coast, it was the union's turn to do a little stalling and bring the interior up alongside the stronger locals. He continued:

It is no use attempting to get the satisfactory wage increases through the Regional War Labour Board. It would be necessary to by-pass P.C. 9384 and the only way this could be done is by uniting the whole of the industry into one similar demand. Likewise, Conciliation Boards will bring about no satisfactory solution, and we should move to do away with them and settle the whole problem with one master stroke.

New demands were to be drafted more in line with the coast demands, and the interior locals were to prepare to take parallel action to enforce them. Some voices were raised in

concern about the readiness of the interior locals to bring their members in solidly behind the strike. Pritchett assured that it would be the objective to try to avoid a strike in the interior, but warned that the locals must be prepared to strike if necessary. The full strategy was to be hashed out at an interior policy conference on 12 March.⁴⁰

The wage situation in the interior was chaotic. On account of the concentration of production into several large operations in the north, a situation resembling that on the coast, the RWLB had recognized many more occupational classifications there than in the south, resulting in a higher overall wage ceiling. But there were wide differentials amongst the various southern areas as well. The RWLB allowed a range of rates in many job classifications, with the precise wage left to the employer's discretion. While it had been the Board's intention that specific rates be determined on some rational basis relating to the nature of the job, skill, or length of service, the Pacific Coast Labour Bureau found, in its 1945 survey, that the determining factor was in many cases expediency. A labour shortage in the East Kootenays had resulted in the illegal practice of paying much higher than RWLB rates. The recognition of additional job classifications there resulted in the highest average sawmilling rates in the south. The high concentration of Japanese workers in the North Okanagan employed at a flat rate of 57 cents helped produce a low average wage in that area. The RWLB common labour minimum wage in the interior was 12 cents below the 67 cent floor set for the coast. But the variation across interior sawmills was actually much greater than the RWLB's differential with the coast. In Prince George, only 40 percent of mill workers earned below 67 cents per hour, compared to 47 percent in East Kootenay, 57 percent in Kamloops and 63 percent in Nelson. In addition to the elimination of range rates, the September 1945 Kamloops conference had set the objective of raising the common labour rate across the interior to 67 cents. The November 1945 District brief for presentation to the RWLB aimed at establishing a uniform minimum and stabilizing wages across a multitude of different occupational categories in approximate parity with the coast, as a basis for industry-wide collective bargaining.⁴¹

The interior negotiation agenda just on wages, leaving aside the remainder of the collective agreement, was truly onerous and complex. The organizational problems in the industry, dominated as it was by hundreds of small, dispersed operations, made it difficult to mobilize the workforce behind any coherent set of demands. In 1946, by comparison with the coast sawmill sector, the interior had 4516 employees dispersed across 515 operations, as against 14,084 coastal employees in 343 operations.⁴² The total number of woodworkers in the interior is not clearly discernable from the available statistics, but appears to have been anywhere between 5000 and 8000,⁴³ from Prince George in the north to Cranbrook in the south-east. Each area had its own peculiar forest economy which presented additional problems. Prince George, for instance, was traditionally linked to the northern rail economy and had a vast hinterland of untapped timber wealth upon which to draw for future expansion. The union estimated a potential membership there of 2000, which exceeded the combined potential of Kamloops, Princeton and Kelowna.⁴⁴ The southern industry, generally, was less richly endowed and, according to the union's analysis, its operators were controlled more directly by the reactionary CMA. That association in British Columbia, in turn, was said to be dominated by the CPR and Consolidated Mining and Smelting. Dalskog, who was fast becoming the District's resident expert on interior matters, alleged that "if the operators don't fall in line with the CMA, they cannot ship their products out, because the CPR says no." The northern operators, linked into the CNR, apparently felt more independent. The union believed the CMA, which in fact conducted negotiations for both interior districts on behalf of the Interior Lumber Manufacturers' Association and the Northern Interior Lumbermen's Association, welcomed that set-up inasmuch as it kept the interior industry and the union decentralized, and served as an obstacle to any standardization of rates in the direction of the higher Prince George scale.⁴⁵

Furthermore, the interior situation suffered inasmuch as there was still, in 1946, a great deal of organizational work to be done on the coast, and the District's resources were

stretched thin. Given the policy of the International Director of Organization to try to drive an anti-communist wedge between the District Council and the interior locals, there was a certain urgency to attaining a first agreement. Caught up in the idea of a continent-wide post-war strike wave, the District leaders decided to try to leap over all the complexities and difficulties of the interior and adopt Dalskog's "one master stroke" policy. When delegates who had been involved in the effort for the previous six months or more to consolidate an agreement around the 1945 coast terms assembled in Kamloops on 12 March to receive the word, the District leaders had plenty of explaining to do.

Opposition was to be expected from Kamloops delegate Sekora, a "white bloc" organizer who felt that the operators were too weak to stand a 25-cent increase, and the union too weak numerically to support an effective strike. Moreover, loggers laid-off since November were not happy about a strike just as operations reopened. His concerns were seconded by Simpson from Kamloops who also wanted reconsideration of the wage proposal, but would go the limit on 40 hours. The equally weak Princeton local supported the Kamloops position. But even Prince George delegates were not happy with the endless changes in programme. The membership there had been sold so thoroughly by the union on the 1945 agreement, it would be difficult to gain acceptance of the new proposals. The prevailing sentiment around the local, they reported, was that the union should have grabbed the 1945 agreement while it had the chance. District loyalist Freylinger, who disagreed with the other Prince George delegates, nevertheless admitted there was a great deal of confusion as to why so much change had occurred in the space of two weeks. The strike vote issue had been presented to the local, he informed the meeting, but it had been decided not to take the vote until after the conference had provided some more information to take back to the members. Delegate Range explained that as Prince George was about the highest paid area in the interior, the men figured they were in a secure enough position. They would have to be educated that the only real security was through the union. The report from Kelowna by District loyalist Mel Fulton was of a 75 percent strike vote, the

main centre of resistance being as always, Simpson's Sawmill where "the boys and girls" had recently been given a three-cent increase. Though supporters of the programme, his membership did not want a strike.

The biggest boosters of the 1946 programme were from Nelson and Cranbrook, though the delegate from East Kootenay did point out that it no longer appeared the interior was going for equalization of wages with the coast, given the 25-cent across-the-board demand. Al Parkin, union and LPP stalwart now working out of Cranbrook, noted his local was in good shape because of the "psychology of the boys." They had been organized before; there were even still a few IWW members. The recent RWLB decision granting raises in only 29 of 136 job categories of three percent had put the local in a fighting mood. Though they could have signed off the 1945 agreement on those terms they had decided to fight for the 1946 programme. It was important to remember, urged Parkin, that the interior employers were instilled with the policies of the CMA to keep the worker down to the lowest possible level: "We must realize that we are dealing with not just an employer, but with the organized employers, and reactionary capitalism."

In order to steer the meeting onto the right track, District Executive and LPP members, Melsness and Bergren kept before the delegates the IWA's role in that larger struggle. Bergren noted from the discussion that the interior suffered from the same kind of differences as existed on the coast with respect to degrees of enthusiasm for going the limit. But, he chided, "how can we sit here and talk about compromising when all the CIO, CCL and AFL have endorsed the program that came out of our Convention?" From the chair, Bert Melsness summed up and offered a simple resolution to the conflict that appeared to exist between District policy and the concerns of some interior locals. With respect to the employers not being able to take a raise in pay, he explained, it was important to understand that being employed by the lumber industry, whether by a big or small operator, was subject to the demand for lumber, and if the "little guy can't produce it, the big guy can...and if we can't work for the little guy we can work for the big guy." In

either case, woodworkers could "help to create a larger demand for the things we produce by fighting for the wage program on a national basis." He recommended negotiations with Stuart Research and the CMA at the same time. On the question of equalization of rates, which had dominated the interior negotiating agenda for almost a year, Melsness quickly brushed that concern aside. The main question now was a 25-cent increase. "After we get that we can incorporate equalization of wage rates into our negotiations" the District secretary assured.

Despite the obvious divisions and weaknesses amongst the interior locals, the motion carried to adopt and support the IWA's 1946 programme, which had now become, according to the rhetorical flourish of Vice-President Bergren, the programme of the entire Canadian labour movement. An action committee for the interior was struck, representing all six locals, and dominated by the four district appointees, Parkin, Fulton, Freylinger and Langmead. Heading into negotiations with Stuart Research in a matter of days, and apparently spearheading the attack of Canadian labour against reactionary capitalism and the policies of the federal state, District One had been spared the embarrassment of a public display of the structural and political weaknesses in its own organization. The interior had been brought on board.⁴⁶

IV

As the IWA prepared its challenge to the established industrial arrangements in the provincial forest industry, in conjunction with a nation-wide struggle against wartime wage-price relationships, the operators in British Columbia's most important industry were busy defining their own post-war strategy with respect to the shape of industrial relations. While District One was moving towards expanding the post-war playing field, the operators were looking to narrow it. Nineteen forty-six would be a crucial year in this regard, as PC 1003 was due to expire early in 1947, with power over industrial relations

reverting to the provinces. The conduct of collective bargaining in 1946 would have a decisive influence on the direction of post-war labour policy.

In a lecture delivered to the third annual convention of the provincial Truck Loggers Association in January, and published in the British Columbia Lumberman, well-known counsel in labour-management disputes, Walter S. Owen, reviewed the progress of industrial unions over the course of the war from open shop to union recognition. With the passage of so-called compulsory collective bargaining legislation, the open shop had now come to mean any shop without a union security clause in effect. "I think we may deduce," Owen warned, "that the battle lines are being drawn for further struggle and many more important negotiations will be the order of the day in the immediate future, and employers must prepare themselves without delay." In particular, employers must prevent a repeat of 1943 when a unified labour movement won amendments to the ICA Act over the heads of disorganized employer groups. That development had proven more disastrous than anyone had anticipated when the provincial minister of labour succeeded in having incorporated into the federal Wartime Labour Relations Regulations many of the features employers in British Columbia found to be most obnoxious. As for the future of labour relations, Owen urged the necessity to clarify current ambiguity with respect to the employer's right to communicate with his employees on the subject of union organization. More importantly, it was essential to "drive relentlessly" toward the goal of imposing financial and legal responsibility on trade unions for actions such as illegal strikes, as a quid pro quo for the legal requirement to deal with a certified union. The post-war world of labour relations, Owen concluded, was going to pose many challenges to the goal of obtaining industrial harmony. In particular, the conduct of the IWA in announcing it would take a strike vote before the start of negotiations marked a deterioration in relations between labour and management. "That to me," owned Owen, "is tantamount to approaching the conciliation table with a loaded gun pointed at the employers."⁴⁷

¶ The IWA's strike vote certainly did cause consternation amongst coastal operators who had grown accustomed to a more quiescent relationship with labour over the previous two years. To calm fears, Stuart Research circularized its clients assuring them that though there was no provision in PC 1003 to prevent the IWA from taking a strike vote prior to entering negotiations, the question of the timing of a strike was another matter. After the union submitted its demands, probably soon after 15 March, the process of negotiation and compulsory conciliation would take at least 73 days. There would be no strike allowed until after the end of May, and more likely not until mid-June, Stuart assured the operators.⁴⁸

The operators in the forest industry wished to continue the pattern of "friendly bargaining" established during the last years of the war while at the same time imposing new restrictions and legal entanglements on the union as bargaining agent. From the other side, the union, just as ingenuously maintained that emergency legislation set up for wartime purposes, especially orders PC 1003 and PC 9384, provided an inadequate framework for peace time labour-management relations. That argument had substantial weight with respect to the wage control order. But the dispute settlement machinery incorporated into PC 1003, as the union well knew, predated the war considerably. Moreover, the union recognition, certification and collective bargaining provisions of the order went a good way toward meeting long-sought union demands with respect to recognition and security. A policy of circumvention in 1946 had more to do with the end of a period of North American politics dating from the mid-1930s than with the end of the wartime emergency. As Stuart Research and District One entered negotiations in March 1946, neither side intended to play the game by the old rules, at least not for long. But the union would be the most immediate and obvious transgressor, and most vulnerable to public attack after the strike. The employers' agenda, in the process of formulation well before the strike, and fleshed out over the course of 1946, could be made to look like a

response to the events of that year. The IWA, and other militant industrial unions, played right into the organized employers' hands.

V

Armed with a 93 percent strike vote, District One opened negotiations with Stuart Research on 21 March 1946. The District Council had been given an additional shot in the arm with the recent victory in the International executive referendum election of three left-wing candidates largely on the basis of support from District One and Two. For the first time since 1941, the International executive was not to be dominated by anti-communists. Of particular note was the election of first vice-president of CPUSA member Karly Larsen from Northern Washington.⁴⁹ While there would be little material benefit for District One, given the lack of an International strike fund, the presence of Larsen on the negotiating team gave a moral boost to Pritchett, Dalskog, Bergren and Melsness, and tended to neutralize International president Fadling, who also at times sat on the committee.⁵⁰

The set of proposals presented to Stuart Research on 26 March was unusual in its scope. For instance, one-half of the 60-page wage proposal had nothing directly to do with the collective agreement. Extended statistical presentations and arguments urged the federal government to adopt a reconstruction programme aimed at full employment and adequate housing. These items were, of course, part of the CCL's political action programme as well as high on the agenda of the LPP.⁵¹ While these were no doubt important political issues for the union to pursue, it is questionable whether they had any place on the bargaining table. Stuart Research discussed them under the category of "other subjects" and confined its reply to wage and hour matters pertaining to the lumber industry.⁵² The IWA, nevertheless, cast its argument for increased wages in global terms. Current demands and job action to back them up were directed as much at the wage, price and social policy of the Canadian state as they were at the British Columbia lumber operators.

Such was the orientation not only of collective bargaining demands, but also of District strategy and tactics. In general, the District had committed itself to a tactic of circumventing the existing federal industrial relations regulations governing wages and dispute settlement. But beyond that, the larger strategy was not only to circumvent, but to smash the war-labour boards and federal wage controls. A strike seemed inevitable, in fact, desirable. But what kind of strike, and against whom? Pritchett outlined the alternatives. The woodworkers could strike the employers after negotiations failed to yield the maximum demand; or, the District could settle for a minimum programme, make joint application to the RWLB, and then strike when it was rejected. The latter option held the greatest potential, but also carried the most responsibility and risk for the leaders of the IWA. International Board member Dalskog summed up the situation for the delegates at the 14 April District Council meeting: "If we accept an offer of the employer and have to go on strike to force the Regional Board to approve it, then that will be the ticket, not only for the IWA, but for the entire trade union movement across Canada." But, he continued, if the employers offered 15 cents, he did not see how the union could accept without giving "serious consideration to the whole position of the trade union movement across Canada, because if we accept it, the whole movement would be confined to such an increase."⁵³ What might be a satisfactory increase to British Columbia woodworkers might not be appropriate to their lower paid counterparts in Quebec, or to steel workers in Ontario. The total picture would have to be considered, not just the immediate concerns of the British Columbia rank-and-file. When "white bloc" member Stuart Alsbury raised the objection that the membership should have the right to accept or reject any partial agreement with Stuart Research, Pritchett immediately put the question on a higher plane. If an impasse were reached in negotiations, the committee would be in constant consultation with the International officers and the CCL. The IWA, he explained, had pledged to the top "Strategy Committee of the CCL that no agreement would be finalized without first consulting them, in order to make the greatest degree of coordination between the powerful

unions across Canada." At this point in mid-April, however, it was recognized that the IWA was far ahead of everyone else in its preparations for a strike. In order to "give the IWA the opportunity of seeing the reserves brought up alongside us," the CCL Wage Coordinating Committee had requested the union to continue negotiations and "mark time." "We thus have ample opportunity," the District President assured worried delegates, "to give the employers all the time they want to consider our demands." On that note, Council delegates quickly and apparently unanimously (Alsbury's reservations notwithstanding) adopted a resolution instructing the entire membership to undertake final preparation for a full stoppage of work, including the establishment of strike committees on every job.⁵⁴

Prior to the adoption of that resolution, negotiations had not proceeded well for the union. When the employers used federal wage controls rather than the industry's ability to pay to justify a five-cent offer, District spokesmen were quoted in the press to the effect that the strike would be the responsibility of the federal government and against the war labour boards.⁵⁵ But the RWLB quickly threw the onus back on the industry by informing District officers, in a special meeting, that the government had relaxed regulations to the extent that the board could authorize any agreed upon increase. Indeed, under an Order-in-Council issued on 31 January 1946 amending PC 9384, boards were authorized to grant wage increases to such extent as in the opinion of the NWLB was reasonable in the circumstances and consistent with maintenance of existing prices.⁵⁶ District leaders remained publicly skeptical that the employers or the government would not stall on a final settlement. The fact remains, that early in the course of negotiations, the union's attempts to launch a nation-wide struggle against state controls was being undercut by their relaxation. What is more, the industry was not about to agree on an increase that District leaders would consider a sufficient minimum to use as a national pattern in any test of war labour board policy.

The day after the District Council meeting called for strike readiness and an end to stalling, Stuart Research increased its offer to 10 cents, a figure that was, at the very least,

supposed to compensate for loss of earnings due to the reduction of the regular work week to 44 hours, scheduled to take place in British Columbia on 1 July.⁵⁷ When the union agreed to a joint application to test out new RWLB policy, given the right offer, the industry produced its best offer prior to the termination of negotiations: 12½ cents across the board, retroactive to 15 March, amendment of the present strike and lockout clause in accordance with the 1945 International convention resolution, and adoption into the agreement of the 1946 provincial hours-of-work act. Stuart also offered to pay overtime in excess of 44 hours retroactive to 15 March. Aside from that concession, his offer on hours was really only what would be required by law. The union security issue was to be dropped. On 28 April, at a mass meeting held at the Boilermakers' Hall in Vancouver, the union negotiating committee announced they would reject the offer. Their position was endorsed by members present.⁵⁸

The following day, the union informed Stuart that 12½ cents would not meet the increased cost of living plus offset the wage reduction created by the shorter week.⁵⁹ With the 93 percent strike vote in hand, the committee considered the offer unworthy of a general membership vote. Without some consideration of the union security issue, the union felt confident in refusing to recede from its 25 cent/40 hour demand. District negotiators would submit a counter proposal on wages and hours only if the employers agreed to submit the question of union shop and check-off to binding arbitration.⁶⁰

The confidence of the District cadre was no doubt given a further boost at a May Day rally in Stanley Park where the keynote speaker from Toronto, C.S. Jackson of UE and the CCL national executive told the gathered throng:

The monopolists have ganged up on labour and the people in a two-front war plan...to drive down the living standards of the masses to the level of the hungry '30s, and to foment war against the Soviet Union. The way to stop this is for the workers to strengthen their efforts for the 40 hour week to assure the right of a job; to secure increased purchasing power that they may enjoy the great volume of productive capacity, and to be vigilant and united against the war mongers.

Pritchett spoke on the task of his union in spearheading the struggle for the restoration of wage levels and the need for the fullest support of the trade union movement and public behind the IWA struggles. The Lumber Worker noted proudly that one of the lead positions in the May Day parade went to the IWA as the organization spearheading the present drive for increased wages, the 40-hour week and union security.⁶¹

With the seemingly important first week of May now upon them, both sides to the dispute geared up for confrontation. Stuart circularized his clients with news from the CCL convention that May was to be a crucial month in labour relations. The British Columbia lumber industry, he reported, was to be the spearhead of the CCL drive for higher wages and a shorter week, and plans were being hatched for support strikes.⁶² In response, the industry put its "public relations" campaign into high gear. Stuart prepared a summary report on negotiations and on 3 May sent sufficient copies to each operation for distribution to every employee. The report noted that negotiations had broken off after rejection by the union of a \$1 per day offer which would have put \$9 million (\$3.2 million by IWA estimate) in employees pay envelopes. On the other hand, workers were warned, it would take many months to recover the wages lost in a two or three week strike. The operators, realizing that thousands of urgently needed homes in Canada and Great Britain would not be built if there were a strike, had made every effort to avoid a stoppage. At this point, negotiations spilled over into the press with both sides giving their version of the cost to the industry of Stuart's last offer.⁶³

When the parties met on 6 May, Stuart, reacting to the Boilermakers' Hall decision, pointedly proposed that the union take a referendum vote on his last offer, preferably supervised by the provincial Department of Labour. Any increase would now be effective only from the date of RWLB approval, and a two- or three-year agreement with annual wage adjustments was offered as a form of "union security."⁶⁴ With the employers' stand hardening, and the broader labour picture apparently shaping up as expected, the District Executive met on 7 May to consider a strike deadline. Mine Mill negotiations at Trail and

Kimberley were coming to a head with the company's final offer having been made the day before.⁶⁵ The situation on the Great Lakes was reaching a critical point as well, with Pat Sullivan threatening strike action if no agreement was reached on the eight-hour day by 7 June. TLC vice-president James Thomson, at a meeting in Vancouver that same week, called for organized labour to throw its weight behind the seamen's eight-hour drive as the "opening canto" in the general movement by Canadian labour for the 40-hour week.⁶⁶ District One had been asked by the International Executive to extend its strike date to allow for coordination of action with the United States districts. Larsen now reported the American strike vote would take place on 18 May. But there was still a slight snag in the interior. At Prince George, final talks had been delayed by the operators, with a big meeting now scheduled for 16 May. Nevertheless, a general strike deadline was set for 11 AM on 15 May, with Prince George to come out immediately after the scheduled meeting there.⁶⁷

Provincial labour minister Pearson called Pritchett and Dalskog to Victoria on 8 May to discuss the situation. In his press statement after the meeting, in an effort to undermine the IWA strategy of proceeding outside of normal legal channels, Pearson summed up beautifully the historical watershed that had suddenly been reached in provincial industrial relations:

The International Woodworkers of America have behaved themselves well in recent years and I can hardly believe they would sacrifice the prestige they have built up by ignoring the legal procedure at this stage... They have made wonderful progress in the last few years by observing the labour laws. I cannot see them now throwing away all they have gained.

Pritchett responded abruptly by noting that the employers could avoid a walkout simply by agreeing to arbitrate union security.⁶⁸

Going through the legalistic motions, now with the backing of Pearson, Stuart turned down the arbitration proposal and announced the operators would apply to the Wartime Labour Relations Board for conciliation of all issues. After a meeting with Pat Conroy of the CCL and Karly Larsen, Pritchett announced on 10 May that conciliation was

only another stalling tactic. The IWA had offered arbitration on union security only, he maintained, because it did not feel negotiations had been exhausted on wages and hours.⁶⁹ More to the point, union security was not high on the national agenda. There the struggle focussed on wages and hours, and the IWA was to lead that struggle. Though for some interior union agents, union security in their poorly organized operations was a greater priority, the District officers were quite willing to hive it off from the main reconstruction struggle around which there was greater potential for rallying mass support.⁷⁰

With the CCL National Wage Coordinating Committee set to meet in Toronto on 12 May to discuss the British Columbia situation, Humphrey Mitchell, to forestall the shutdown of a key "reconstruction industry," quickly responded to Pearson's recommendation and appointed provincial chief justice Gordon Sloan as an Industrial Disputes Inquiry Commission, under wartime order PC 4020.⁷¹ The IWA stuck to its guns. With the strike deadline still in place, Pritchett proposed publicly that Sloan arbitrate the question of union security. The arguments could be presented in two or three hours, and while Sloan pondered his decision, the parties could go immediately into negotiations on wages and hours, with Sloan acting as mediator. The union strike committee had agreed privately, in fact, on 13 May, to come down to 20 cents and the 40-hour week, on the condition that union security be arbitrated. Although by this time Mine Mill had settled at two of its operations, Trail and Kimberley for 15½ cents and provisions for the introduction of the 40-hour week, Vice-President Larsen urged that "we could do better on the coast in woodworking." (It is notable that he omitted the interior in his prognosis). Even if Harvey Murphy's pledge of full support for IWA demands had now been considerably weakened, the strike committee still felt sanguine about the possibility of a "Dominion strike movement."⁷² The previous evening 18 CCL and AFL unions meeting in Vancouver set up a committee to mobilize public support for the IWA.⁷³ On 14 May, this provincial Trade Union Coordinating Committee published an advertisement in the local press with the by-line: "CITIZENS!", pledging full support to the just demands of

the IWA. The committee deplored the attitude of the 147 operators represented by Stuart Research "in placing private gain before the interests of the country, and refusing to recognize their responsibility in assisting the reconversion program to provide Homes, Jobs and Security." The unions stood ready to take whatever action was necessary to insure against a return to the conditions that prevailed in the "Hungry Thirties, to which the employers refer as normal."⁷⁴

At this point the heavyweights in the industry swung into action with H.R. MacMillan issuing a thundering statement to the effect that good Canadian citizens working in the lumber industry, having due respect for and faith in the judiciary, surely would not strike while Sloan's investigation was in process.⁷⁵ MacMillan employees all received a letter from management explaining how the company was defending their basic rights of citizenship to be allowed to decide freely whether or not to join a union. At the same time the employers were pressing the government to circumvent the union by taking a vote of all employees on their final offer.⁷⁶ The day prior to the strike deadline, Van Dusen of H.R. MacMillan, Mackin of Canadian Western Lumber, and the president of the BCLA met in Victoria together with Sloan and the District One negotiators in an attempt to avoid a strike.⁷⁷ The operators agreed finally to have Sloan arbitrate union security, but would not negotiate wages and hours with a strike deadline hanging over their heads. The IWA would call off the strike and continue negotiations only after the industry agreed to arbitration of union security and either accepted, or resumed negotiations on a new 18 cent/40 hour proposal.⁷⁸

It is worth noting, in view of the ultimate settlement ~~that would end the strike~~ over a month later, just where the two sides would have stood on the eve of the strike if the union had been prepared to back down. Union security was off the table for all intents and purposes. On wages, the difference was between 18 cents and 12½ cents. Given the recent Mine Mill agreement, and the intervention into negotiations by Commissioner Sloan, a saw-off at 15 cents was more than likely at this juncture as a final settlement. That would

have left hours of work as the main sticking point, and it is unlikely, given the determined opposition of the employers to go any further than the recently legislated 44-hour week, that the union would have made significant progress on that front beyond some possible modification in how the time was distributed. But the union leaders had much more on their trade union agenda on 14 May than 15 cents, the legal work week with modifications and a binding third party decision on union security, all applicable solely to the coast locals. Similarly, an industrial relations agenda had been brewing amongst various employer groups, which, at least for the short term, saw confrontation with militant unionism as desirable. As Elmore Philpott reported in his Vancouver Sun column shortly before the strike began, "It is no secret that there is a 'might as well fight it out now' spirit among the big employers and in the unions. That is ominous."⁷⁹

Indeed, it was evident that from the start of negotiations neither the union nor the industry made any real concerted effort to avert a work stoppage. The IWA played out the coast negotiations in an effort to gain time for all the pieces to fall into place: Fighting Fund contributions, interior contract talks, the American strike vote and the CCL's national wage coordination effort. Stuart and the organized employers, given the bellicose approach taken by District One, saw a golden opportunity to suffer a strike but to discredit the British Columbia trade union movement and set the stage for the repressive measures that would follow in the wake.

Chapter Seven

1946: Strike

I

On 15 May 1946 a general strike of woodworkers occurred across British Columbia. There is no dispute from any quarter that initially the shutdown was as close to 100 percent as was conceivable, except for the Prince George region which came out soon after its final negotiation talks collapsed. Even Stuart Research was forced to admit in its "Strike Communication #2" to its clients, that "except for isolated operations employing less than a dozen men...the walkout is complete." There was less agreement on the level of enthusiasm for the strike. Stuart informed his clients that the men left the job "reluctantly" and that the usual enthusiasm accompanying a strike was "conspicuously lacking."¹ Press reports were mixed. The Province followed Stuart's line, while Sun staff reporter Leslie Fox provided a more balanced picture after a two-day tour of Vancouver Island points. Most men he talked to expected a short strike with the government intervening to force a settlement. On that basis Fox found that regardless of their feelings towards the union or the strike, woodworkers were solidly behind a pay increase to meet higher living costs. Opinion was more divided on the union security issue. Regardless, scabbing was non-existent and the picket lines more or less a formality. Perhaps a typical expression of rank-and-file perspective came from David Murray, a young married man from a crew at Copper Canyon, and resident in Chemainus. Murray told Fox he did not believe in too much power for either the unions or the boss. "But the showdown had to come sooner or later. It's just as well it was now. So it's here and we'll tough it through."

At least at the outset, workers could count on up to two weeks credit from local merchants. Many still had a pay cheque due. Some companies, such as MacMillan's at Port Alberni, allowed continued use of bunk and cook houses, while others, like BSW closed cooking facilities. Emergency soup kitchens were set up by the union in the hopes of keeping as many men as possible in camp to keep the closure solid.² When the BSW

bunkhouse was also closed, strikers were to be housed at Graf Memorial Hall. After four bus loads of workers still decided to leave town, local 1-85 put picket lines around the bus depot and train station to prevent workers without permits from exiting. Following a radio appeal, the local strike committee was deluged with foods and supplies, including 150 mattresses. One local store offered to sell preserves at cost to the emergency kitchen.³

Vancouver Sun columnist Pierre Berton did a feature story on Norman Brown, a 26 year old war veteran, as a typical example of the 180 millworkers on strike at the British Columbia Fir and Cedar mill in False Creek. Brown and his young wife, parents of a 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ year old, viewed the strike as inevitable, though it meant the end of their Saturday roast, their plans for a washing machine and their weekly visit to a neighbourhood motion picture house. Brown figured he could scrape through and continue to keep up payments on his \$2500 five-bedroom house. With a cheque still due on 23 May, \$200 left from his service gratuity, and \$11 a week promised in strike pay if needed, the mill hand hoped the strike would end before all his resources were gone. He told Berton, "The boys are solidier now than they were before the strike started."⁴

The focal point of the strike was the approximately 150 companies represented by Stuart Research, employing 32,000 woodworkers and comprising 58 logging camps, 36 sawmills, 22 combination camp and mill operations, 12 shingle companies, five plywood plants and nine miscellaneous processing plants. The federal Department of Labour estimated that a total of 416 employers and 38,000 workers were affected by the strike. Outside the Stuart group, there were then approximately 6000 workers distributed over 250 operations.⁵ Approximately 100 of these small outfits, employing between two and three thousand workers were located in the coast district. Most of these shoestring operations, unable to withstand a protracted struggle without going under to creditors, signed agreements on the union's 1946 terms either before or during the strike on the understanding that wages and hours would be adjusted according to the master agreement

upon settlement.⁶ The union attempted to use these signed agreements to exert public pressure on the associated operators.⁷

The third general arena of the strike was in the interior where 3-4000 striking employees were spread across approximately 150 different operations that were under the umbrella of the CMA. In the Prince George area, the Northern Interior Lumbermen's Association reported 1250 men on strike against 16 different companies. In the East Kootenay centres of Fernie and Cranbrook, at least 944 workers from 21 different operations joined the walkout. Reports from the Kamloops, Princeton, Kelowna and Nelson area were incomplete, though it would be safe to say that up to 1500 workers were involved in mostly small outfits throughout the four centres.⁸ In spite of pre-negotiation pledges by the District to work towards integrating the interior into a master set of negotiations, District demands were formed in terms of the larger national struggle, with little regard to the particular needs of the interior locals. These unionists found themselves essentially on the periphery, almost as support strikers to the more crucial struggle on the coast. At no time during the strike was there an attempt made to reopen separate negotiations with the CMA, while Stuart had no mandate to act for the interior lumbermen. In the absence of any attempted resumption of collective bargaining, the interior locals were most vulnerable to an imposed government settlement as the strike dragged on.

In general, though, given the inherent difficulties in conducting a British Columbia woodworkers strike, there appeared to be, at the outset, a remarkable degree of solidarity. Moreover, the momentum of the strike swept into the ranks many previously unorganized operations, contributing to an extraordinary influx of new members during the first week or so. Flying squads of pickets were reported, for instance, walking into small plants in the Fraser Valley, signing up the workers and shutting down operations.⁹ The Vancouver mill local, 1-217, reported 1000 new members. Kamloops and Nelson reported substantial gains as well. The Lumber Worker claimed 9000 new members had entered the union by 28 May. Even half that, no doubt optimistic, estimate, would indicate a considerable

degree of rank-and-file militancy in the early stages of the confrontation.¹⁰ There is no doubt a large degree of truth in Al Parkin's glowing assessment that the strike's popularity was based on the fact that the IWA "had advanced a programme that met the needs of every woodworker." There is some question, however, as subsequent events will indicate, whether union leaders actually conducted the strike with the needs of every woodworker foremost in their minds. Parkin is also correct in his analysis that the extent of the walkout caught the operators by surprise, and "made it difficult for them to organize a counter-offensive," particularly in the face of suspicions that lumbermen were attempting to create an artificial shortage of lumber for home building as an excuse for increasing prices.¹¹

In an effort to turn public resentment against the union, Stuart Research promptly published an advertisement in the paper: "Lost! to the end of second day," \$468,000 in wages, 8,125,000 feet of lumber, or enough to build 812, five-room houses.¹² The good citizens of Courtenay, in a mass public meeting, quickly responded with the charge, allegedly supported by the Vancouver Building Exchange, that most lumber production was going on to the "black market" and not into housing construction. They supported the IWA's demand for a royal commission to investigate.¹³

To carry the lumbermen's message to the doubting masses, Stuart Research, with the help of a special strike assessment of its clientele, began a series of twice-daily radio broadcasts over stations in Vancouver and Port Alberni entitled "The Voice of the B.C. Lumber Industry." This programme was intended to counter the IWA's "Green Gold" broadcasts which Stuart noted had acquired a large audience over the years. The morning broadcast would be primarily "for young people and women, while the night broadcast is for the information of the general public."¹⁴ These broadcasts were used to smear the IWA for engaging in an illegal strike, for preventing the shipment of lumber and grain via the U.N. Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) to people in Europe and Asia, for preventing the release of lumber for veterans' housing, and for threatening British Columbia's fruit crop with a shortage of wooden containers during the most critical part of

the season.¹⁵ Stuart's most emphatic attack against the union, however, was directed at the very heart of what this strike would eventually be about—trade union legitimacy. Carrying forward a theme first voiced by labour minister Pearson the week before the strike, Stuart branded the walkout "a phony strike" based as it was on a union strike vote conducted prior to the start of negotiations. Stuart demanded a supervised referendum of all 37,000 woodworkers on the \$1 per day offer. Based on Pritchett's own figures that 14,000 of 18,000 members had voted 93 percent in favour, Stuart claimed less than one-third of those on strike voted for a strike 14 weeks before. Not only was the strike illegal, with respect to its violation of laws concerning conciliation, "but surely it is illegitimate, too, on the basis of not being representative of the great mass of workers," and because no vote had been allowed on the industry's final offer. There was no need to mention, though he did, that the February vote had been conducted by the union "in a way that would never be tolerated in any political election outside of a totalitarian country."¹⁶ It is worth remembering that the IWA had waged an intense four-year battle to attain that very thing—legitimacy as bargaining agent—that Stuart was now calling into question.

Now Stuart's allegations were manifestly unfair and unfounded as far as his charges of illegitimacy were concerned. As Pritchett quite rightly retorted, Stuart knew who the bargaining agent was. It was the IWA, not 19,000 non-union workers, which had the legitimate right to decide on matters of collective bargaining and strike action under existing law.¹⁷ But the fact that the strike was technically illegal made it easier to brand it illegitimate, particularly inasmuch as the illegality involved short-circuiting a procedure which normally would have entailed a membership vote on a conciliation board recommendation as part of a strike vote. Stuart's demand for a supervised vote on the \$1 a day offer carried considerable weight in spite of the 93 percent strike vote of February.

During the first days of the strike two issues arose that were ominous forebodings for the union of larger problems to come. In the Kootenays, the Creston Cooperative Fruit Growers' Association, representing 1450 growers threatened with crop spoilage; took over

the operation of Creston Sawmills with the intent of operating at the current wage rate. Seventy-five workers buckled under to pressure and returned to work. Cranbrook local 1-405 sent in 40 flying pickets, and got agreement from the growers to pay retroactively the industry-wide wage settlement. The District Strike Committee agreed it was important to gain the farmers' support, but worried about such an opening demoralizing other strikers. Further negotiations resulted in a tentative agreement on the union's 1946 terms, with an adjustment to be made later in line with the final industry agreement. Pritchett told the committee that this agreement laid the basis for "a united front of the farmers and labor against the employers. The farmers are in a bad situation; we have no fight with them and we have got to find a way and means of cooperating to save their crops."¹⁸

A second minor incident arose in connection with the loading of UNRRA lumber from a dock in New Westminster. Two ships had been half-loaded prior to the IWA strike. Upon the commencement of the strike, the lumber was considered "hot" and longshoremen refused to finish the loads. When the powerful Shipping Federation threatened to break off current negotiations with ILWU local 502, the longshoremen's union, in spite of Pritchett's urging to call the Federation's bluff, felt it was not strong enough to join the IWA's struggle. District One reluctantly agreed to have these two ships loaded. Local 502 was part of the provincial Trade Union Coordinating Committee, and had been signatory to the 14 May press advertisement in support of the IWA's struggle against the lumber operators. Local representative Jack Berry appeared before the District Strike Committee on 27 May and criticized the lack of coordination between the IWA District Council and its locals inasmuch as two ships had been allowed to be loaded in Vancouver the cargoes of which were similarly at ship's side before the strike. Berry noted that his local was solidly behind the strike, but they were in their own negotiations and had to keep their "skirts" clean.¹⁹

These two episodes are significant insofar as they indicate the problems the District had from the very start in maintaining some semblance of centralized, coordinated control over the strike in the various locals and sub-locals—a problem that would become more

severe as the anticipated short strike turned into a long one, and the District committee's strike strategy became more unfathomable to the rank-and-file woodworker. Furthermore, they indicate the problems the union would face in building broader community and labour support, beyond mere rhetoric, for its highly politicized collective bargaining agenda. Thirdly, the problem of the fruitgrowers in the interior was only just beginning to be joined. In the absence of any real attempt by the District committee to settle the interior strike, the fruitgrower issue would come to overshadow the very substantial reasons that woodworkers in the interior locals had for following their coast comrades in a province-wide shutdown. Lastly, the dilemma of local 502 was symptomatic of the much bigger problem of coordinating the collective bargaining agenda of several large industrial unions in an effective political assault against federal government wage controls and the resurgence of conservative capitalism in Canada.

Two days after the IWA walkout began, however, District hopes of an escalating and broadly-based job action were buoyed when woodworkers were joined on the picketline by about 500 greater Vancouver foundry workers from local 289 of the Metal and Chemical Workers Union, an affiliate of Mine Mill.²⁰ During the first week of the strike, as well, two IWA representatives, Jack Greenall and Dick Custer, were dispatched to eastern Canada to canvas for support, including financial contributions, from individual trade unions involved in the wage campaign.²¹ Meanwhile, on 18 May, the government released the report of Chief Justice Sloan on his failed efforts to avert a strike. Because of the apparent impasse between the parties, Sloan was at a loss to recommend any further action other than the use of some governmental authority, of which he doubted the existence, to impose a binding settlement.²² Given the massive disruptions to the provincial economy, the British Columbia Minister of Labour, George Pearson, recommended to the federal minister the reappointment of Sloan as special commissioner to try to bring about a resumption of talks.²³

On 21 May, the CCL Wage Coordinating Committee sent a delegation to present a memorandum to Humphrey Mitchell, reminding the minister of the ongoing strike in British Columbia, as well as a strike of employees of the Anaconda Copper and Brass Company in New Toronto. It also advised the minister of the danger of additional strikes of even greater proportions in steel, automobile, electrical, hard-rock mining, chemical and packinghouse industries; and, most urgently, the danger of an industry-wide strike in the Canadian rubber industry scheduled for 27 May. Specific proposals were offered starting with industry-wide, rather than plant-based negotiations, and further amendment of the wage control order to accommodate any wage-hour pattern resulting in a minimum wage for 40 hours up to 20 percent higher than the previous minimum for 48 hours. Further, the artificial division in conciliation proceedings between labour relations matters and WLB-regulated wages impeded settlement of the lumber dispute and was creating similar problems in steel negotiations in Hamilton. Finally, where strikes had already begun, the committee urged the federal government to accept full responsibility for re-establishing negotiations, rather than leaving it with the provincial ministries.²⁴

The same day that he received the CCL delegation, Mitchell, following Pearson's recommendation, and satisfying in part the demands of the Coordinating Committee, reappointed Sloan as special commissioner with broader powers than under his first appointment, to hold hearings, obtain evidence and submit findings on the full range of issues under dispute. Sloan was given authority to act as a binding arbitrator on union security, if both sides agreed, but was to act only as a conciliator on all other issues, including wages and hours. Pearson correctly observed that the industry had capitulated insofar as it was persuaded to continue negotiations under Sloan with the strike continuing, and to waive the normal procedures under PC 1003.²⁵

The larger significance of the Sloan Commission was observed by the Vancouver Sun report which noted that a Sloan-mediated settlement in the lumber industry in the neighbourhood of 15 cents would put the RWLB on the spot and would serve as a test case

providing a yardstick for other workers such as moulders, foundrymen, metal mine workers and shipyard employees. One way or another, the IWA was shaping up to be the spearhead of the coordinated CCL-CIO wage drive in Canada. Whether District One would be content to have its position as leader of the Canadian labour movement defined and circumscribed by the proceedings and recommendations of Gordon Sloan was another matter. At any rate, the union made the most of this small victory and staged a mass parade, rally and tag day in New Westminster the day after Sloan's reappointment. A "mile-long" procession of 1700 woodworkers filed up Columbia Street, led by a five-piece band playing martial music through loud speakers on the back of a truck. Marchers, three abreast, captured the attention of the downtown populace. Gathered at Queen's Park, the crowd roared approval when Pritchett announced that the operators had been forced by mass public strike support to resume negotiations.²⁶

II

District One re-entered negotiations on 22 May riding high, not really prepared to back down without substantial concessions from the industry, considering how much responsibility it appeared to be carrying for the entire Canadian labour movement. Sloan, as well as Stuart Research, was similarly cognizant of the attention focussed on the resumed negotiations. But while District leaders could rally mass demonstrations of the rank-and-file in New Westminster and Vancouver, where many loggers and mill workers had congregated, there was growing concern regarding communication with the "out of town" locals and the woodworkers holding down picket lines in the small lumber outposts dotting the province.

Negotiations ran for three days in succession. The employers first showed themselves willing to consider binding arbitration of union security, but the parties remained stuck on wages and hours. Sloan went to work on hours, trying out various formulas for a modified 44-hour week. The union appeared happy with an offer of a

48/40-hour split in logging, with appropriate overtime, for each six months of the contract, but wanted a similar modification in the mills. The employers remained firm on a straight 44 hours in the mills. Over the course of the three days, the industry spokesmen appeared to lose confidence in Sloan, and by the end of discussions withdrew their offer of binding arbitration. They would not accept Sloan's decision on union shop and check-off. The commissioner had apparently manoeuvred them on hours and they sensed a similar type of modification with respect to union security if Sloan had his say. Wages were never seriously discussed, both parties sticking to their pre-strike positions. In the end, Stuart suggested appointment of an arbitrator on all issues, with no binding power.²⁷

Pritchett told his committee that Sloan admitted that the operators were fighting amongst themselves as to how far to go with the union's demands. With the growing number of small independent operators signing on the union's terms, there was obvious pressure on the bottom end of Stuart's group to cut a deal. Sloan also informed Pritchett that the operators thought the commissioner was leaning too much to the union side and that they were looking for an impartial person whose recommendations they could accept.²⁸ Sloan may have been simply trying to gain the confidence of the union. If so, his remarks seemed to have the opposite effect. On 25 May, with the gap widening rather than narrowing, the commissioner indicated that he himself would serve as an arbitrator and proceed to hear formal submissions from both parties, on the basis of which he would formulate non-binding recommendations on all outstanding matters.²⁹ Stuart informed his clients that this new development brought the employers' position back to that of 21 March and relieved them of any commitment whatsoever with respect to union demands.³⁰ He clearly considered negotiations to have concluded for the time being and Sloan's proposed tribunal to be the equivalent of a one-man conciliation board. The union, too, realized negotiations were at an impasse again, but put little stock in the outcome of further proceedings. After gaining Sloan's assurances that he was not proceeding under PC 1003, and that his recommendations would simply form the basis for further negotiations, the

District Executive gave approval for Bjarnason and Marcuse of the Trade Union Research Bureau (TURB), successor to the PCLB, to present the union's case to Sloan.³¹ But when the District Strike Committee met on the opening day of hearings, it became evident that it had already dismissed the ongoing conciliation process as a means to winning its demands. The union apparently did not hope to gain much more from Sloan, and could expect even less from Stuart.

Since 15 May, the District officers had worked to keep as many men as possible in camps and at the mill sites where they worked. Publicly they claimed this was a gesture aimed at avoiding an unnecessary delay and cost to workers in starting up again in the event of a short strike.³² In fact, as we have seen above, union leaders had always been very concerned with the problem of transiency. During a strike, in particular, it was important to maintain some semblance of organization in each operation to ensure solidarity amongst strikers, prevent the possibility of scabbing, and counteract any moves by employers or local officials to undermine the strike. At the outset it had been necessary to keep the hope of a short strike alive to carry along the less enthusiastic members. There is no indication that District officials had planned any measures to ensure the continued solidarity of the local rank-and-file in the event that negotiations bogged down in conciliation, or the coordination of events at the provincial and national level did not proceed according to expectations.

There were now several factors that argued for a change in strike strategy. To begin with, the workers had been out for almost two weeks. The union was very wary of where Sloan was taking them and did not want to be trapped by his recommendations. The much-vaunted national wage action was slow to materialize, and the American woodworkers had just settled without a strike. It appeared to be time to step up the action in an effort to spark a broadening of the strike in Canada and to reinvigorate the woodworker rank-and-file. Finally, as discussed at the 27 May Strike Committee meeting, the system established at the beginning of the strike to maintain communications and coordination between the District

level and the locals had faltered. The District officers were also the negotiators, and did not have enough time to attend to all the necessary organizational details of the strike. More to the point, the emphasis in District strategy on mobilizing broader support in the community and the trade union movement further preoccupied the executive. Little time remained for the mundane work of reviewing local strike committee reports each morning, and sending out night letters each evening with a District report and advice on local problems. The local unions were supposed to produce their own daily strike bulletins based on this communication with the District. Such an elaborate system was no doubt overly ambitious to start with, but given the larger concerns and responsibilities of the District leaders, was bound to falter.³³

The new District strategy was designed, in fact, to circumvent Sloan, to revive the strike effort and mobilize the membership to a new level in a mass trek down Vancouver Island which would culminate in a mass lobby of the provincial cabinet and legislature. June 3 was set for the commencement of the trek. The strike committee motion instructed all members, in particular transient unmarried loggers, still in camp to be called in to their respective communities for full participation.³⁴ The Lumber Worker reported that "following repeated attempts at settlement, and with the possibility of men in camps losing contact with developments in the city of Vancouver," camp and mill workers from the Queen Charlotte Islands and across Vancouver Island would be moved to various assembly points. Workers on the mainland would congregate in Vancouver in preparation for joining the island trekkers.³⁵ A union spokesman was quoted in the Vancouver press as stating that the action would be patterned on the mass trek during the unemployment crisis of the 1930s. Whereas the CCL Coordinating Committee had accused the federal government of dumping responsibility on provincial governments for settling strikes arising largely from inadequate dominion regulations and procedures, this unnamed union agent now claimed the trek was designed to get action from the provincial government which had been hiding behind the skirts of the federal government.³⁶

Indeed, the traditions and struggles of the 1930s still echoed in the minds of many union men, woodworkers in particular. While District One had one foot firmly planted in the world of the ICA Act, the other was still rooted in traditions of the Workers Unity League and the LWIU. Treks, marches and tag days were as much a part of the industrial relations struggle in 1946 as was the process of negotiation, conciliation and high-level conferences with government labour officials. As counterpart to the highly-politicized post-war collective bargaining agenda, the IWA readopted strategies that had been more characteristic of the pre-war, pre-recognition days of the blacklist and the open shop. With the political formation within which the union had reached legitimacy shifting, District leaders began to straddle two different industrial relations realities in an effort to reconstruct a trade union practice grown overly-bureaucratic, brittle and top heavy. But caught between two different worlds, they were in fact fully part of neither. As the union swelled with new recruits, unschooled in the heroic days of underground organizing in the backwoods, and the blood and sweat of the handsaw, it became increasingly trapped in an industrial relations system that had no place for fighting funds, flying pickets, or national wage campaigns. At the same time it was upon this industrial relations system that the union's very existence as an industry-wide bargaining agent had come to depend.

The response from the state and organized capital to the union's planned march on Victoria was as self-righteous as could be expected. Provincial labour minister Pearson, friend of moderate labour,³⁷ accused the IWA of taking the law into its own hands. If the government accepted the union's attitude, then "we are heading for a state of anarchy." He suggested that the cabinet may not meet with the IWA delegation under such circumstances, especially if the union was trying to force the province to take action in a field of dominion responsibility. He reminded the union that its strike was illegal and warned that "it is not a situation... people of this country will tolerate much longer." The Mayor of Victoria raised the spectre of severe overcrowding and possible troubles in his city with the arrival of

thousands of woodworkers, especially when it became known that the United Fishermen had agreed to supply fish boats to move the mainland march to the Island.³⁸

More significantly, the trek announcement provided an opportunity for the CMA to call for a tightening of the reins on labour. Hugh Dalton, secretary of the British Columbia Division, wrote to George Pearson requesting discussions on the reconstitution of the Board of Industrial Relations so as to include under its powers new authority to "ensure assistance in bringing to bear a restraining influence on elements in the province responsible for certain current conditions both actual and impending."³⁹ In an open letter to Premier Hart, H.A. Renwick, Chairman of the British Columbia Division, set the post-war agenda of capital squarely before the government and the public. He warned that what was skillfully being engineered was a "carefully-planned system of staggered strikes, or to use a military term it is a general strike in echelon," the genesis thereof being "political rather than economic." In essence, the current wave of strikes was a planned attempt under communist direction "to disrupt industrial life on this continent with the ultimate object in view of destroying private enterprise and democracy." With regard to existing and threatened strikes in British Columbia, the CMA called for enforcement of penalties provided in law in the case of illegal strikes, provisions to ensure the rank-and-file were kept fully informed of the progress of all negotiations, and strong opposition to any form of union security. The letter suggested that the federal government be asked to freeze all wages and salaries for two years to enable industry to reorganize its improved capacity; such action to be offset by reductions in income tax as a way of increasing take-home pay and stimulating production. In the provincial field of labour legislation, the CMA recommended amendments to the ICA Act to ensure full legal and financial responsibility of unions, a government-supervised vote of employees on "bona fide" offers made in the course of negotiations. All strike votes should be government supervised and prohibited in advance of negotiations, and bargaining agents elected only by employees of six months standing.⁴⁰

The public outburst from the CMA galvanized local unions into action and elicited a prompt and strident reply from the British Columbia Trade Union Coordinating Committee which held a special meeting in the Boilermakers' Hall to draft a response to the premier. Harvey Murphy bellowed to the assembled unionists, "This statement is a call for the establishment of straight Fascism in Canada." The letter sent from the group to Premier Hart heightened the rhetoric. The mask was off, it said. "The C.M.A. now stands revealed...as a group of Fascist-minded reactionaries, whose object for the day is to smash all trade union organizations, leading to the final subjugation of the Canadian people." A mass meeting of labour unions was called for Saturday 1 June at Cambie grounds to protest against the CMA letter.⁴¹

A British Columbia Federation of Labour delegation composed of Pritchett, Murphy, CCL Regional Director Danny O'Brien and IWA International Organizer, George Brown who had served as a witness at the final day of the Sloan hearings, met with the premier and labour minister on 31 May. They received assurances that the government was not impressed by the CMA charges that communism was influencing the present strike.⁴² Nevertheless, if CMA red-baiting was not about to bring immediate provincial action to halt the strike, its "reform" agenda for the administration of labour relations, arising as it did from what the government considered to be an illegal shutdown of the most important industry in the province, would not be lost on the cabinet and caucus when they came to redraft the ICA Act the following year. More immediately, the CMA diatribe heightened the fighting mood of the woodworkers' union, and put it in an even poorer disposition for acceptance of any compromise settlement offered by Sloan.

The Sloan hearings got underway the same day that the strike committee launched its plan for a trek to Victoria, and lasted four days, through to 30 May. The coincidence in timing is significant inasmuch as the hearings and the trek represented two different strategies. The trek to Victoria expressed a deteriorating commitment to normal industrial relations practices as a means of gaining important working class gains. But District

participation in the hearings was part of the legacy of the previous decade's struggle for legitimation. Having received assurances that the Sloan hearings were not being conducted as a conciliation board under PC 1003, the union went ahead with its participation in a quasi-conciliation board, the impact of which would be much the same on the course of the strike. The District's involvement in the hearings was made even more ambiguous by the content of its presentation which spoke as much to the problems of reconstructing the post-war economy as it did to the IWA's collective agreement.

On the first day of hearings and carrying over onto the second, Emil Bjarnason of TURB presented the IWA case for a 25-cent wage increase. This demand was the heart of the union programme for which over 30,000 woodworkers were currently on strike. Bjarnason's presentation was remarkable for its failure to represent the needs of those workers in terms specific to either the lumber industry or the British Columbia economy. His presentation was divided into three parts: 1) points relating to the public interest; 2) needs of workers in the woodworking industry; and 3) the ability of the industry to pay. The first section put forward the Keynesian argument for increased purchasing power as a means of stimulating employment and economic growth. If the national accounts were to be balanced so that the public could purchase all of the goods and services on sale in a given year, payments made by the average corporation had to balance against revenue received by it. This argument was by no means merely introductory, comprising as it did the first 17 pages of the typescript, but was really the focal point of, and set the tone for, the entire brief.⁴³

Now it could be expected that Bjarnason's argument on the national restructuring of income distribution would be cast in general terms with little reference to the British Columbia woodworking industry. But when he moved on to the points more specific to the IWA collective agreement, the needs of woodworkers, and the ability of the industry to pay, the economist continued to relate these issues to the broader national stage, in part because of the orientation of the 1946 wage struggle, and in part because of a paucity of

hard facts on the particular situation in British Columbia. It appears that TURB had not been asked to do research on the coast forest economy to compare with the 1945 wage survey of the interior. In this respect, Stuart Research was much better prepared to play the conciliation game "straight up," and provide the concrete facts that Sloan needed upon which to build his recommendations. As much as Sloan was aware of the larger provincial and even national significance of his commission, his recommendations, by the very nature of the federal industrial relations process, had to grow out of and apply directly to the particular industrial situation he was investigating. Stuart understood this and geared his presentation accordingly. The IWA, now trying to move beyond the restrictive legalistic parameters of federal and provincial industrial relations machinery, was ill prepared to match Stuart point for point; whereas Stuart was able to dismiss much of the union's case on wages as irrelevant to the particular situation of collective bargaining at hand.

Bjarnason's argument on the needs of British Columbia woodworkers focussed on a critical analysis of DBS cost-of-living figures based largely on hypothetical assumptions with only general applicability. Only when he returned on the second day to conclude his brief did Bjarnason submit material, pursuant to Sloan's request, on the actual hourly rates of pay of various classifications of woodworkers. Sloan wanted some basis to make a determination not on what wage increase was due the average Canadian worker, but on what to recommend in this dispute. Only reluctantly, and with prodding from Sloan and Stuart, did Bjarnason bring his submission back down to the more detailed level of actual wage rates paid in the coast industry.⁴⁴ On the ability of the industry to pay, the union had at its disposal little concrete information. Its argument, based mainly on wartime profit figures of only three large, integrated and highly unrepresentative enterprises, was hardly designed to impress the commissioner.⁴⁵

The union's case was easily brushed aside by Stuart who noted that the IWA's original submission (of 26 March), in addition to the wages demand, dealt with subjects such as housing and full employment: "These matters weren't discussed in our statement

in reply...(which) was confined to the industry in B.C." About the latter Stuart made several trenchant observations that went largely unrefuted by either Pritchett or TURB. He noted that IWA wages were the highest of any Canadian lumber workers, that the average weekly wage of British Columbia woodworkers in 1944, including the lower paid interior districts, exceeded those in all other British Columbia industries except coal. The average weekly wage in the British Columbia lumber industry had increased 52 percent since 1939, second only to the metal trades at 54 percent, while total labour costs per thousand board feet of lumber, due to decreased productivity of labour, had risen 107 percent in the same period.⁴⁶ Stuart brought forward an industry chartered accountant who, armed with audited statements of several smaller firms, established a case for a more normal narrow profit margin allegedly typical of the coast industry. Stuart used this evidence to argue that "wage increases of the size demanded by the Union could only be met by substantial price increases."⁴⁷ To substantiate his claims regarding decreased productivity and soaring production costs, Stuart introduced four well-known industry figures who all attested to personal experience with labour supply problems during the war resulting in reduced efficiency and productivity.⁴⁸

While he previously had not deigned to respond to IWA arguments that lay outside the normal areas of collective bargaining, for Sloan's benefit Stuart sarcastically remarked that "the present time seems noticeable for many things, not the least is the enrichment of our collective bargaining terminology with such phrases as 'industrial democracy,' 'high wages and full employment'." In its submission, Stuart went on, the union used such phrases, and then took the figure of 25 cents "out of the air, so to speak, and attempts to justify by references some of which are considerably removed from the local situation." Taking a page from a source equally removed from the local context, Stuart quoted Sir William Beveridge from his report "Full Employment in a Free Society," to the effect that sectional wage bargaining, pursued without regard to its effect on prices, "may lead to a vicious spiral of inflation, with money wages chasing prices and without any gain in real

wages for the working class as a whole."⁴⁹ Though Sloan was not commissioned to make recommendations on price increases, he was certainly aware that his recommendation could lead to upward pressure on current price ceilings. Stuart's presentation, laced as it was with hard data on productivity, profit margins and labour costs, gave Sloan much to draw on for a consideration of the wage-price relationship. The union argument that a 25-cent wage boost for Canadian workers could produce full employment without the need for price increases was largely unsubstantiated.

The case for the 40-hour week, presented by Bert Marcuse, was on somewhat firmer ground inasmuch as there were numerous precedents in Canada and the United States, the most relevant being the American west coast lumber industry. But the basic proposition presented by the union that a decreased work week would lead to increased efficiency and productivity was again only weakly supported by evidence drawn from the industry in particular. Moreover, as the company counsel, C.L. McAlpine pointed out, the union itself, in statements made by Pritchett and witness George Brown, undermined its own argument by indicating that the American districts have reverted to 48 hours during the war in the interests of increased production.⁵⁰

On the issue of union security, the union had pretty well given away the store with its offer of compulsory arbitration. Sloan knew from this offer that it was not a major strike issue and was under no pressure to give anything. He could throw that concession to the industry and extract a few cents more in return, along with some modification of the 44-hour week.

If it were effectively to lead the post-war drive of Canadian labour for wages, hours and security, the IWA had, at the same time, to deal effectively with its own collective bargaining agenda. But, from the outset, the union had oriented its bargaining strategy around the idea of circumventing normal industrial relations channels. Presentation of briefs, evidence and convincing arguments was not high on its agenda. At the very moment that the conciliation process entered its most crucial phase, the union embarked on

a new approach of rallying a mass trek and lobby in order to pressure the provincial government to help engineer the breakthrough it was supposed to be spearheading. Stuart, by sticking to the straight and narrow path of conventional industrial relations proceedings, was much better positioned to get the kind of recommendations the industry wanted from Sloan. The IWA was playing two games at once, and, as it turned out, neither of them well. In the "real" world of industrial relations that it had grown up in, it was necessary to play Sloan's game. Or, to be consistent with its stated strategy, the union should have circumvented Sloan's special commission as it had tried to circumvent PC 1003. The federal government merely cast its net wider, and caught the IWA. The union was not prepared. There was, of course, no guarantee that with better preparation, arguments and a more conventional approach the IWA would have fared better than it did. But, given the reality that whatever Sloan recommended would ultimately have considerable bearing on the final settlement, the union might have paid more attention to its own collective bargaining agenda. As it turned out, Sloan's recommendations, and the manner of their release on 1 June, signified the beginning of the end of the IWA's 1946 strike, though the return to work was still nearly three weeks away.

III

On Saturday 1 June, two days before the IWA trek to Victoria was to get underway, Sloan presented his recommendations for a settlement to the two parties and gave them until Monday to respond. In a controversial move, he also, simultaneously, released his recommendations to the press. In a brief, two-page report, without elaborate explanation, he presented his conclusions. Wages should be increased 15 cents an hour across the board. No reasons were given for recommending this apparent saw-off between the union's lowest 18 cent demand, and the industry's $12\frac{1}{2}$ cent best offer. On hours of work he recommended the straight 44-hour week in the mills and a modified 44 hours in logging—48 hours during April through September, with time and one-half over 44, and a

40-hour week during the slower winter months, with overtime for any time worked in excess. His reason for withholding the straight 40-hour week was based squarely on the employer argument on productivity: given the urgent need for building materials, and the continuing shortages of labour, the 40-hour week "with consequent decrease in over-all production...cannot be justified at the present time." Given all that, his statement still left a clear opening for the IWA to pursue the shorter week in subsequent rounds of negotiations, and, to that extent, represented considerable progress for the union on the question of hours.

If wages were a saw-off, and hours leaned in the direction of the union, on union security Sloan caved in to the employers. The union had proposed a package linking a union shop clause with a voluntary revocable check-off. By keeping the financial arrangements of the employee with the union voluntary, but the membership relationship compulsory, the District could avoid the onerous and restrictive conditions attached to the Rand award in the UAW case.⁵¹ This interesting IWA proposal indicates a growing sensitivity to the negative implications of an overly-legalistic and compulsory approach to union security. The voluntary principle applied to dues assignment would, to some extent, ameliorate the bureaucratization inherent in compulsory union membership, while at the same time simplifying the process of dues collection. But the voluntary check-off was virtually meaningless as an extension of existing union security, without the union shop provision. As this issue was to be a concession to the employer, in Sloan's effort "to steer a middle course," that is precisely what the commissioner recommended. Given the union's own figures of 75 percent membership, (24,000 of 32,000 coast woodworkers) he did not consider a union shop necessary to protect its position as collective bargaining agent.⁵²

The provincial government seized on the Sloan report as an avenue for itself and the two parties to use to extricate themselves from an increasingly difficult economic and political confrontation. Hart and Pearson issued a joint statement urging both sides to

accept in the interest of alleviating a national housing emergency, the threat to shipments of foodstuffs to Europe, and the general disruption to the provincial and national economies.⁵³

District One immediately announced it would put its planned trek to Victoria on hold while it considered its response.⁵⁴ The District Executive had no intention of accepting Sloan's offer, but now that it had been made public, given the outspoken insistence from Stuart and the organized employers that the rank-and-file be consulted, the union was forced to be seen considering the proposal before proceeding with its mass lobby.

The District had clearly been outsmarted by Sloan. Had Pritchett really thought Sloan would broadcast his report far and wide, in the nature of a conciliation board award, it is unlikely the District would have launched its lobby undertaking prior to the report. Now Sloan had cleverly undermined the momentum of that initiative. The District Executive was more outraged by Sloan's deft manoeuvre than with the recommendation itself. As Pritchett told the special District Council meeting of 5 June called to respond to Sloan's recommendations, "It was with a great deal of surprise that we viewed the Commissioner's actions in presenting these recommendations to the press also; the inference being that through public and government pressure, he was trying to shove the proposals down the throats of our membership."⁵⁵ Sloan's tactics of trying to force a vote on the matter seemed to the union to play right into the hands of the CMA and Stuart Research. With the strike over two weeks old, and with those who had not already drifted into the cities and towns being called out of camps to assembly points in preparation for the trek, any meaningful referendum vote would have required a devastating delay. Not having a full vote would add further fuel to the red-baiting flames, particularly in view of the reasonableness of Sloan's recommendations, and the very good likelihood of their acceptance by a sizeable proportion of the union membership.

Realizing he had been outfoxed, Pritchett chose to attack Sloan's procedure as a way of deflecting attention away from an award which the strike committee quickly labelled

as inadequate. As Karly Larsen told the 3 June executive meeting assembled to consider a response, the employer would have given 15 cents and a modified 44-hour week right off if the union had agreed to keep the 1945 no-strike clause and shelve union security. How could they justify a two-week strike to the members for something they could have got at the start?⁵⁶ In a public response to Sloan, the District Executive labelled the commissioner's actions "in making public your recommendations while still acting as mediator in negotiations a breach of good faith and unprecedented in the annals of labour." In view of Sloan's actions, he could no longer be accepted as "an ambassador of good will, interested in bringing about a fair and just settlement of the dispute." The IWA, Pritchett maintained, had never broken off negotiations, and called upon the employers to reenter talks immediately.⁵⁷ Given the union's stated intent to circumvent normal dispute resolution procedures from the start; considering it was illegally on strike, and had treated the Sloan hearings with considerable contempt in announcing a trek to Victoria the day they began, Pritchett's attempt at moral outrage appeared somewhat contrived, if not downright precious.

This initial response to Sloan was part of a seven-point plan of action decided upon by the 3 June executive meeting. Further, the union would hold a special council meeting on 5 June to draft a response to Sloan's recommendations, even though the letter of 3 June from the executive had already implicitly rejected them. It recommended that all locals hold special meetings which would, in effect, ratify the District Council rejection. Picket lines were to be reinforced. Dalskog was dispatched to Ottawa to confer with CCL officials. The Victoria lobby, scheduled for 7 June, was to be held over to the fourteenth as a culmination of all activity. And it was finally decided, in view of the pressure being put on interior woodworkers by fruitgrowers and the federal government, to demand the immediate inclusion of the interior in the negotiations with the coast. As Bergren saw it, the rejection of Sloan had laid the basis for bringing the interior into joint negotiations, and

so overcome one of the greatest weaknesses, the division of the negotiations into three separate processes (coast, north and south interior).⁵⁸

It is interesting that it was only after the rejection of Sloan's proposals that the union turned its attention to the interior. Had the Sloan award proven to form the basis of a national wage settlement, the coast locals may very well have cut a deal, leaving the interior to fend for itself against the reactionary CMA and the mounting hysteria being generated by the fruitgrowers and the federal government. Only after three weeks of strike activity was some action taken toward winning a decent contract settlement for the interior locals. Now, in an attempt to stave off capitulation or government intervention in the interior, and in furtherance of the increasingly futile effort to keep the farming communities on the union's side, the District Executive offered a three-week agreement with the fruitgrowers on 1946 terms, during which time box production would resume and the growers would join with the union to bring about a settlement with the operators. Failing agreement in three weeks, operations would cease. On the coastal front, the union requested an extra two days from Sloan in order to give locals a chance to meet and reject the proposals, and the District to confer with International and national officers, and provincial labour groups.⁵⁹

When they met on 5 June, representatives from all locals, including those from the interior voted unanimously to reject Sloan's terms. The reasons for rejection were plain. To begin with, Pritchett's criticism of Sloan's procedure became the focus of much of the discussion and tended to overshadow the main substance of the findings in local meetings. Secondly, the real measure of the proposed settlement of 1 June 1946 was the pre-strike offer on wages and hours; the union could have settled on much the same terms prior to 15 May. In addition, 15 cents fell considerably short of the CIO pattern increase of 18 cents, already established in the United States, and even further below the 20 cent increase for 1946 just recently consolidated for the American woodworking districts without a strike. Furthermore, the District position was complicated by the potentially divisive nature of the hours of work recommendation. Both Bergren and the secretary of the Chemainus sub-

local agreed that if Sloan had recommended a straight 40-hour week, the union would likely have signed. Though the Sloan proposal suited the loggers who generally preferred to work all day Saturday if they had to work half of it, for mill workers there was no gain whatsoever over and above the new legal maximum. A too-ready acceptance of this offer would most certainly have exacerbated tensions between milling and logging locals. Even given all that, had union expectations, shaped by a broader political agenda, been pitched at a more normal level for the renegotiation of a collective agreement, District negotiators might still have been able to settle on 5 June with some self-respect. But, acceptance of an offer "shoved down their throats" by the chicanery of Industrial Disputes Inquiry Commissioner Sloan, appointed under wartime order PC 4020, would have defeated a major objective of the strike which was to circumvent and finally destroy the wartime legacy of controls and restrictions on Canadian labour. It was that objective that had accounted for the union's downplaying of the Sloan hearings to begin with, and that ultimately stood in the way of acceptance of its results. The strike would culminate in a trek to Victoria, regardless of the impact on those plans of the Sloan report.⁶⁰

Meanwhile, with more and more loggers gathering in Vancouver, the problem of feeding and housing them became acute. In order to raise money for their room and board, and as a means to generate broader public support for the strike, the union applied to city council for a tag day, but was turned down. On 30 May, some 600 strikers took to the streets selling tags, and raised some \$4000 before police moved in and made several arrests.⁶¹ On 3 June, 900 strikers and supporters paraded to city hall to hear Bergren, Murphy, Vancouver Labour Council president Leary and Malcolm McLeod, president of the Shipyard Workers speak on the main strike issues.⁶² The same day, the clientele of Stuart Research met and authorized acceptance of the Sloan recommendations on condition that the union followed suit. Once apprised of the union rejection, Stuart refused further negotiation on any matter until the union signed Sloan's deal.⁶³

With the union's rejection of Sloan and his terms, preparation for the trek gathered momentum, the mass lobby now scheduled for 14 June. An elaborate plan was laid out with military precision. Nine committees were struck; arrangements made to bring delegations of up to 10 in from each interior local. Banners and slogans had to be prepared, and liaison committees were to be established to provide for feeding and billeting. Every town and area involved was to organize special lobby committees to receive delegations, as well as help stage a province-wide tag day. Local politicians were to be approached for support. The departure of local delegations was to be "made into an occasion for demonstrations, parades, mass meetings..." As local delegations moved toward Vancouver and Victoria, they were to stop in each major centre for rallies, petitions and fund raising. It was clear from the strict and precise organizational guidelines drawn up for coordinating the march that the District organizers expected thousands to participate.⁶⁴ But as the union planned the culminating event of the strike, timed to take place in support of high level talks with the provincial cabinet, events quickly closed in on the IWA.

In a statement prepared on behalf of the lumber operators, R.V. Stuart announced their disappointment and concern with reports that the Sloan recommendations were being submitted to quickly-called mass meetings of local memberships where only 10 to 20 percent of the workers cast ballots, rather than to properly organized and scrutinized secret ballots of all men for whom the IWA was bargaining agent. "Continued organization of a trek to Victoria on June 14 is a strong indicator," stated Stuart, "that the union top executive is planning to prolong the illegal strike."⁶⁵ Walter Owen chimed in with a speech to a section of the Vancouver Board of Trade in which he called for the immediate prosecution of IWA strike leaders. He condemned the practice of taking strike votes prior to negotiations as a communist technique.⁶⁶ Gordon Sloan also took to press in a defence of his impartiality against the accusations of Pritchett; and noted that the latter's final comment

in the hearings had been to express appreciation for the "fair and impartial manner" in which they had been conducted.⁶⁷

On 6 June, the pressure on the union really began to mount. The British Columbia Fruit Growers' Association turned down the IWA offer of a three-week truce to allow box production in Kelowna.⁶⁸ Its president wrote Humphrey Mitchell protesting the lack of action and indifference of the federal government, particularly as the Sloan commission had no application to the interior dispute.⁶⁹ George Cruickshank, Liberal MP for Fraser Valley, called on the federal government to appoint a controller to take over and run all British Columbia box factories. He arranged a meeting with Dalskog, who was in Ottawa on CCL business, to discuss the same proposal, and continue negotiations on a possible truce.⁷⁰ A call for government action also came from the British Columbia Commander of the Canadian Legion speaking in the interests of veterans urgently in need of lumber for housing.⁷¹ Finally, Mitchell received protests from the Chairman of the Western Branch of the Pulp and Paper Association of Canada warning of the danger of a shutdown of British Columbia pulp mills due to a lack of logs.⁷² On 8 June the Woodfibre plant closed down its 600 employee operation, and Port Alice was scheduled to shut down on 27 June.⁷³

The Vancouver Sun joined the chorus in a 6 June editorial questioning the leadership of Pritchett who was taking his followers into a "cul de sac by veering away from the Sloan settlement." The public thought the recommendations were reasonable. By what course, the paper challenged, did Pritchett expect to improve on them?⁷⁴ In its daily harangue over the radio, and through the press, Stuart Research continued its programme of red-baiting and vilifying the communist leaders for denying union members \$11.5 million in additional wages.⁷⁵ In response, as he claimed, to many requests from employees for copies of the Sloan award and of the employers' acceptance of the same, Stuart Research supplied a pamphlet to be sent by operators to their workers, headed with the by-line: "Acceptance of the Sloan award by the I.W.A. can put this industry back into operation again within twenty-four hours."⁷⁶

Broader trade union support also began to slip. The TLC in both Vancouver and Victoria expressed continued support for the IWA, but questioned the union's strategy. Birt Showler, in particular, was reported to have regretted the IWA's repudiation of Sloan as arbitrator.⁷⁷ Dalskog was receiving similar expressions of surprise from unions in central Canada that the IWA had rejected what they considered to be a high wage increase of 15 cents.⁷⁸ While hundreds of telegrams voicing union and community support for the IWA flooded the offices of the provincial and federal ministers of labour during the second week of June, that flurry of paper appeared to be the climax of the united campaign in support of the strike.⁷⁹ After meeting in Toronto on 7 June, the CCL National Wage Coordinating Committee voted unanimous support of the IWA strike demands, and sent a request to Humphrey Mitchell to bring pressure on the British Columbia lumber industry employers to enter direct negotiations in good faith.⁸⁰ Hard cash and a significant broadening of strike action were nowhere in sight.⁸¹

The rank-and-file, too, appeared to be growing uneasy with the lengthening strike, if there was any accuracy to the follow-up report of 7 June of Sun staff correspondent Leslie Fox. He noted that after the rejection of the Sloan award, traces of bitterness were beginning to appear in place of the cooperation and goodwill he had noted on his first tour of island centres three weeks previous. "I found non-unionists willing to speak their minds more frankly about being thrown out of work and about the union system," wrote Fox. "I talked to men who were running out of money." Joseph Clarke, a veteran of the 1934 logging strike, but no longer active in the union, complained to Leslie Fox of the manner in which voting was done at local meetings. All was not negative, though, according to Fox's survey, as many woodworkers prepared stoically and with determination for what was no longer perceived as a short strike.⁸² But an informal report to a federal official from a construction first aid man at Port Alberni who had mixed socially with some mill hands indicated that, for many men, rock bottom was close at hand. He reported a general shortage of funds, with many selling cars or putting mortgages on homes to raise money.

When the strike was first called, he claimed, 50 percent were enthusiastic. "Today, nothing like that." Many were saying that the union had blundered in asking for the check-off and would be happy with 12½ cents.⁸³ Six years later, on the eve of another general strike in the coast industry, Ellen Haglund, the wife of a woodworker, wrote to the District President recalling the bitterness of the previous strike:

I have not forgotten the strike of 1946 and no strike pay no unemployment insurance either and any little savings completely exhausted in no time at all...I don't intend to come to the "soup kitchen" stage while I have two hands to work with—and that's all the IWA had to offer in the strike of 1946.⁸⁴

As organized capital, government, and the press rallied against the union, and support from the broader labour movement and amongst the rank-and-file weakened, prospects for a triumphant trek and mass mobilization of forces appeared dim. Yet the union charged ahead, groping for a better settlement and, at the same time, a new structural framework for the practice of industrial relations, more in line with the emerging political formation of the post-war world. When the District Negotiating Committee was invited into further discussions with Commissioner Sloan, it was decided that only Pritchett and Larsen would go, "the main direction and force of (the) leadership" being utilized "in mobilizing our membership and in raising the whole struggle to a higher plane." Through public mobilization, municipal and city councils were approached to back the 1946 demands in full. MLA's and MP's were contacted.⁸⁵

After Pritchett and Larsen met Pearson on 10 June, Sloan recommenced mediation efforts, meeting both sides separately on the check-off issue.⁸⁶ Stuart agreed to accept a clause making the voluntary check-off voluntarily irrevocable. The union submitted a revised proposal of 18 cents, a modified security clause "grandfathering" existing non-union employees, and the Sloan terms on hours as a basis for future negotiations. Stuart flatly refused to discuss any other issues or to negotiate directly with the union.⁸⁷ In an attempt to whip up the membership then being rallied for the mass trek and lobby, Pritchett

issued a statement accusing Stuart of refusing to negotiate directly in spite of Sloan's request to do so. Both Sloan and Stuart quickly denied that Stuart had been asked.⁸⁸ Pritchett then sent an open telegram to Sloan, calling for negotiations on the basis of Sloan's 1 June proposals to be held under the chairmanship of Sloan. Given the District President's earlier position with respect to Sloan and his report, Stuart could afford to mock Pritchett's renewed enthusiasm and did so in a lengthy and open response, demanding the union to stop stalling, end its illegal strike and sign for \$1.20 a day.⁸⁹ The Sloan terms hung like a dark cloud over the District's planned trek.

In Ottawa, Dalskog's similarly well-publicized meetings with Fraser Valley MP George Cruickshank and the federal minister of labour, called to engineer some way out of the increasingly critical impasse in the box producing sector of the interior industry, also yielded no positive results. Rather it drew public attention to another key weak point in the strike—the threat to the province's agricultural crops and dairy industry. On 9 June, Mitchell rejected Dalskog's contract terms for a three-week truce in the interior box mills, though negotiations continued with Cruickshank.⁹⁰ Sensing that events were turning their way, the interior operators' association requested George Pearson, in his capacity as chairman of the RWLB, to authorize employers to implement a ten-cent increase over the heads of the union, on condition that the dominion Wartime Prices and Trade Board allowed a concomitant increase in prices.⁹¹ Given the increasing pressure to reopen operations in the interior, and the relative weakness of the interior locals, District Secretary Melsness, on the eve of the climactic trek to Victoria, wrote to acting Prime Minister Isley offering the union's assistance in saving the fruit crop by returning to work on the basis that the government take over the box industry and negotiate an agreement with the union.⁹²

The two days prior to the planned mass lobby, District Council One and Stuart Research made their final bids for public support with large block advertisements in the daily press.⁹³ While the reading audience was being entertained by public jousting over

who was responsible for prolongation of the strike, Pritchett and Larsen, continued discussions with Sloan. Then, on the day of the trek, they met with Pearson, Hart and the cabinet, seeking provincial government support for dominion intervention into the interior dispute. Further, with all the pressure on the union to conduct a supervised vote, District negotiators advanced the clever plan of a government-supervised referendum on a union shop, to be held after a return to work, the result, if affirmative, to be binding on the industry.⁹⁴ It is difficult to believe that the District Officers had any hope of gaining either government or industry approval of such a scheme. If they did, it clearly depended on the degree of mass support for the strike that could be shown still to exist through the turnout for the trek and lobby.

On 12 June, union spokesmen had made a well-publicized request to Mayor George of Victoria to make the Camp McCauley barracks available to house 7000 lobbyists.⁹⁵ In fact, the long-awaited and much-heralded mass trek drew fewer than one-quarter of that number. From 6-700 woodworkers and supporters from Vancouver composed the large part of a contingent of 850 who spent the night before in Nanaimo. On route to Victoria the next morning they were joined by 6-700 more trekkers from Courtenay, Comox, Ladysmith, Alberni, Duncan, Chemainus and Cowichan. In Victoria, the approximately 1500 trekkers were joined by more demonstrators—1500 according to the Lumber Worker, 500 according to Western Business and Industry.⁹⁶ Many of these latter were non-woodworker supporters who had come to the capital to help swell the ranks. No doubt the enthusiasm and colour of the three-mile march through Victoria was impressive, despite the downpour of rain. With each local in its place, and headed by the Women's Auxiliaries and veterans, the parade moved towards the legislature, the Boilermaker's sound truck playing records of labour songs and the "Labour Arts Guild" entertaining the sodden masses with "cheery labour songs."⁹⁷ No amount of hoopla, however, could disguise the disappointing turn out. The Sun reported that the decision of the union to call off the Victoria lobby after only one night was regarded as a promising indication of a quick

settlement.⁹⁸ More to the point, the embarrassingly small turnout had had very little impact on the employers or the government. As Stuart exulted in his 14 June circular to his clients, the trek to Victoria and interview with the provincial government had been "unsuccessful from the union's point of view." Attendance of strikers from the mainland and Island points outside Victoria, Stuart reported, was only a fraction of the number expected and asked for by union leaders. The total attending the mass demonstration did not exceed ten percent of those claimed to be on strike by the union. The strikers delegation, according to Stuart, got no encouragement from the government, but was urged to accept the Sloan report and get back to work.⁹⁹

IV

With the failure of the IWA's mass culmination to impress the provincial government or the industry, the strike on the coast was for all intents and purposes over. But before the strike on the coast could be terminated, some form of settlement had to be extracted for the interior. Dalskog, still in Ottawa during the trek, now made public the union's offer to the government, delivered through George Cruickshank, to send its employees back into the box factories if the government took them over.¹⁰⁰ But while the dominion government ruminated, it was necessary to keep the coast negotiations going and the coast strikers on side. Thus, when the District Council met in a special meeting on 16 June to consider the new check-off proposal, it heard a recommendation from the District Executive for a return to work based on the original Sloan proposals plus the voluntary irrevocable check-off and a referendum vote of the membership on a modified union shop, as well as the inclusion of the interior in the final settlement. Pritchett warned delegates to expect problems on the latter two points.

This proposal was preposterous for several reasons. First, Stuart would certainly never have agreed to a poll of union members only on a union shop clause. Secondly, the union had long-since relegated the union security issue to subordinate status in the strike.

To win this new demand would have required an impossible prolongation of the strike over that one "non-strike" issue. Thirdly, any extended prolongation at this point was out of the question. Dalskog and Jack Greenall who had both recently returned from the east had rather bad news from that front. The financial support from other unions promised through the coordinating committee had not materialized. That lack of money, Dalskog intimated to the delegates, would influence IWA strategy. Greenall tried to put a better face on this state of affairs, noting that the IWA strike was not big news back east despite its unprecedented size. "They have their own fights," and so, he informed the council not to expect much financial help. Rather, it was necessary to consolidate the union position around the current proposal and wait for the labour movement to catch up. The normally optimistic Karly Larsen noted that after three weeks, the bosses usually started to work intimidating the workers. If finances were low, he warned, weak spots would begin to show in the organization.¹⁰¹ It was evident, then, that the position on union security was largely a stalling tactic to provide time to arrange an agreement with respect to the interior. As well, it was conceived as a useful propaganda tool to be used against the operators to help consolidate the union membership prior to a return to work. As Larsen explained, it was possible to emerge from the strike with the greatest possible results, if the union was very careful in seeing "that adverse publicity did not destroy the tremendous gains we have in the making," if the union could go out and call the biggest meetings of the membership yet, and pass this plan with a bigger vote than that which rejected the original Sloan proposals. Quite bluntly, Larsen explained, "the purpose of this formulation is to actually turn the heat, with the support of the public, on the provincial and federal governments and Sloan, to force the operators to agree to a vote amongst the membership, which they have been hollering for all along."¹⁰²

The District executive had absorbed the lesson of its hasty and ill-conceived rejection of the original Sloan proposals, as demonstrated in the disappointing trek and the falling away of broader labour support. The task at hand was to engineer a return to work

with the membership united, in spite of the obvious failure of the strike, after 3 June, to generate any concrete results. To accomplish this task it was necessary to undermine employer and state propaganda on the issue that was potentially most damaging and divisive—lack of consultation with the membership. The union would show its members and the public just how sincere Stuart was with all his protestations about the democratic rights of employees.

The day following its special meeting the Council reassembled to hear Sloan's expected response. The federal government could not get agreement from the employers to abide by a referendum decision and so could not proceed. All Sloan could recommend was a clause added to the check-off article stating that an employee could enter a voluntary irrevocable agreement with the union to continue to have dues deducted through the life of the agreement. This proposal, Pritchett noted, was meaningless. Sloan also responded that his commission did not cover the interior, so neither could any agreement he recommended.¹⁰³

With Sloan temporarily out of the way, the Council proceeded to pass the main recommendation of the Executive calling for the referendum, the irrevocable check-off, and the inclusion of the interior. In a press release, it now called directly on the federal government to conduct the vote. There was virtually no chance that the state would respond positively, and the District Council knew this.¹⁰⁴ But there was hope, as the District officers well knew from Dalskog's stay in Ottawa, that the dominion government would move to settle the interior dispute. Dalskog had developed a good working relationship with George Cruickshank. In fact, the union had even quoted the Liberal MP's supportive remarks in a 15 June newspaper advertisement aimed at countering negative employer propaganda. Cruickshank was prominent among a group of seven British Columbia members, from all three federal parties, who called strongly on 17 June for the government to appoint a controller to reopen the British Columbia food container factories. Mitchell appeared adverse to intervene in a dispute where the "right degree of

conciliation" had not been pursued.¹⁰⁵ But with the local press running articles with by-lines such as "Blight over B.C.," the minister on the following day appointed Gordon Bell as controller of the box factories and shook mills in the interior, and of sawmills and lumber camps supplying them. All employees of these plants were ordered back to work and the operators were ordered to enter into negotiations with the union with a view to settlement of the dispute. At the same time, Sloan received a new commission extending his jurisdiction to include the entire dispute between all interior operations and the union.¹⁰⁶

With that news, the District Council rushed back into session on 19 June. The District officers had been granted a 24-hour extension of the back-to-work order to give time for the council to meet. So anxious was the executive for some small victory in the face of capitulation, that this delay was heralded as setting a precedent for organized labour in postponing the enforcement of an order-in-council. The union went on quickly to endorse the principle of the controller, even though, it was admitted, the order constituted a strike-breaking tactic. The decision of the officers was that the inclusion of the interior, with Sloan appointed as commissioner, was a tremendous advance, placing the union in a position to be able to bargain collectively for that section of the industry for the first time. There was, of course, no guarantee of a true industry-wide contract, applying the terms of the coast master agreement to the interior.

Larsen, in speaking to the recommendation that the strike be terminated on 21 June at 11 AM, admitted that it might be asked why the District Executive had not settled two days before. Since then, he claimed, there had been two important gains—the extension of union security and the inclusion of the interior in negotiations. In fact, the irrevocable check-off clause had been theirs since 14 June. The real change had been the government order-in-council, which arrived just in the nick of time in the opinion of International Board member Dalskog. He asked the council to realize that if this break had not come when it did, it would have been necessary for the union to alter its position since "we are

conducting this fight alone.” Pritchett seconded this sentiment when he noted that one factor determining the present stand was the national picture, and the lack of reserves they had expected. There was no guarantee that sufficient forces would come into play within the next week to give added strength, but asked the council to consider that the union had “driven into the ranks of monopoly capital as far as we can at this time.” Now the task was to halt, consolidate and return to the job “as one man and woman” as they had come on on 15 May. Indeed, given the disastrous prolongation of the coast strike for over two weeks with almost nothing to show for it in terms of the coast agreement, the District officers had reason to be worried. Though the union membership had swelled by upwards of 10,000, that could prove to be a considerable problem if disgruntlement took hold amongst a rank-and-file unschooled in the union’s struggle for recognition.

To combat possible dissension, the union resorted to some creative tactics which presaged a new style of industrial relations that would emerge from the 1946 strike. In an effort to turn the largely meaningless voluntary check-off clause into a meaningful organizational tool, the union adopted a plan to have as many members sign the revocation waiver with the union as possible during the return to work. As Pritchett optimistically told the council delegates, “This will put us back on the job with union security.” Dalskog seconded Pritchett noting that the check-off must be properly handled by the business agents: “To the degree with which our workers go back on the job united, will we maintain our organization; and no contract on a piece of paper is worth anything unless you have the organization behind it to see that it is live up to.”¹⁰⁷

R.V. Stuart, always sensitive to important nuances in the collective bargaining relationship, reacted rather hysterically to this new union tactic. Between 20 and 25 June, on three different radio broadcasts and in a large newspaper advertisement, Stuart Research assured employees that “there are absolutely no ‘ifs,’ ‘ands’ or ‘buts’—no conditions at all attached to lumber workers returning to work either in a sawmill or in a logging camp.” Employees were not obligated under any terms of the Sloan award, Stuart assured, to sign

any paper waiving the right to revoke the check-off. The 1946 agreement was, in this respect, "a guarantee against inroads of the hard-fought freedoms that are now theirs...and ours as Canadian citizens."¹⁰⁸

The voluntary check-off itself, which was part of the original Sloan recommendations, while it would possibly ease the burden of the job stewards and free them up to deal more effectively with grievances, was a very weak form of security. With some creative tactics of his own, Stuart sought to turn it into a vehicle for undermining the security of the union. In August, he distributed copies of a form to all member companies for use in recording the extent of the check-off. It is important, he urged his clients, that the information be complete and up to date "as it will be of great assistance in future negotiations with the union...it will give the industry a fairly reliable picture of IWA membership strength in the industry." As well, on the basis of these monthly reports, Stuart would keep his clientele advised of any fluctuations in union membership.¹⁰⁹

If the achievements on the coast fell far short of original expectations, similarly, the settlement in the interior was modest in comparison to prenegotiation aims. The notion of bringing this first "industry-wide" interior contract into line with the coast agreement had been largely lost sight of prior to the start of negotiations when the District found itself spearheading the wage campaign for Canadian labour in general. There was thus little hope of achieving coast contract terms in the interior when the District resurrected that demand in late June. The other more tangible long-standing objective in the interior was to equalize wage rates across the different regions. Towards this end, the union attempted to establish its so-called "Kamloops scale," drawn up from the findings of the 1945 PCLB survey, as the basis for a 1946 wage settlement.

The federal back-to-work order affected mainly operations in the southern interior. In Prince George, where members had been reluctant to strike for the 1946 coast terms to begin with, 1600 strikers held out for some concrete assurance that their effort had not been in vain. As Prince George delegate Range told the 1947 District Convention, "what were

we going back to work for in the northern interior? We had been out at that time for thirty days. We didn't have a thing. All we had was our thirty days lost time, so we stayed out."¹¹⁰ To effect a return to work in Prince George, an interim agreement was signed on 26 June providing for the coast check-off clause, the 44-hour week and an agreement from employers to carry on with wage negotiations. On that basis, Prince George went back on 27 June.¹¹¹

When negotiations resumed, the union was clearly under considerable pressure from its interior members to produce some decent results. Dalskog, the main negotiator, demanded 15 cents across the board, based on the Kamloops scale, a base rate of 67 cents and an actual agreement embodying all the clauses of the 1946 coast agreement. With Sloan acting as mediator, another interim agreement, on wages, was struck on 5 July providing a 10-cent increase across the board and establishing a common base rate throughout the interior of 67 cents per hour, thus eliminating both the widely different rates within the region, and bringing the new interior rate up to the old common labour rate on the coast. A 90 day probationary period was introduced similar to one previously in force only in Cranbrook, which ameliorated the effect of the range rates in many job categories. With further help from Sloan some inequalities in existing RWLB directives would be eliminated in subsequent negotiations with each party entitled to adjustment of eight such categories in each existing RWLB schedule.¹¹²

The union made a last-ditch attempt to establish a broad equalization of rates across the interior by claiming that the 10-cent increase should apply to its own Kamloops conference scale. Dalton insisted that the spread in wages between north and south be perpetuated in the present proposed wage increase.¹¹³ Dalskog's demand that the interior master agreement incorporate all the coast language on such things as seniority, vacations with pay and safety and health, met with similar resistance from Ruddock and Dalton who told Sloan they would "not negotiate on the basis of the Coast agreement, but instead on an

agreement which had been discussed repeatedly with the I.W.A. over the eighteen previous months at many points in the Interior."¹¹⁴

Nonetheless, when negotiations concluded in late July the gains were quite substantial; in many ways more significant than those attained on the coast. As Pritchett somewhat hyperbolically told some skeptical interior delegates to the 1947 convention, "it was a tremendous accomplishment for the membership in the interior locals who had been newly organized, organized overnight, to jump over the entire struggle that we have been through in twenty years, and in a short period establish for the first time an industry wide contract..." But there was a downside to the 1946 interior strike as well which Pritchett noted, inasmuch as the interior membership was new and "were on the fringes of the situation, as it were."¹¹⁵ That situation produced the kind of discontent and criticism of the long-entrenched District officers that surfaced at the 1947 convention.¹¹⁶ This first so-called "industry-wide contract" in the interior followed more or less on the coattails of the coast settlement and had as its catalyst the attempts of the international director of organization, George Brown, to drive a wedge between the District Council and the new interior locals. Moreover, it grew out of the accidental circumstances of the box industry's strategic economic importance, and was mediated by a federal government commissioner who, fortunately, had a strong commitment to the principle of industry-wide bargaining. Even at that there were still important discrepancies between northern and southern contract terms. It came about at the beginning of a phenomenal post-war explosion in interior lumber production, following hard upon the already considerable growth during the war. The interior locals, by and large, lacked the degree of stability and organizational strength that had been achieved in most coast locals through a long, hard struggle. It remained to be seen whether, to use Dalskog's words, the piece of paper on which the contract was written was worth anything at all.

V

The strike of 1946 was notable for a variety of myths that sprang up around it, some of which have been perpetuated by various chroniclers of these events. The first myth is that the IWA spearheaded a national drive to smash through wage controls.¹¹⁷ In fact, the union had been notified by state officials well before the strike that any mutually agreed upon settlement would be passed by the RWLB. Mine Mill settled with Consolidated Smelting right at the start of the IWA strike for 15½ cents and 40 hours and set the general pattern for the subsequent mine settlements.¹¹⁸ The IWA settlement, which was next in line, certainly reinforced the pattern, but if there had been a federal ceiling, it was already pierced well before 20 June. Moreover, the IWA's designation as spearhead was used by Stuart to undermine the union's position during conciliation proceedings, inasmuch as he claimed the 25-cent wage demand had been developed outside of British Columbia and had no particular relation to the situation prevailing in the lumber industry where employees were amongst the best paid in the country. The wisdom of the CCL Coordinating Committee in permitting the IWA to act in this capacity is questionable in terms of the union's ability to build a strong case in its own particular District negotiations. The IWA was a large, seemingly strong and militant industrial union, well positioned in the very important British Columbia lumber industry to win a substantial industry-wide increase. But in the more conventional world of industrial relations, it was unfortunately encumbered by the third-party bureaucracy. District One had also to play Sloan's game to do the job effectively. Its famed militancy was ultimately tamed by the deft manoeuvrings of Sloan and Stuart.

Moreover, the 1946 woodworkers' wage settlement was not even uniform across the province. As one bitter Prince George delegate to the 1947 District convention lamented, "...the Coast boys got 15 cents and that's all we hear now—'The Woodworkers in British Columbia got a 15 cent increase. They set the pattern for Canada.' Sure, the boys on the coast got 15 cents but what did the interior get?"¹¹⁹ The coast increase itself,

heralded as a great achievement on 20 June when accepted, upon more sober reflection in January 1947 was found to have barely covered the loss in wages due to the decreased work week, higher income tax and increased cost of living. By the beginning of 1947, according to the District officers, the average woodworker's net gain in annual earnings had been reduced to \$1.50.¹²⁰

The second most notable myth, expressed very recently to the author by Emil Bjarnason of the Trade Union Research Bureau, was that the 1946 strike effectively established the union shop in the coast lumber industry.¹²¹ Indeed, Pritchett's assessment right after the strike had been that the voluntary irrevocable check-off paved the way for the full union shop on the job through the concentrated effort of every member and job steward.¹²² Writing from a more critical point of view, John Stanton has recently argued that the achievement of the check-off in 1946, though a great convenience, helped dissolve the close ties between leaders and members established in the prerecognition days, and led the union down the road to bureaucratization. After 1946, Stanton recalls, "union dues were deducted from pay cheques and paid by the employer to the locals once a month. Each employee, as he signed to authorize this deduction, also signed up for union membership and was automatically admitted. Becoming a member of the IWA was no longer an important event in a workers' life."¹²³

District One, on the coast at least, by virtue of a high level of union membership and the voluntary check-off did have something resembling union security. But it was not a contractual guarantee. It was still something that had to be worked at to maintain. In fact, with the return to work, the job steward had to scramble around to get employees to sign a waiver before there was anything approaching a union shop, and that, only for the life of the current contract. Workers had to request the check-off from the employer, and, in the case of new employees, that process would normally follow their being signed up by the organizer. The 1946 settlement, in short, did not take District One as far down the road towards full union security as either its supporters or its detractors have maintained.

The third myth about the strike, reiterated in One Union in Wood, is that it resulted in "An industry-wide contract covering the interior as well as coastal operations."¹²⁴ It had indeed been the union's original intention to bring the interior locals into one master set of negotiations which would result in a province-wide master contract. In the end, the 1946 strike produced only a semblance of an industry-wide settlement. In fact, though the interior dispute was settled through one set of mediated talks under Gordon Sloan, contract terms and wage scales differed from north to south. The fact of an industry-wide strike in 1946, by its very nature, appeared to produce a kind of industry-wide settlement. The following year, without the unifying force of a strike, collective bargaining in the interior fractured back into its component parts. Nineteen forty-six did bring about union recognition through most interior operations, no mean achievement in itself, as Pritchett noted, but a far cry from an industry-wide master agreement for all British Columbia woodworkers.

A fourth myth relates to the establishment of the 40-hour week in the last half of the contract in the logging sector. The District officers believed that once established in the logging industry, "the very heart of the union," the 40-hour week would never be relinquished.¹²⁵ That prognosis proved to be essentially correct, and the 1946 settlement was an important milestone on the way towards entrenching the 40-hour week on the coast. Still, given the tendency amongst a significant segment of loggers to opt for longer hours if available, and the desire of employers to undermine the 40-hour limit through mutual agreement with their employees, there is some question whether the union had won a shorter week or just more overtime work for some of its members. Though the 40-hour week was, in accordance with Sloan's recommendation, established for the last six months of the collective agreement in most coast logging operations, it did not rest easily at the heart of the industry either with the employers or with many loggers (see chapter eight below).

The fifth myth surrounding the 1946 strike related to its characterization as part of a broadly-based mass movement of workers, farmers, small businessmen and ordinary citizens, directed against the reactionary policies of monopoly capitalism and American imperialism in the post-war era. District leaders were certainly sensitive to the LPP post-war analysis with respect to the intensifying world conflict between imperialism and socialism, and Canada's role within the framework of United States international strategy. That perspective had conditioned the entire strike agenda from January 1946 onward. And, quite definitely, the IWA did manage to generate substantial public sympathy, as witnessed by its successful mass demonstrations, tag days and considerable moral support from the national and provincial labour movement during the early stages of the strike. Nevertheless, after the 3 June rejection of the Sloan report, District One experienced a noticeable weakening of community and labour support. The last two weeks of the strike witnessed the rapid evaporation of the broad political agenda and a return to the more mundane world of the collective agreement. The trek and mass lobby of the government, far from being the peak, or political high point of the strike, as myth would have it, only highlighted its denouement.¹²⁶

The 1946 strike was conceived in broad national, if not international terms. The strike itself did not grow out of a process of collective bargaining, but was premeditated on the basis of a more far-reaching political agenda, bolstered by pent-up rank-and-file wage demands. It was this basic character of the strike which so irked both employers and politicians, and which conditioned the union's attitude to the process of negotiation and conciliation. This attitude laid it open to attack from organized capital and the state for failure to give appropriate consideration to either the employers' pre-strike offer or Sloan's "reasonable" recommendations for a settlement. As Pritchett himself admitted in his post-strike analysis, the Sloan report was "rejected by the union in a manner which constituted a major error on the part of the union and tended to improve the position of the employers in the eyes of the public. The rejection also tended to isolate the union from a large section of

support.”¹²⁷ Reactionary elements amongst the province’s employers seized on this admission as further evidence of “growing signs within the ranks of labour that legislation to ensure secrecy of ballot on major decisions in union affairs would be welcome.”¹²⁸

If the strike did not live up to expectations politically, it did set a pattern for future trade union practice in the British Columbia woodworking industry. The trek, harkening back to the halcyon days of the 1930s, also presaged the eventual march out of the IWA of its communist contingent into a “squeaky clean,” independent, militant Canadian woodworkers union in October 1948. The Fighting Fund, and the voluntary check-off proposal which formed part of the District’s original union security demand, were reminders that the union still had strong roots in the militant, laissez-faire, days of the open shop and blacklist. Dalskog defended the Fighting Fund concept from attack by a fellow District One delegate at the 1946 International convention in discussion on a resolution to establish an International strike fund. Delegate Hyde from local 1-217 drew attention to the experience of the recent British Columbia strike, where a Fighting Fund, as opposed to a strike fund, had been established, to be used in whatever way the District Executive saw as most appropriate in fighting for the issues at stake. The records showed, complained Hyde, that the biggest percentage of the fund had been used for “propaganda, parades and publicity,” rather than actually keeping men on the picket lines by looking after their material needs. Dalskog rose to the bait. Though he supported the idea of a strike fund he wanted delegates to be clear that no fund could have fed 37,000 British Columbia woodworkers for 37 days in 1946. Workers would still have to go out and rally both financial and moral support in the community: “That is the way you win strikes, not by an International Union pouring funds in to keep the strikers.” In British Columbia, Dalskog explained, the union asked its membership for a day’s pay to support the 1946 struggle. “We didn’t ask for a strike fund. It wasn’t in our Constitution and we didn’t feel that it was advisable. We felt that it was advisable to at that time put it on the voluntary basis, to create a fund that would carry on the struggle that we were entering into.” Some of the

most militant struggles had been carried on, and the greatest gains won, Dalskog reminded his union brothers "when the union had nothing to start out on but the militancy of its workers."¹²⁹

The dichotomy between Fighting Fund and strike fund symbolized well the basic dichotomy that would eventually split the union in two. District One had come to maturity within the increasingly institutionalized world of industrial relations. That world called for a business-like approach to collective bargaining, including the raising of money to support a strike. The woodworkers' voluntarist tradition, building support around specific issues, seeking a day's pay from members as an expression of militant support, clashed with the bureaucratic approach inherent in a regularized monthly strike fund assessment deducted automatically by the employer from each pay cheque as part of union dues. That was the approach that was favoured by such white bloc adherents as Mitchell, Alsbury and Whalen.¹³⁰ But there was more to their position than just plain politics. These men more fully embraced a philosophy of business unionism which they saw as the logical outcome of the IWA's march to union recognition and industry-wide collective bargaining. They correctly understood the essence of the industrial relations system in which the union was so thoroughly enmeshed. For the District leaders, however, the 1946 strike was not the harbinger of business unionism, but rather the launching pad for a continued assault on the constraints of the legalism inherent in that system. The events of 1946 ought to have been a clear warning that the IWA was balancing precariously between two different worlds, and could easily be broken asunder. Bjarnason's quixotic attempt to debate the reconstruction of Canadian capitalism in the context of an Industrial Disputes Inquiry Commission, was only matched by the somewhat pathetic attempt of the old-line party stalwarts to rekindle the glory days of the on-to-Ottawa trek, during the dying days of a strike that had already been undermined by the deft manoeuvrings of Chief Justice Sloan and industry labour relations expert, R.V. Stuart. By June 1946, far from being the spearhead of the Canadian labour movement, District One was rudderless and floundering in the turbulent seas of a

new post-war political formation. As Pritchett remarked in his post-strike analysis, one of the weaknesses of "this great strike" had been the union's "under-estimation of the role of monopoly capital in the post-war period."¹³¹ Only the fortuitous intervention of the federal government saved District One from humiliation. Yet in 1947-48 the IWA would continue to push at the limits of conventional industrial relations, while provincial employers and the state moved to restrict the legal parameters within which trade unions could move about freely. A collision between the IWA and this state-employer initiative would play a large part in the 1948 departure of the union leadership.

Chapter Eight

1947: Restructuring the Industrial Relationship

The struggle over the nature and limits of the British Columbia industrial relations process and structure during 1946-48, in which District One was a key player, was part of a broader struggle that absorbed much of the North American labour movement in this period. That fight, while linked to the changing global political-economic realities of the cold war period, had a more particular material basis in the economics of industrial production during the war and post-war years. Before going on to look in some detail at the struggle over the industrial relations system in the forest industry, we shall review some of the economic factors and forces which framed that struggle, particularly from the point of view of the employers.

I

In his book, The Right to Manage, Howell J. Harris outlines lucidly the linkage between the ideology of anti-communism, which shook American society to its roots, and the problems of management at the level of the firm. He documents a "gut feeling" amongst America's industrial management that the rate of productivity had fallen dramatically during the war period because of labour shortages, a loss of tight managerial discipline and relaxation of normal business efficiency. Low productivity might not have posed an immediate crisis during the profitable consumer boom of the early reconversion period. The perception was common, however, that boom would quickly be followed by depression, and then "success in the restoration of productivity and cost control might make the difference between survival and bankruptcy."¹ On a higher, political-economic plane, American businessmen who were determinedly in the process of dismantling the New Deal, saw in a renewal of unfettered capitalist enterprise, the only hope of restoring Americans' faith in the economic system and warding off the socialism and communism that were rapidly engulfing Europe and even Great Britain. Capitalizing on Republican

successes in the 1946 congressional elections in order to “win back territory it had lost to workers and then unions during the war” the American business community moved quickly for reform of labour relations law and to have Congress “implement its conservative economic strategy.”²

The fears and perceptions of American capitalists were very much alive in the minds of Canadian businessmen as well. Particularly in British Columbia, perceptions of falling rates of productivity were linked with the success of communist-led trade unions. Of course the anti-communist campaign that characterized these years was fuelled by the broader perception of a Soviet threat to free enterprise and democracy, but it was rooted in the material conditions of the British Columbia economy.

During the war, with full employment, workers took the opportunity to drive wages up as much as a regulated economy would allow, while employers claimed the quality of the labour supply was deteriorating.³ Following the war, the trend of full employment, a scarcity of woods labour and declining output continued.⁴ The industry claimed that while in 1945 it took 20.4 man-hours to produce 1000 board feet of lumber, in 1948 it took 22.7 man-hours—an increase of 11 percent.⁵ The union, as well, documented an increase in labour costs of over 27 percent between 1945 and 1947, but argued that the increase in lumber prices ranged between 81 and 95 percent during the same period.⁶ An independent study carried out in 1959 supports these trends most notably in logging. While the woods workforce on the coast expanded spectacularly between 1946 and 1947, approximately from 7000 to 14,000, physical output per man year, using 1949 as the base (100), fell from 133.1 to 86.2, and then further to 81.6 in 1948.⁷ In the milling sector, where most of the new technical improvements, integration and fuller utilization of raw material was being applied, productivity did increase slightly. Using 1949 as a base (100), Deutsch *et al.* found average annual employment increased from a 1946 level of 77.4 to 95.5 in 1947, and then to 108.3 in 1948. The average physical output per man-hour rose from 85.9 to 92.5 in 1947 and then stalled at 92.6 in 1948.⁸ In the all-important logging sector,

moreover, where production costs were more difficult to drive down, labour income, as a percentage of gross value of output, dropped slightly during 1946-47 but rose by over eight percent during 1947-49.⁹ The industry was concerned that when the depression hit and prices fell, it would be stuck with high fixed costs that would eat into profits. The union's political argument claimed that only by increasing wages could the inevitable depression be kept at bay.¹⁰

Concerns about the future stability of the industry conditioned operators' perceptions on unionism and productivity. Further, as with workers, capitalists were experiencing the pent-up frustrations of wartime regulation and state interventionism. On top of the problems with taxation and timber depletion, they also were hit by the reduced 44-hour work week and the application of the federal unemployment insurance programme to both logging and milling sectors as of 1 August 1946. In 1948 came sharp increases in freight rates.¹¹ Lumbermen wanted to unfetter themselves from state and social incursions into their enterprises, at the same time that they looked to the state to harness the power of unions, and provide greater stability to their industry through reform of the forestry laws. There is some debate regarding the relationship of the province's big lumber operators with the state over the issue of forestry reform,¹² an argument that cannot be resolved here. In an industry that, at least since 1912, had been regulated and promoted by an active state, it was consistent with past practice that any broad policy initiatives toward ensuring future stability and expansion would come from the state bureaucracy, without too much protest from the corporate giants.¹³ In the face of escalating social and labour costs, declining or stagnating productivity, depletion of the most accessible timber and the beckoning opportunities in the post-war world for further integration, concentration and expansion of the industry, both labour and forestry reform were on the agenda. It is no mere coincidence that 1947 witnessed the passage of significant legislative reform in both these areas.

That is not, of course, to say that the industry played a passive role with respect to state initiatives. It played an active part both during and after the Sloan Forestry Commission proceedings, and prior to the passage of the new ICA Act, to ensure that state policies were designed to meet its needs. Moreover, lumbermen, outside the area of government policy, actively pursued measures to rationalize and integrate production to meet the challenge of increased operating costs. The immediate post-war years witnessed continued development of power saw and other automated technology.¹⁴ Typical of the kind of initiatives announced on the pages of the British Columbia Lumberman in these years was one from Robert McNair Shingle Company of Port Moody that "faced with ever-increasing labour costs and declining productivity of the individual on one hand, and the certainty that a return to a competitive era is closely approaching on the other," the company had just completed the installation of a new "all-electric" mill which promised to reduce the cost of producing lumber through a 75-percent reduction on labour required over conventional mills.¹⁵ At the behest of the industry, the British Columbia Industrial and Scientific Research Council established during the war to aid in the development of war industry, conducted a survey of more than 30 mills during the summer of 1947. The Research Council compiled statistics on machinery breakdowns and man-hour time losses as a first step in a programme aimed at cutting lumber production costs. Expanded studies were planned for 1948 which would include the shingle sector and a study of mill production methods.¹⁶

In addition to these new initiatives with respect to production techniques, new experiments in utilization or salvaging of what had previously been considered waste wood in both log and mill sectors got underway during and immediately after the war. High log prices suddenly made economical the salvaging or relogging of smaller, less desirable timber left on logged-over lands formerly returned to the government. CWL's Comox Logging and Railway Company at Ladysmith pioneered in perfecting log salvage techniques in a joint experiment with Powell River Pulp and Paper and the provincial

government. This venture formed the basis of CWL's expansion into the pulp and paper industry with a new operation at Duncan Bay. (In fact, it was a combination of salvaged material with new timber grants which would form the basis of many new Farm Management Licences for pulp production on the coast.) R.J. Filberg, ever at the forefront of new production initiatives in the logging industry, became president of the new operation, the Canadian Western Timber Company Limited.¹⁷ On the milling side of the industry, in the interests of closer utilization, BSW added a presto-log operation to its Boundary Shingle mill, and Canadian Forest Products began the manufacture of hardboard from waste generated at its Pacific Veneer plant.¹⁸ MacMillan also installed a hardboard mill, and in 1947 invested some of its profits from the post-war boom to build a pulp mill near Nanaimo. Fifty percent of the new Harmac Mill's wood would be supplied from waste chips from MacMillan's saw and plywood mills.¹⁹

It is clear that the new push for automation, closer utilization and integration of operations went hand in hand with what the chief of the Vancouver Forest Products Laboratory called "a broad program for the maintenance of forest land at full productive capacity"—in other words, sustained yield.²⁰ In fact, one forestry analyst claimed that it was the closer utilization of the forests, especially with respect to the use of smaller logs, which made it possible to put the forests on a sustained yield basis by lowering the growth cycle for usable timber from 100 to 60 years.²¹

The achievements of the industry with regard to forestry policy and methods looked after only part of the ledger. The whole post-war programme to reduce costs, increase productivity, assure future timber supplies—in short, to stabilize the industry for future investment and expansion, would not be complete until some modus vivendi had been arrived at with labour. The pulp and paper industry had achieved that goal with its mill workers years earlier (see chapter four above). The big wild card remained the IWA, which, along with Mine Mill, was regarded as having a destabilizing effect not only on

industrial relations in the mines, metal shops and forests, but on the whole of industrial relations in the province.

The link between the militant and so-called "illegal" strikes of 1946 in British Columbia, and the push from organized capital for labour law reform has been ably documented by Paul Knox.²² Specific employer proposals regarding supervised strike votes, enforced votes on offers during a strike and the legal accountability of union members reflected the broad thrust of post-war North American labour law reform. They also reflected the particular concern of British Columbia employers to contain if not to eliminate altogether the growing power of left wing unionism in the province's key industries. What has not been so clearly documented in the British Columbia case is the material basis of this anti-communist drive. Behind the calls of such anti-communist fronts as the British Columbia Federation of Trade and Industry that "the time has come to write into the law of Canada the responsibilities of the leaders of our labour unions," was an urgent concern that militant industrial unions were responsible for the decline of labour productivity through such factors as an erosion of the differential between skilled and unskilled workers, and reduction in the pride of the workers in their work—which were only reinforced by gains made by unions during the war.²³

First, there was the obvious problem of loss of production due to strikes. As H.A. Renwick, Managing Director of B.C. Manufacturing Company, and Chairman of the British Columbia Division of the CMA told the 30th Annual Meeting in April 1947, had the true will of the majority been heard, these destructive strikes in the lumber, mining and engineering industries would not have occurred. It was in line with this belief that the CMA, in cooperation with other business associations, "made submissions recently to the Provincial Government as to the desirability of providing by legislation for the taking of a pre-strike Government-supervised vote before a strike is called in any industry," and then only after all the processes of conciliation and arbitration had been exhausted.²⁴ But the question of labour productivity went far deeper than just the curtailment of disruptive

strikes. On the CMA and forest industry association agendas in British Columbia was the question of rooting out the communists and replacing them with responsible business-minded trade unionists. The first step in that direction was reform of the industrial relations system so as to undermine the ability of leaders to rally their members quickly for timely preemptive strike votes, and effective strike action which would drive up wage rates. The second step was implementation of heavy penalties if not outright decertification if union leaders tried to circumvent a whole series of legal and procedural hurdles in the interests of protecting the bargaining power of their members. Current leaders would either be brought within the framework of responsible business unionism or discredited in the eyes of their rank-and-file as disregarding of the will of the democratic majority and as illegitimate contraveners of the statutes governing collective bargaining.

To address this general problem of bringing labour into line in the interests of increased productivity, the CMA, at its June 1947 Annual General Meeting, held a comprehensive session entitled "Labour Relations and Production." Particular attention focussed on the legislation recently passed in Nova Scotia, Alberta and British Columbia, and the pending federal legislation to replace PC 1003. Under the Chairmanship of R.O. Campney, Chair of the Industrial Relations Committee of the British Columbia Division, full expression was given to the problem of communism in the trade unions, and its effect on production. Among the most outspoken participants were some unidentified British Columbia members, one of whom asserted that "there can be no question that labour legislation and productivity are interlocked." Several statutes passed in recent years affecting output reflected the more and more militant demands of labour leaders, but not the demands of the average worker. The leaders, he noted, often misrepresented to the rank-and-file the real position of the industry, even in the face of audited company reports. The impact of unionization had been to "bring down to the level of the lower the better man in the plant." The union, of course, has tried to establish a wage rate on the status of the best

man in the place." He advocated putting men on a piece-work basis as one way to break the hold of the union.²⁵

Another British Columbia member saw the new ICA Act as righting the balance that had for years been tipped in favour of labour as a result of a Minister of Labour (Pearson) who had favoured the union viewpoint. Added to that imbalance was "the way the Government taxes us and the position of the Canadian dollar and the American dollar and the sterling area," so that "none of you gentlemen are free to do your business as you might like to do it." Though "a howl went up from our friends, the Communist leaders" over the supervised secret ballot, he saw the new provisions as helping to restore "a free economy." A third British Columbia member struck the note of the new face of liberalism in the province: "recognizing that the unions are here to stay, we therefore want to make our unions strong, and comprising men whom we believe to be honest... We are going out progressively to clean the house from within, because we have faith in our individual workers." That transformation of the communist-controlled unions would lay the basis for "two moves that probably everyone had in mind to keep labour costs down to within reasonable distance of the old normal"—mechanization and speed-up on the one hand, and tighter supervisory practices on the other. As well, he commented on the current trend of using contractors to reduce costs, particularly in the areas of maintenance and construction. Clearly a good working relationship with a compliant, business-minded union, would facilitate these changes.²⁶

Any doubt that communism and the future health of industry were linked together as key business concerns in 1947-48 is easily dispelled by a brief look at the proceedings of the 5th Annual Truck Loggers' Convention held in Vancouver in January 1948, to which 1000 delegates from throughout British Columbia as well as the northwest United States flocked to discuss two key topics—communism, and the new provincial forest management plan. With respect to the pernicious affect of communism on trade unionism, the alarm was sounded by various speakers, including the outspoken Walter Owen who

called for direct legislative action to root out the red evil. The most interesting and thoughtful analysis, however, came from an American public relations counsel with Weyerhaeuser Timber Company of Tacoma, Col. Walter DeLong, whose address, entitled "Let's Raise the Iron Curtain Between Employer and Employee," was reprinted in full in the British Columbia Lumberman. While adjuring management that business must tell its story in order to educate labour in the free enterprise system, he observed that communist labour leaders had dropped an iron curtain between employees and management, preventing the free intercourse which would allow management to expose "the false doctrines" and explain the economic realities. "The greatest long-term threat to our political and economic system," lectured DeLong, "is the worker's opposition to increased efficiency and to profits." Through employee forums, small group meetings with supervisory personnel, and key employees, the leaders of thought from various departments of the company (usually married men with families and homes and some seniority), greater understanding would be engendered about how the sales dollar was divided, the relation of wages, prices and profits, how competition controlled profits, how production regulates prices, wages and dividends and so on. By lifting the iron curtain between employee and employer, industrial peace would reign. North America's true economic potential could easily be realized, according to the Weyerhaeuser spokesman, if only "we do not high-jack each other or fall for this hocus-pocus economic philosophy that the communist agitators spread, that the country owes us a living whether we work for it or not."²⁷

During these tumultuous years, 1947-48, the pages of Industrial Canada, Western Business and Industry, British Columbia Lumberman and other business journals were full of in-depth analysis of productivity problems, labour relations and the impact of provincial, federal and United States' statutes on the power of unions. The ultimate industrial relations goal of the CMA, the Truck Loggers' Association, the BCLA and other associations of organized capitalists was no longer to eradicate trade unionism, but to help bring about a

business-minded cadre of trade union leaders sympathetic to their concerns of reducing costs, meeting new post-war opportunities, while at the same time planning conservatively for the inevitable downturn. To such trade unions would go the full rewards of union security and legitimation, along with full responsibility before the law—an outcome clearly pointed to in 1945 by the Rand Formula, the original blueprint for conservative, post-war business unionism. The first step along that route in British Columbia, with the return of authority over industrial relations to the provinces scheduled for the spring of 1947, was to bring the ICA Act into line with the new political and economic realities governing post-war North America. With the institutional “leg-up” on the communists, the process of cleaning house could proceed, aided and abetted by the anti-communist forces within the labour bureaucracy itself.

II

Disgruntlement amongst organized employer groups in the province over the inroads made by organized labour with the provincial government had been growing since 1945. Prior to war's end, a BCFL-led lobby resulted in the creation of a government-labour committee which was to confer on legislative matters, both provincial and federal. Pearson specifically excluded CMA participation.²⁸ While continued BCFL demands for a new provincial labour code were deflected pending anticipated federal action, cooperation with the state paid off for the Federation and the TLC in 1946 when the government responded to lobbying efforts with the enactment of the 44-hour week and a statutory one-week paid vacation provision.²⁹

These concessions threw the CMA's top brass into a rage against the government for its political expediency in turning a deaf ear to its own lobbying efforts.³⁰ Unfortunately for it, the CMA had no alternative party to which to throw its support. It did, however, grow increasingly cool toward the chief Liberal elements in the government, Hart and Pearson, and helped lay the groundwork for a shift to the right in the Coalition

structure after Hart's resignation in 1947.³¹ The position of the CMA-led employer groups was buttressed quite quickly in this regard with the outbreak of labour unrest in the province in the summer of 1946, the responsibility for which was easily placed at the doorstep of the LPP-led unions. The CMA's new chief in British Columbia, H.A. Renwick, viewed the lumber and foundry strikes as part of a general communist plot against North American capitalism.³² When Pearson spoke out strongly against the IWA's action in undertaking an illegal strike, it was in part because it was a slap in his face and helped to lower his political stock with organized capital.

In fact, in the wake of the 1946 strikes, the state was quickly becoming more receptive to the demands of capital. In December 1946, a departmental official had drafted a memo for Pearson on the ICA Act, recommending such changes as excluding supervisory or confidential employees, weakening the provisions for industry-wide bargaining, allowing for easier decertification prior to a first agreement, explicitly prohibiting strikes during the term of an agreement, and providing for mandatory supervised strike votes requiring two-thirds or three-quarters support of all workers involved prior to any strike action. Harmonious industrial relations, free from compulsion, were to be maintained as a matter of principle, by continued exclusion from the law of any form of union security. The new act was to be administered by a Labour Relations Board constituted similarly to the federal wartime board.³³

Many of these ideas had of course been received either directly or indirectly by the state, during the preceding months, in the form of letters, formal presentations and published diatribes from various employer groups and representatives. They were all neatly summarized in a 24 February industry association blueprint for post-war labour relations in the province. The brief, presented by 15 employer groups led by the British Columbia Division of the CMA, including eight forest industry associations, entailed 17 points. Chief amongst these, and most contentious, were the supervised pre-strike vote procedures of all employees affected by a dispute, a supervised vote on any new employer

offer during the course of a strike, mandatory certification votes, the registration of unions as legal corporate entities subject to damage suits for contract violation, the filing of annual financial statements, "just as is done by industry," possible revocation of bargaining rights for unions striking illegally, and the recognition of the individual's right to work by making all forms of union security illegal. Employers were to be given freedom to choose whether to bargain individually or as an industry. The new act was to be administered by a Board, independent of the civil service.³⁴

In its preamble, the brief noted "it is obvious that everywhere in Canada and the United States there exists today a public belief that...new union power has not been matched with union responsibility. The trend is therefore toward new legislative safeguards to ensure that there will be democratic procedure within the trade union and that the public interest will be better protected from those unions that may develop irresponsible leadership."³⁵ That North American trend of which the industry brief spoke, had been initiated well over a year before by a parallel American business organization to the CMA, the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM).

In its 1946 declaration of principles on labour-management relations the NAM included such fashionable devices as legal recognition of an employee's right not to join a union, binding arbitration of all disputes, contractual no-strike provisions, atomized as opposed to multi-employer bargaining, and a secret ballot vote supervised by an outside agency on the employer's last offer. In addition, the NAM principles proposed facilitating the questioning of union representativeness, and called for the outlawing of any kind of union security and of a whole range of union actions such as sympathy strikes and boycotts.³⁶ British Columbia business thought on industrial relations was clearly part of a general current of conservative North American business policy.

The November 1946 United States congressional elections, which swept out the liberal Democrats in favour of a Congress dominated by conservative Republicans, only expressed at the national level a broad anti-union sentiment that had swept through many

state legislatures in the wake of the post-war strike wave.³⁷ This anti-union movement would find its ultimate expression in the so-called "slave-labor law," the Taft-Hartley Act of June 1947. This Act embodied many of the NAM's 1946 principles, as well as the infamous non-communist rule proposed by the hard-line NAM minority faction, barring access to the NLRB by any union with communists as office holders.³⁸ Similarly, in British Columbia, much of the CMA labour relations agenda would be incorporated holus-bolus into the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1947, more commonly known at the time as Bill 39. Some of its harshest proposals however, had to await the 1948 session for implementation, after the Coalition had realigned itself further to the right, and the threat of labour retaliation had died out.

Strictly speaking, it could be argued that Bill 39 grew quite naturally out of the existing provincial and federal labour codes, and did not represent a real departure or break from the long process of institutionalizing industrial relations begun actively in the 1930s. That indeed is the convincing argument applied by Christopher Tomlins in his analysis of the reform of the Wagner Act. Taft-Hartley was not a dramatic transformation or overturning of Wagner, but only carried its pluralistic principles further towards clearly delineating and limiting areas of legitimate trade union activity. Taft-Hartley (and the same argument applies to Canadian labour law reform) was not intended to disrupt collective bargaining structures developed since the 1930s, Tomlin states, but to ensure that unions were confined ever more strictly within those structures: "Wages, hours and working conditions were enthroned as legitimate objects of industrial government. Activities which obstructed the further development, expansion and productivity of the corporate political economy, however, were to be avoided."³⁹

Indeed, as the IWA District One chief legal advisor wrote in his March 1947 analysis of Bill 39, the wording of the bill was only half the story. The other and vital half was "the real situation in which the law makes its appearance, and the manner it is administered." With wartime labour and economic controls rapidly coming to an end, and

with the "inevitable" post-war depression ever on the horizon, John Stanton argued that big business was preparing the people for a new version of the "hungry thirties." Stanton concluded:

Bill 39 expresses the big employers' own estimation of the labour situation in this province. While not yet able, because of labour's strength, to break openly with the unions, the big employers, through the Coalition government in Victoria, want its crippling provisions to put themselves in a strong position for union-busting in the immediate future.⁴⁰

Bill 39, viewed in the context of intensified class struggle after V-E Day, and in conjunction with similar employer-backed legislation in the United States, was a major statement of a shift in the balance of political forces in North America. Its actual provisions were less dramatic. The old Act's supervised secret ballot vote on an arbitration board award, held at the discretion of the minister, became a mandatory supervised strike vote of all employees affected prior to any strike action. Most objectionable to the IWA in this regard was less the principle of government supervision—Pritchett claimed government supervision gave a vote more authority—but the notion that the law could override the union's constitution which provided that only union members could vote on such matters as contract approval and strikes.⁴¹ Such a provision contravened the cherished right of a union to manage its own internal affairs, and undermined the legitimacy of a trade union's role as sole bargaining authority for all employees covered by a collective agreement.

PC 1003 had provided fines for employers, employees and trade unions guilty of violating its provisions, particularly with respect to strikes and lockouts. Bill 39 took what the labour movement had considered as enforcement provisions for a wartime emergency, and instituted them as part of the peace-time industrial relations system, though the amounts of possible fines were reduced.⁴² The employers' demands that unions be incorporated and collective agreements be given the full legal status of other contracts were not included in the 1947 bill, leaving the actual status of collective agreements in civil law as a matter of

legal dispute.⁴³ Neither were calls for mandatory certification votes or a legal ban on union security made part of the new law.⁴⁴

Particularly galling to industrial trade unionists, in light of the long struggle for recognition, the new ICA Act (1947) provided separate definitions for bargaining agent (a trade union) and bargaining authority (a bargaining agent other than a trade union). It thus gave recognition and equal standing before the law to both trade unions and employee associations. As Stanton claimed, "these two definitions taken together create a duality of employees' bargaining machinery which continues throughout the Bill, which is not without its significance."⁴⁵ Regardless of this significance, Bill 39 only made explicit, by definition, the same duality or ambiguity with respect to employee bargaining representatives which existed in both the previous provincial Act and PC 1003. In fact, according to Stanton's analysis, Bill 39, under its unfair labour practices section, provided greater protection to unions against attempts at control or interference by employers than did PC 1003; and under its certification procedures it contained "stronger provisions than have ever been contained in any earlier labour law, either Federal or Provincial, on the subject of company unions." Moreover, the certification sections, according to Stanton, clarified the status and rights of a certified bargaining authority "and will eliminate considerable ground for argument." On the other hand, the separate organization of craft workers in industrial plants already under agreement was to be facilitated by removing certain criteria for certification that had existed previously.⁴⁶

The sections of the new ICA Act (1947) governing conditions prior to strikes or lockouts were delineated in more detail than in PC 1003, or in the old ICA Act. Nevertheless, their effect with respect to "cooling-off" was much the same. The prohibition against striking during the life of an agreement, while implicit in the old provincial statute, was spelled out explicitly, as in the federal wartime regulations. The ICA Act (1947), however, extended the federal cooling-off procedure with the addition of the supervised strike vote which was intended to follow the award of a conciliation board.

Particularly in the case of industry-wide bargaining, as in the forest industry, the time required to take such a vote, given the inadequacy of existing machinery, could be lengthened considerably. The ICA Act (1947), as did PC 1003, provided for a Labour Relations Board to administer the Act with broad discretionary powers which could in theory be used to undermine trade union power. The labour movement felt there should have been at least some guarantee of a union nominee on the board, as was the practice with the federal board.⁴⁷

As is evident from this brief analysis, the ICA Act (1947) in many respects formalized and delineated labour relations practices that had developed concomitantly with the widespread recognition of industrial trade unions in Canada during the war. That process of formalizing a labour code tended to give unions more protection against the worst forms of anti-union activity from a bygone era, and re-established in provincial law the basic principles of union recognition and collective bargaining won during the war. At the same time, it also reintroduced into a peace-time atmosphere the tight legal parameters enforcing the terms and conditions of the collective bargaining process that were part of the wartime order. As well, as Stanton observed, it laid the legal foundation that in future would facilitate the emergence of opposition blocs and craft challenges within the industrial union structure. By specifically rejecting union demands for an extension of union security in law, while at the same time taking the power of decision over the use and timing of labour's most important weapon—the strike—out of the hands of both a union's leaders and its general membership, the Act offered both a rebuke and a challenge to the authority of unions such as the IWA to continue to act as legitimate bargaining agents in the new post-war political and industrial reality.

But just as the organized employers and the state in British Columbia were moving to formalize and delineate the parameters of industrial, and ultimately class relations in the province in the aftermath of the 1946 strikes, District One was embarking on a strategy of challenging and broadening the limits of conventional collective bargaining behaviour.

III

From the union's viewpoint, several issues which were never properly addressed in the master negotiations remained outstanding, after the 1946 settlement, such as special category wage adjustments for shingle sawyers and packers, trainmen and mill engineers. In addition, several categories of employees remained excluded from the protection of the hours of work clause, most notably cook and bunkhouse employees. Such important demands as union security and an industry-wide health and welfare plan still ranked high on the negotiation agenda. The major unfinished piece of business left over after the return to work in June 1946, however, had been the 40-hour week. The union was determined to build on its 1946 achievement and institute the 40-hour week (won for loggers during the winter months) across the industry and throughout the entire duration of the contract. To achieve this goal, the District, along with the logging locals, adopted a tactic of aggressive interpretation of the agreement, backed up by on-the-job action of rank-and-file loggers.

During the summer of 1946, both union and employers tested the meaning and intent of the hours of work clause. The unions sought to limit hours, the employers were concerned to find ways around the implementation of 40 hours in logging scheduled to begin on 1 October. There was no issue which impinged so directly on the productivity of an operator's labour force as did either statutory or contractual curtailment of hours outside the sphere of managerial discretion. The 1946 agreement set no parameters on the working week. In August, the union raised at the Joint Industry Committee, the issue of whether employees working Saturday afternoon would be paid time-and-one-half regardless of hours worked during the week. The matter was referred to Sloan who interpreted that only if time worked on Saturday afternoon exceeded 44 hours for the week would overtime be paid.⁴⁸ That interpretation made it evident to the union that it would have to fight both prior to and during negotiations for a strict five-day work week as a basis for enforcement of the 40 hours. A second blow to the union position came with Sloan's ruling that fallers and buckers paid on a piece-rate basis did not come under the provisions of the hours-of-

work clause.⁴⁹ That ruling suddenly linked together the struggles for 40 hours and against piece work.

Union strategy was formalized at the first District Council meeting after the switch to 40 hours, held on 13 October. Pritchett noted the weakness in the contract with the lack of a clearly defined work week. Mark Mosher from local 1-85 fingered "transient" loggers as the ones who were interested in making fast money by working more overtime. Given the general situation in the logging workforce, that designation clearly could cover a large segment of workers. To remedy the situation, the Council adopted a working rule of no Saturday work in logging, and no Saturday afternoon work in the mills unless overtime wages were paid.⁵⁰

Stuart had already complained to Pritchett that "groups of men in a number of our logging camps" were refusing to work Saturdays regardless of accumulated hours.⁵¹ The situation in the camps, and the District Council's adoption of its "working rule," led to meetings between Stuart Research and the union on 18-19 October. Many operators were anxious to regain production lost during the strike, and to stockpile logs in the event of a severe winter. The BCLA had been pushing for a ruling from both the union and the Board of Industrial Relations on the right to continue operating 48 hours (with overtime paid) in camps where employees were willing.⁵² S.G. Smith, manager of BSW logging operations, had told an Association meeting that his men would not stay in the woods in any case on a 40-hour basis, and wanted the Board of Industrial Relations to rule on whether it would permit operators to exceed the statutory 44-hour average over the course of the year.⁵³ Under pressure from the BCLA, Stuart drafted a form letter from companies to employees raising the possibility of winter closures. A number of employees, the letter explained, had approached management with a request to apply for permission to work 48 hours. The company was willing to comply with the request provided its action was endorsed by a majority, and had union approval.⁵⁴ In fact, as Stuart admitted to his clientele on 7 October, in only five camps with 400 men had a clear majority already asked

for 48 hours, though in others the matter was still under discussion amongst the workers.⁵⁵

It was in this context, with pressure coming from the employers to undermine the 40-hour principle with the lure of extra wages, that the union tightened its stand in order to counteract a possible trend. At the mid-October meeting with Stuart, the District representatives adamantly opposed any proposal to work 48 hours on the grounds of extra remuneration where men preferred to work an extra eight hours on Saturday rather than stay in camp idle. Union officials were sympathetic to applications for 48 hours where on account of emergencies or circumstances beyond the operators control, average production fell below normal for a 40-hour week. They also would consider the matter of straight-time Saturday work (where such work did not exceed 40 hours) to make up for individual employee time lost due to similar causes.⁵⁶ But when seven applications were immediately fired off to the Board for consideration, the union had second thoughts. At the hearings before the Board, union officials withdrew their recent undertaking to Stuart and expressed frank opposition to any hours in excess of 40, and to any Saturday work in camps or Saturday afternoon work in the mills without overtime pay.⁵⁷

It had become clear to District leaders that with the operators pushing for longer hours, and with groups of so-called transient loggers in many camps anxious to earn what they could quickly before moving on or returning to town for a binge, that no clear distinction could be enforced between overtime work for reasons of extra remuneration only, and "legitimate" overtime due to lost production, or the anticipation of it. According to an industry survey conducted in 1948, of an estimated total of 12,000 coast loggers, only 3100 lived away from camp, and 1300 lived in company houses. These 4400 mostly family men would have been the staunchest supporters of a strict 40-hour week. The remaining 7600 lived in camp, and paid board and lodging charges. Unless they left camp for the weekend, they would incur charges of \$1.50 a day just to sit idle. Even if they left, they were still charged for lodging while away. The costs of travelling to and from camp,

in addition to the cost of meals and lodging while away (on top of the assessed camp lodging charges) would have been an incentive for these workers to take whatever weekend work was available.⁵⁸ The union could not stop workers from wanting to earn overtime wages, but if it wanted to win a contractual 40-hour week, it had to hold its members in check, at least temporarily.

The union's difficult position with respect to its members, and the tactics it was forced to take, were clearly outlined in a confidential letter from Ernie Dalskog to S. Pederson, the chairman of the camp committee at M & M Logging Company at Forward Bay. The previous chairman, a man named Watts who worked as a flunkey in the cookhouse, had tried to enforce the union position. R.V. Stuart had informed Dalskog on behalf of the company that trouble was brewing in camp because Watts had refused to let the crew work on Saturday unless they were paid time and one-half. Watts then got into a dispute with the bull cook who refused to continue to work with him. The crew voted unanimously that Watts should leave the cookhouse, apparently reflecting both a concern with their diet as well as with his position on the work week. Watts refused to take employment elsewhere in camp and was fired. Dalskog claimed in his letter to Pederson that Watts had been fired over the 40-hour issue. Though Pederson did not completely concur with this version of events, it is clear that Watts' position amongst the crew had been weakened through his enforcement of District policy. Watts had upheld the union position, Dalskog wrote, "that we will not make up any lost time during the week by working Saturdays; that the work week starts Monday morning and should run consecutively and end on Friday night..." Dalskog, who admitted he did not care too much for Watts personally, then explained to the camp chairman the thinking behind the union's position, and the need to defend Watts:

...while we were not able to get it as clear cut as we wanted it, nevertheless, we established the principle of the 40 hour week through our strike action. We know that we are going to have an argument with the Employers this Spring when negotiations open up... Therefore, we have to fight to establish a regular scheduled work week and stop all overtime work because working

more than 40 hours a week, even if it is paid at the rate of time and one-half, weakens our argument for the shorter week.⁵⁹

Not only did the District have the difficult task of selling these tactics to a membership anxious to maximize its time in the woods and not too keen on weekend leisure, it also had to come up with a legitimate defence of its position with respect to the terms of the collective agreement. Disregarding the clear intent behind Sloan's recommended terms for settling the hours of work matter in the 1946 negotiations, the District, in its effort to expand the conventional parameters of collective bargaining, adopted a very narrow, legalistic (though nonetheless creative) reading of the agreement. In 1945, the parties, at Sloan's suggestion, had adopted the phrase "shall not exceed" into the hours of work language. The 1946-47 contract, the union now claimed, only stated a maximum that the regular hours of work should not exceed. It did not compel employees to work 40 (or 44) hours, but only compelled the employer not to exceed that limit. Therefore, employees were not bound to work Saturdays in order to bring their week's total to 40 (or 44).⁶⁰ That interpretation would become a major bone of contention as spring approached and negotiations grew nearer.

The hours-of-work clause in the 1946 master agreement divided the year into two parts. In logging the 40-hour week applied from October through March; the 48-hour week during the busier season from April through September. The term of agreement ran from 20 June 1946 to 20 June 1947. The union was faced with the prospect of the return to 48 hours in logging on 1 April, just as it began its new set of negotiations. Yet its strategy called for enforcing 40 hours on the job as a key to winning it at the negotiating table. What had been a minor skirmish over Saturday work after 1 October, would become a major battle after the return to 48 hours on 1 April.

To gear up for that battle, logging locals such as 1-80 in the Duncan area circularized members on the "shall not exceed" interpretation now to be applied to the 48-hour schedule. Since the 40-hour week was one of the most important and popular

demands "there would be no better way of assuring ourselves victory in this demand than by demonstrating our solidarity of purpose RIGHT NOW." But, in fact, solidarity on the issue, as already demonstrated, was distinctly lacking in the camps. To try to overcome existing divisions, the local sounded the principles of worker and family well-being:

The popularity of the 40-hour week makes it definitely here to stay, not only among the married workers to whom it brings more deserved leisure in family life, but also among the "short stake" travellers who, if they don't "go down" for a weekend, are taking action to see that better recreation is developed at the scene of the operation itself. All of which is to the benefit of all concerned for it is action that would likely have gone neglected for years to come were the need for proper recreation not so forcibly brought home by the dismal fact of the lengthened weekend in camp.⁶¹

It would not be any easy matter to hold the majority of loggers to the shorter week once 48 hours became normal again, particularly when logging operations were by-and-large not set up for extended weekend leisure. Clearly union leaders realized that the institutionalizing of the shorter week, in practice, would have to take place over a prolonged period. What was needed in the spring of 1947 was short-term job action, en masse, even if many workers saw in the winning of 40 hours only the opportunity for increased earnings through more overtime after a new contract was signed. After attaining that goal, the much more difficult struggle could be undertaken to convince both union members and employers of the need for a real shortened week for reasons of social and cultural betterment of workers' lives. The executive of I-80, in March 1947, noted support for its position from workers at Rounds, Meade Creek, Youbou and Ladysmith, and called for every sub-local and camp to endorse the local's position.⁶²

The union, at this point, had the industry running around in circles. Legal counsel to Stuart Research advised Stuart on 11 March 1947 that according to his careful examination of Article IX, there was "nothing in the contract which in any way obliged the Union to work 48 hours." The only recourse left to the operators, if the union chose to work only 40 hours, was to "vigorously oppose paying any overtime unless the men had actually worked 44 hours per week." To pay overtime after 40 hours during April to

September would, in his opinion, "be fatal." Heffernan predicted that if the matter were submitted to Sloan for interpretation, "I cannot see how he could give an interpretation which would be favourable to the operators."⁶³

Stuart apparently had more faith in his friend Sloan than did Heffernan. The same day he received Heffernan's memo, Stuart wrote Sloan quoting sections from the Chief Justice's 1 June 1946 recommendations for settlement where he gave his reasons with respect to the urgent need of production for his hours of work compromise. Stuart reminded Sloan it was clearly the union's intention when it signed the 1946 agreement to work 48 hours from April to September. Indeed, Stuart might have noted there had been no immediate dispute during July through September 1946. Now, he informed Sloan, the District intended to instruct the locals to work only 40 hours. Was this a breach of the contract?

On 19 March, a more formal request for an opinion was apparently forwarded to Sloan jointly by Stuart and Dalskog after a union-management meeting. Sloan's quick response supported the operators' contention that it was a definite term of the agreement that hours of work should average 44 per week in logging over the working year. From 1 April to 20 June 1947, 48 hours applied, with time and one-half after 44 hours.⁶⁴

Forgetting his self-criticism following the 1946 strike, and continuing his vendetta against Sloan, in a meeting with Stuart Research following Sloan's interpretation, Pritchett declared his refusal to read Sloan's remarks.⁶⁵ Glossing over the fact that Dalskog had been party to the request for the interpretation, Pritchett told the District Wages and Contract Conference at the end of March that the application to Sloan had been illegal since the contract did not provide for such a procedure. Moreover, Sloan, the man specified as chairman for all arbitrations under the collective agreement, had, by virtue of his interference, ruled himself ineligible.⁶⁶

With negotiations due to open in a month's time, the union viewed the 40-hour issue as crucial in establishing a position of strength in bargaining. Prevented by law and

by public opinion from holding a "legitimate" strike vote prior to the start of negotiations, as in 1946, the District could use rank-and-file support for its 40-hour campaign as a substitute of sorts. At the Wages and Contract Conference, 94 local delegates rallied behind the slogan "40 dollars for 40 hours," calling for a 20-cent increase across the board, an industry-wide 40-hour week with no exceptions, an industry financed health and welfare plan, and lastly the union shop. Pritchett urged all local business agents and secretaries to sign a supplement to the collective agreement stating 40 hours would be worked henceforth pending the outcome of negotiations.⁶⁷

The first Saturday after 31 March was 5 April, the same day the arbitration board hearings on the 40-hour week were scheduled to begin. At the request of Sloan, Judge H.I. Bird acted as chair in this case, with Harvey Murphy representing the union and Alfred Bull the employers.⁶⁸ That Saturday, thousands of loggers were reported off the job on the Island and up the coast. Port Alberni, Courtenay and Duncan all reported heavy compliance with the union ban on Saturday work. The Vancouver Sun reported the "holiday" was quite general.⁶⁹ Union officials Dalskog and Pritchett quite deliberately failed to appear at the hearings, while Murphy, too, was needed out of town on other business. Stuart Research counsel, J.W. de B. Farris accused the union of stalling and asked the board to proceed without its representatives. Bird granted an adjournment until 15 April, leaving the union at least one, and probably two more Saturdays to show its collective strength, at least in the important logging sector. On Friday 11 April, the Vancouver press predicted that most of the 13,000 coastal loggers would stay away again on Saturday,⁷⁰ and the following week even after the arbitration decision against the union, Stuart estimated only between 4500 and 5000 back at work, while the union claimed a total shutdown. The Sun announced one-half of British Columbia's loggers were on a "spontaneous holiday."⁷¹

With Harvey Murphy in the minority upholding the union interpretation of the contract, the arbitration board ruled that the intent of the 1946 settlement as expressed in the

tripartite agreement ending the strike, was for the union to work an average 44-hour week in logging. Bird agreed with Farris that "regard must be had to the circumstances in which the contract was written..."⁷² That was a sound principle of industrial relations that in other circumstances might have been used to benefit the union. Murphy, stuck to the narrow view that the voted-upon and signed master agreement made the tripartite agreement irrelevant.⁷³ The majority report noted that in the three months following the strike settlement, loggers had worked 48 hours with union approval. Even if 48 hours were only a maximum, however, the management rights clause in Article XII vested full authority in the operators to determine the number of hours to be worked within the limits fixed.⁷⁴

The editor of the Lumber Worker charged that in so applying Article XII to the hours of work issue, the majority of the board had "written in the provisions of Bill 39" by removing from the collective bargaining process the determination of what the conditions of work shall be.⁷⁵ More to the point, Bird had come to the rescue of the industry by upholding the principle of management's right to direct its workforce, of crucial importance for an industry determined to reverse the trend toward reduced worker productivity. In protesting the majority award, the District Council claimed that output of lumber had actually increased during the period that the 40-hour week had been in effect, thereby proving the union's contention that the shorter work week both benefited workers and resulted in higher production. That was an argument the industry would never buy.⁷⁶

Though the decision had gone against it, the union too had made its point. In spite of earlier divisions on the intent behind the shorter work week issue, rank-and-file support for the 40-hour week had been clearly demonstrated. Even after the decision had been accepted by the District Council under strong protest, various locals and sub-locals continued to threaten on-the-job actions. Over-zealous local leaders such as Nels Madsen of 1-71, J. Higgin of Courtenay 1-363 and union representatives in 1-80 continued to instruct members to refuse to work 48 hours on the last Saturday in April. Pritchett was forced by Stuart to police the agreement by sending letters to the offending leaders

instructing them to comply with the decision under protest. Stuart, however, fought back, trying to use the ultra-militant stance of some union representatives to discredit the union as negotiations got underway on 23 April. He publicly charged the IWA with "double-dealing" on the basis of a telegram sent by John McCuish, Business Agent for the Queen Charlotte Islands loggers, which congratulated the men on the "militant stand which has laid the basis of the 40 hours in the new contract," and urged continuation of the struggle for 40 hours. Pritchett sprang to McCuish's defence, noting that in view of the fact that the union was demanding 40 hours in its new contract there was clearly no double-dealing.⁷⁷

The employers continued to push for some advantage. In a statement on the 1947 negotiations, they asserted that failure of the union to enforce acceptance of the majority award was proof of the need for specific provisions to ensure contract fulfillment. Before they would consider details of amendments for 1947, they proposed that each local of the union be registered as a legal entity, accepting liability for damages in case of non-fulfillment of contract provisions. If that were not acceptable, as an alternative they would accept from each local a bond in the amount of \$10 for each member which would be liable for attachment for damages.⁷⁸ With the union's demands now on the table, Stuart balked at responding until the loggers fell into line.⁷⁹ When the loggers persisted in enforcing the 40-hour rule on Saturday, 3 May at Salmon River, Cowichan and other Island points, Stuart called an indefinite halt to negotiations until all Saturday job action ceased. Pritchett threatened a strike vote unless negotiations resumed the following Monday. In his president's column in the Lumber Worker he noted that "not being satisfied with the anti-union provisions contained in Bill 39 the employers go one step further by the inclusion of the most glaring reactionary proposal ever emanating from any group of employers..."⁸⁰

The 1947 round of bargaining got underway in an atmosphere charged with the recent passage of the ICA Act (1947), calls for the legal incorporation of the woodworkers locals, and an impressive display of rank-and-file militancy in coastal logging camps, all of which seemed to point toward the IWA as the first test case for the new ICA Act (1947).

Chapter Nine

1947 Negotiations: Compliance

The 1946 IWA contract settlement had left most of the union's major bargaining issues unresolved. Union security, the 40-hour week, a substantial wage adjustment that would allow workers to leap ahead of price inflation, a health and welfare plan, would all be-carried over onto the 1947 bargaining agenda, as would a multiplicity of demands for adjustment of sectoral inequities for piece-workers and others who did not benefit fully from the terms of the master agreement. The much-lauded industry-wide agreement in the interior had broken down in its implementation with the refusal of several operators to sign it.¹ The 15-cent wage increase (10 cents in the interior) had rapidly been eaten up by increased cost-of-living, reduced hours and higher taxation (see chapter seven above). The reduced work week was being eroded through the mutual desire of operators and loggers to make hay while the sun shone, so to speak.

Also carried over into 1947 was the mixed legacy of the 1946 strike. Certain lessons were apparently learned with respect to the operation of a strike fund, voting procedures and over-reliance on broader labour movement support from outside the province. On the other hand, 1946 had produced a new confidence in the union that it had the strength and support to take the operators on in an industry-wide struggle.² And, at the provincial and local levels, the union had generated a considerable amount of labour unity and support, its ill-fated trek to Victoria notwithstanding. The IWA's position as "kingpin" in the province's labour movement was enhanced, even as its stature on the national stage was put into proper perspective, by the events of 1946. Insofar as the woodworkers' strike had been the catalyst for the employer-state programme to impose new limitations on trade union strength, District One ought to have been, and, apparently was prepared to play a leadership role in any ensuing province-wide confrontation with capital and the state.

In session at their 1947 District convention, local delegates heard aired both the short-comings demonstrated by the previous year's strike, and high expectations for the union in 1947. Some interior delegates voiced dissatisfaction with their peripheral status during the strike, which only served to fuel existing grievances with respect to their access to District meetings and conventions. But delegates followed the lead of District officers in voting down a proposal that would have subsidized interior delegates attending union functions on the coast. Pritchett rather callously advised them to get their men elected to the District board as the means of getting their concerns heard.³ Conventioneers also heard a prescient warning from delegate Harrington speaking on behalf of all special categories exempted from the overtime provisions and other benefits of the contract—members who, he suggested, represented “the weakest link” in the chain of union solidarity and a “potential source of disruption” to be played on by the bosses.⁴ They also heard how fallers, already outside the provisions of the hours-of-work clause, were being induced to purchase their own power saws; the next step on the road to becoming full-fledged contractors, completely outside of the parameters of the collective agreement.⁵ Dire warnings came, as well, from the Vancouver sawmill local 1-217 that skilled shingle workers were becoming ripe for raiding by the AFL if the IWA did not do something quickly to reverse the deterioration in their wages and conditions going on under the piece-work system.⁶ On the matter of the work week, Pritchett raised the issue of Saturday work at straight time and noted it was becoming “quite a problem” in the logging local, particularly in view of Chief Justice Sloan's 27 August interpretation of Article IX.

Any attempts to resolve most of these problems would have to await the next round of contract talks. The convention did act to address one serious problem exposed by the 1946 strike, that of the Fighting Fund. By choosing to raise money through voluntary contributions to support the fight for specific contract issues, the union had quickly accumulated \$85,000 from its membership, as well as \$26,000 from other sources. But

the Fighting Fund had problems, not the least of which was a "lack of uniformity" in terms of contributions. Some members paid in a full day's wages, others less, some none at all. In particular, in local 1-217, where there had been quite a fight for a "proper" strike fund as opposed to a Fighting Fund, workers seemed to have held back more than in other locals. It was the only coast local to have run a deficit, receiving back during the strike almost \$10,000 more than it had paid in.⁷ On top of that came the problem of disbursement. While \$80,000 went to locals to spend how they saw fit, \$28,000 was used by the District for other expenses associated with running the strike. Local leaders similarly used a portion of their funds to pay for publicity, travel and the like, leaving not nearly enough to provide proper strike relief. Near the end of the 37-day strike, with resources running thin, locals had been called on by the District to cash in their victory bonds to finance relief. While most locals wrote off the loss at the request of the District, the New Westminster local, seat of the British Columbia white bloc, would soon use the outstanding claim against the Fighting Fund in its campaign to discredit the District leaders.⁸ More damaging politically from the point of view of the District Executive was a sizeable discrepancy which had been found by the auditor of local 1-357's accounts after the strike, for which local executive members and District loyalists Percy Smith and Jack Lindsay were held responsible.⁹ A certain carelessness seemed to have been part and parcel of the general ethos surrounding the handling and use of union funds in District One. This attitude was well expressed by Dalskog's rejoinder to critics of the Fighting Fund at the 1946 International convention: "These people that raise these issues had very little to say about it and be proud of, because the fund that was collected in B.C. for the strike in 1946 the major portion of it came from the loggers' Locals and they never raised any issue about how it was used."¹⁰ Better that they should have, Dalskog might later have added.

Nevertheless, by the time of the 1947 District convention, the executive had recognized that "there appears to be a popular demand, and rightly so, for the establishment of a district strike fund to prevent, if possible, and to protect if need be, our membership on

strike."¹¹ Similarly, the Wage and Contract Committee recommended a 25-cent per month strike fund levy as "key to the achievement of our demands." But in view of the need for a referendum on the issue, implementation would be delayed until April, making it necessary to establish another voluntary fund for the 1947 negotiations.¹² The convention duly passed the strike fund resolution and sent it to District referendum as part of a general increase in dues of 50 cents, the balance to help cover local and District administrative costs. The passage of the dues increase referendum, however, would make it that much more difficult to raise an adequate strike fund for 1947 based on voluntary contributions, on top of the additional monthly levy. The passage of the strike fund resolution was a significant step towards bureaucratization in the woodworkers' union, and seemed to express the will of the more conservative sawmill locals as against the vision of militant trade unionism still harboured by the Dalskog's and McCuish's of the loggers' local who were just then set to embark on their spring offensive for the 40-hour week.

Nineteen forty-seven would be very much a transitional year. While the union seemed to be moving in a conservative direction with respect to its strike fund system, on the broader political front there appeared to be no backing away from the new conservative challenge coming from organized capital and the state. In its report to the January District convention, the Wages and Contract Committee recommended the District Council "leave no stone unturned in its efforts to develop a united national movement, coordinated through the CCL National Wage Coordinating Committee" on which union President Pritchett now sat as chairman.¹³ Speaking in favour of the proposed 25-percent wage increase, Pritchett cast his vision eastward and argued that in considering the resolution this convention "should give a lead to the entire nation because the entire nation will be watching within the next few days the National Wage Coordinating Conference to be held in the City of Ottawa on January 9th."¹⁴ In calling for an intensified political action campaign at the provincial level, through the united efforts of the whole labour movement, the District officers urged delegates that the "IWA will have to spearhead this campaign, as it spearheaded the wage

campaign of the organized workers in 1946."¹⁵ District One still regarded itself, quite correctly, as central to any broad coalition of popular forces that might be mounted in British Columbia. It was hoped that, once mobilized on the broader social and labour issues, these forces would support the union in its coming wage struggle. In January of 1947, on the Pacific coast of Canada, that "long historic process" of which David Montgomery wrote, "of reducing the American labour movement to a trade union movement," had not yet reached its conclusion.¹⁶ The ensuing two years would certainly accelerate the completion of the process both in British Columbia and Canada. In this drama, District One of the IWA was a key player.

During January and February, IWA locals busied themselves electing political action committees and attempting to carry out District instructions to interview MLA's, distribute leaflets in the community, organize public meetings and advertise labour's programme through the local press and radio. In Ladysmith, for instance, local I-80 Business Agent Jack Atkinson together with local officials organized a delegation composed of CCF party member Duncan McKenzie, Mrs. E. Michelson of the LPP Club, Joe Morris of the Ladysmith sub-local, two members of the Old Age Pensioners' Club, Mrs. Dan Campbell and Mrs. George Ouellette of the IWA Women's Auxiliary, all of whom met with CCF MLA for Cowichan-Newcastle, Sam Guthrie, regarding labour's legislative brief.¹⁷ At this point, the issue of labour legislation reform did not stand out particularly urgently from a broad range of proposals that labour was advancing. The BCFL had been lulled somewhat by assurances given through its participation in the joint government-labour committee set up after the 1945 labour lobby. Under the auspices of that committee a subcommittee had been assigned to draft proposed amendments to provincial labour legislation in anticipation of the termination of PC 1003. On 3 January 1946, the full committee reconvened and heard Pearson explain that the labour code subcommittee's report would not be discussed. Rather a government committee was considering the matter of the ICA Act, but Pearson assured that prior to any bill coming

forward the joint committee would have an opportunity to consider it. That intention was repeated several times throughout 1946.¹⁸

On 14 January, a joint BCFL-TLC-Railway Brotherhoods delegation presented labour's demands to the provincial government for consideration during the spring session of the legislature. Included was a broad reform programme of social and labour legislation. Specific proposals were advanced with respect to the ICA Act, highlighted by tighter restrictions on unfair labour practices and statutory union security.¹⁹ With pressure coming from both labour and business, Pearson sounded out his federal counterpart, Humphrey Mitchell, on the possibility of a one-year extension of PC 1003, in order to provide more time for his department to find some middle ground on a new labour bill. Six months appeared to be the most Pearson could expect, and would not obviate the need to pass legislation during the coming spring session.²⁰ Moreover, the organized business interests in the province would not have been satisfied with a mere extension of the federal code for the 1947 bargaining year, nor were they prepared to wait for a new federal code to serve as a model for the provinces. They had their own agenda and they wanted it enacted quickly (see chapter eight above). In 1946, the CMA had squawked at being excluded from prior consultation on labour matters. Now it was labour's turn to complain when, on 11 March, the hastily drafted Bill 39 was tabled in the legislature.

Plans for the spring labour lobby were accelerated with the focus now on Bill 39. Unfortunately, amidst the anti-communist broadside being delivered by the employer groups, the TLC pulled out at the last minute with council secretary Gervin announcing that "last year's lobby accomplished nothing," but "left a somewhat sour taste in the mouths of the members of the Legislature."²¹ Nonetheless, over 216 delegates, including 22 renegades from the TLC assembled for two days in Victoria as the bill wound its way through the legislative process. Objections focussed on the supervised strike vote, the penalties for violating the Act, and protection for craft unions in industrial plants.²² Much was made of Pearson's alleged disagreements with the rest of the cabinet over the strike

vote issue. After meeting with Pearson and Hart on 27 March, as the Bill went to second reading, BCFL leaders Pritchett, Murphy and O'Brien expressed confidence that Pearson would not support the Bill. Pearson's concerns, however, were rooted more in expediency than in principle. He knew from long experience in the department that the supervised ballot was "cumbersome" and in some cases, as with the IWA, "almost impossible to apply."²³ There is no doubt, from his long record in the labour portfolio, that Pearson's sympathies were with the general intent of the employers. But he was also a Vancouver Island politician with his base in the labour stronghold of Nanaimo. The haste with which the Act was patched together, fuelled by the zealous desire of employer to punish labour for its militancy the year before, had left Pearson feeling uneasy. Knox's characterization of the minister as "this lone liberal reformer" trying to withstand the conservative assault against the "liberal reformist impulse" of his old associate Duff Pattullo, is overstated.²⁴ Nevertheless, Pearson was caught amidst class and regional conflicts that manifested themselves to a certain extent within his own party and government.

Soon after Bill 39 had been rammed through the legislature without significant amendment,²⁵ IWA delegates assembled for their Wages and Contract Conference on 29-30 March. In his opening remarks, Pritchett clearly placed the 1947 negotiations in the context of this new straightjacket for labour—Bill 39—which represented a powerful state-employer-AFL offensive against industrial unionism in Canada. It clearly added new "responsibilities and gravities" to the situation the union found itself in entering negotiations.²⁶ But Dalskog sounded a warning noting the heavy cost to the employer of the combined wage proposal and welfare fund. We must realize, he told the 94 delegates, that "our position is not as good as last year which was the first industry-wide struggle since the depression." It came immediately following the war with the membership restless and labour's national campaign more coordinated.²⁷ Nevertheless, buoyed by Bjarnason's assurances that with 1946 price increases of between 17 and 43 percent, and profits up 40

to 65 percent, the industry could easily afford its demands, the union adopted an ambitious programme under the slogan "no contract - no work."²⁸

The main demands for both coast and interior locals were 20 cents across the board, an industry-wide 40-hour week, a health and welfare plan and union shop.²⁹ Attached to the wage demands were specific proposals for a guaranteed daily rate for piece workers, special adjustments for train crews, mill engineers and other trades, elimination of all range rates and of the long hours at straight-time put in by cook and bunkhouse crews.²⁹ To back up these demands delegates agreed to boost the newly-instituted 25-cent per capita monthly assessment through voluntary contributions of one day's pay in order to reach the target of \$100,000 by the summer. These contributions, which were to be collected during the month of May, would go directly into the main strike fund and were to be used for no other purpose.³⁰

Following the passage of Bill 39 the labour movement cooled its heels as far as political action and lobbying was concerned. The focus shifted from the legislature to the industrial arena where, as a Vancouver Labour Council (CCL) resolution bravely asserted:

Several large unions...are now in the process of preparing for negotiations and are faced with the provisions of Bill 39 which places these unions in such a position that the membership may be forced to resort to spontaneous walkouts in support of their negotiating committees...Such Guerrilla action as may be taken by the membership of these unions will require the highest type of job leadership and coordination and also the widest support from all trade unions and other organizations with the interests of the working people at heart.

Predicting such spontaneous strikes to occur soon after the proclamation of Bill 39, the Labour Council called for all unions, veterans, farmers, housewives and other sympathetic organizations to be prepared to lend support. All workers within reach of this call were urged "to start training themselves for spontaneous action by participating in mass Labour Demonstrations on May 1st of this year."³¹

Coast loggers had apparently already begun their training in spontaneous "guerrilla" action in the form of their unofficial Saturday holidays to enforce the 40 hour week. That

action no doubt inspired much of the rhetoric behind the Vancouver Labour Council call to arms, and apparently pointed to the woodworkers' union as the most likely candidate for an initial confrontation with the state once Bill 39 became law. In the Prince George area a preliminary meeting of trade unions was held on 13 April with delegates from IWA local 1-424, Carpenters and Joiners, CBRE and the Bartenders' Alliance. To prepare for "common action" a conference was planned for May of all units of organized labour in the area, a resolution drafted condemning Bill 39, and arrangements begun for a special May Day rally.³² In preparation for an expected province-wide confrontation, the BCFL advanced its annual convention date from September to June, calling on the people of British Columbia to become a "striking force for representative government and returning the power of government to the people."³³

With negotiations about to begin, and, as part of its contribution to the proposed guerrilla action, or perhaps more correctly—guerrilla theatre—District One staged an almost comical exposé of an alleged labour-spy scheme that had apparently been ongoing at Bloedel, Stewart and Welch since just after the 1946 strike. The 21 April edition of the Lumber Worker was all ablaze with photos, sworn affidavits and lurid details on how the labour-spy racket worked. During the 1946 strike Don McAllister, an 18 year old logger with BSW's Port Alberni operation had spoken up at a strike committee meeting with Personnel Manager T.J. Noble in favour of a company request to allow construction work on water and power lines to remain open. McAllister helped sway the meeting and afterward was contacted by Noble as a "liberal-minded" individual who might be interested in discussing the camp recreational problem with him. At the beginning of January 1947, Noble sought his advice concerning a planned recreational hall at the Franklin River camp as a pretext for a more pointed discussion on the economics of the industry and the quality of IWA leadership. Noble stated his belief in honest trade unionism, but feared that the union's officers were leading the membership deliberately into another disastrous strike. With the consent of Mark Mosher, local 1-85 secretary, McAllister played along with

Noble's request for weekly reports to be submitted to Stuart Research on the internal policies, problems and tactics of the IWA. Noble, who served on the employer advisory committee to Stuart, arranged for McAllister to meet with Stuart on 7 February. After McAllister passed Stuart's scrutiny, Noble offered him \$100 a month plus more if needed. McAllister stalled on filing any reports. In mid-March he was instructed to find out the likelihood of a strike, the union's exact wage demand and to report on the 40-hour week fight. At this point Mosher reported the whole affair to Dalskog, and it was decided, with the loggers job action about to commence, to expose the whole plot.³⁴

At a 5 April executive meeting of 1-85, with Dalskog present, a scheme was hatched to entrap Noble at the usual rendezvous spot in the cemetery outside Alberni. Dalskog's sworn affidavit reveals some guerrilla antics bordering on high farce. With Dalskog and the local executive hiding in the bushes, McAllister was to meet Noble, supposedly with information, but instead would hand him back money already received for acting as a "stooge." They waited all afternoon until five p.m. when McAllister appeared to say he had not been able to contact Noble. The crew returned to the cemetery on 6 April and resumed their concealed spots. Dalskog explains what transpired after Noble's arrival. After a short conversation, Noble turned away from McAllister and started to walk along inside the fence towards where Dalskog was hiding, camera in hand.

Noble stopped near me and inspected a gravestone... At that time he was not more than 30 feet away. He then took a few steps toward me. Knowing that my concealment was poor and that I would be discovered any minute, I jumped up and climbed over the fence. Noble stood still as if frozen to the ground. He looked sick. I said to him "Your game's up, Noble." He made no reply and continued to stand frozen to the ground. I then took a photograph of him which did not develop or print properly. I wound my camera for another "shot" when I saw McAllister coming rapidly towards us. When he arrived he handed the envelope containing the money to Noble... I took 2 more photographs, one as Noble opened the envelope and one as he was about to hand it back. I said to Noble "Your attempts to hire agents in the IWA haven't worked." He replied: "What's all this about..."

As Noble turned to walk away, Dalskog snapped another gem, captioned in the Lumber Worker: "Heading back to his car, the picture of abjection and defeat with his plans for

union-wrecking blown sky high." The members of the local executive then came out of concealment and stood around Noble's car as he got in. McAllister tried one last time to give Noble the money, and as the manager drove off, Dalskog took a sixth photograph of the back of his car featuring the licence number. A final snapshot showed local president Yates "congratulating McAllister on a good job well done."³⁵

The 21 April exposé in the Lumber Worker prompted a sharp reply from Prentice Bloedel to his employees denying any solicitation of employees for purposes of spying. Noble claimed McAllister had approached him several times with information concerning communism and a proposed strike. The company, Bloedel asserted, was not opposed to trade unionism nor hostile to the IWA. "The company is opposed to communism and to the extent that the leadership of the IWA, or any union is communistic, it is opposed to that leadership."³⁶ Bloedel did not explain why Noble had, without any questions, apparently found it quite normal to meet McAllister in the Alberni cemetery to receive lists of all communists in British Columbia.³⁷

Although the scheme was rather silly and amateurish it is unlikely, particularly given the detailed nature of McAllister's sworn testimony, that it was all invention. True or not, the labour-spy story fit neatly into the union's spring campaign for the 40-hour week, and against Bill 39. Al Parkin, the union's newly-appointed (and first) director of its Education and Publicity Department established at the January convention,³⁸ cleverly packaged the whole story in the Lumber Worker by placing the labour-spy racket and the current anti-union drive in its historical context dating back to the 1880s in North America. In the 1920s, according to this analysis, the LWIU had succumbed to organized disruption and factionalism and was easily smashed by the bosses. This latest attempt was far from the first and certainly not the last. A strong IWA over the previous four years had meant a loss in profits to the lumber operators, Parkin admitted. Their response was to try to break the union, if not by a frontal attack, then by working from the inside. "This is precisely the program of big business in this year of 1947. It lies behind their anti-communist ranting,

their support of Bill 39, and their phoney talk about 'unions becoming too strong.'" The open-shop men liked unions alright, Parkin quoted a fictional character from Finley Peter Dunne, if properly conducted. And how would they have them conducted: "No strikes, no rules, no scales, hardly any wages and darn few members."³⁹

Both Parkin and his adversaries T.J. Noble and Prentice Bloedel had put their finger on the critical issue for communists in the British Columbia trade unions in 1947. Bill 39, quite subtly, was not aimed at them explicitly. It contained no anti-communist rule as did Taft-Hartley. To many, including union members, it appeared as the logical outgrowth of giving unions legal recognition. The balance, tipped too far in labour's favour during the war, needed to be corrected with a dose of greater responsibility on the trade union side. It was questionable whether the IWA could, in the minds of its own members, let alone the public, conclusively link up Bill 39 with the long-history of anti-communism, blacklisting and red-baiting in the province's heavy industries. The spy-racket exposé was an attempt to do just that. The union's strategy for its 1947 negotiations was premised on its ability to connect the political fight on Bill 39, led by the left-dominated BCFL, and its more militant affiliates, with its own economic struggle.⁴⁰ On its success in this regard might very well rest the fate of the much broader popular struggle on the left against an increasingly more reactionary coalition government. The stakes were high indeed as the union negotiating committee sat down at its bargaining table with Stuart Research to go about the relatively mundane business of renegotiating its collective agreement.

II

After the initial sparring at the beginning of May, with Stuart proposing bonding of union members as a pre-condition to further negotiations, and the union threatening a strike vote if negotiations did not commence immediately (see chapter eight above), the two parties spent much of the month clearing away the more routine of the contract issues and

preparing the ground for the major ones. Grievance and arbitration procedures, vacations with pay, leaves of absence, seniority and so on occupied early meetings. Of note was a preliminary discussion on the work week. Both union and management placed the issue squarely in the context of productivity, though there was considerable disagreement on how the latter was to be measured and whether it was up or down over the 1945-46 period. Nevertheless, when Stuart pointedly asked if the union agreed that "man hours production was the crux of the whole question," Pritchett agreed "that could be considered the question." Thus, at the outset, Stuart established the operators' main point, that the work week issue was a monetary consideration, not just a matter of working conditions.⁴¹

On 19 May, four days after the official proclamation of the ICA Act (1947), and already four weeks into the negotiation process, Stuart finally tabled the industry's wage offer. In order to halt the erosion of wage differentials according to skill, the employers offered an increase in percentage terms: 10 percent, but with a minimum of 10 cents per hour to protect those at the lowest end of the scale, all based on a 44-hour work week. The increase, Stuart claimed, would cost the industry \$18 million in 1947. Union shop, and all other monetary demands were rejected. The welfare fund was to be set aside as a matter for individual operators. H.R. MacMillan Export's timely announcement on 5 May of a contributory pension plan for three-year employees, behind which the union saw a dark plot to derail its industry-wide demand, did much to reinforce this position. Special wage increases for certain occupations were seen as destroying existing wage differentials, causing further dissatisfaction amongst employees.⁴²

The union committee quickly rejected the wage/hour offer, even with Stuart's hint of possible seasonal exceptions on the hours question. By the end of the 20 May session, Stuart had closed off further debate, indicating the union had the industry's best offer. If the District officers advised non-acceptance to their membership, the operators were prepared to apply immediately for conciliation.⁴³

With Pritchett flying off to Toronto immediately after the 20 May negotiating meeting to consult with his CCL National Wage Coordinating Committee, any final decision of the employers' last offer was put on hold.⁴⁴ The District Policy Committee meeting held 23 May, and chaired by Dalskog in Pritchett's absence, seemed to leave no doubt as to which direction the union was moving. If the operators were proceeding to conciliation under the ICA Act (1947), the union was not about to follow. Dalskog presented a 10-point programme on behalf of the District officers intended to put the union in a position of strike readiness. The resolution contained a detailed strike plan calling for a District Strike Committee, seven subcommittees, the printing of picket cards, vouchers and permits, and the setting up of a facility as central strike headquarters. Local unions were advised immediately to establish action committees which would become strike committees in the event of a strike. These action committees were to begin to mobilize the membership, organize participation in any District-wide vote, and speed up the collection of the strike fund. A cautionary note was sounded on this last point. As a matter of policy the committee reaffirmed the decision of the January Wages and Contract Conference, that no strike relief was to be issued until 30 days after the outbreak of a strike, except under special circumstances to be determined by full investigation of the recipient's need. A decision on the amount of strike relief to be made available to individuals was to be held in abeyance.⁴⁵

The experience of the 1946 strike indicated a need to conserve resources until the final stages when the membership's enthusiasm started to fade. But this provision also reflected the fact that voluntary contributions to the strike fund during May had not come up to expectations. Moreover, Stuart Research had moved to obstruct monthly collection of the dues increase effective 1 April, by advising clients not to comply with requests from locals to increase the amount checked-off. Quite correctly, Stuart maintained that the voluntary assignment of wages forms were signed for a specific amount and employers had no right to deduct an additional 50 cents without another assignment form signed for the

new amount. Local executives and business agents thus had to repeat the whole process of providing new forms and getting over 25,000 members to sign them, at a time when they were supposed to be mobilizing members for a strike.⁴⁶ Needless to say, it was a long time after the 1947 agreement was settled before everyone was signed up at the new \$2.00 figure.⁴⁷ The union's policy on strike relief, in place since the beginning of the year, certainly would not have aided collection either. Members were already being assessed an additional 25 cents per month to build up a strike fund from which most of them would not benefit directly in 1947. Under these circumstances, many would question the propriety of being asked for an additional day's wages. Yet, without a substantial fund to back it up, the District negotiating committee felt reluctant to push its demands too far.⁴⁸

Upon Pritchett's return from Toronto, the District Policy Committee convened on 26 May. Unfortunately, a full text of Pritchett's report is not available, only a press item noting that the CCL committee had recommended to all affiliates that no settlement should be finalized without prior consultation with the national body.⁴⁹ Apparently nothing decided in Toronto had preempted the strike plans initiated by the District Executive on 23 May. The Policy Committee immediately passed a resolution calling for a coast-wide referendum. Question one asked whether the union should reject the employers' offer (the terms of which were not specified on the ballot) and continue negotiating. Question two asked, "Failing satisfactory concessions to our membership on our 1947 demands, do you authorize your District Policy Committee to call a strike?"⁵⁰ The referendum was to take 30 days. Officially, the union's position was that it had not broken off negotiations but was simply taking membership opinion on the employers' last offer, as Stuart and the operators had often demanded in 1946. It was Stuart who was refusing to bargain in good faith by having the provincial government appoint a conciliation officer prior to a full hearing of the union's main demands. The union stood fully ready to resume negotiations at any time.⁵¹ It was evident, however, that the union was intent on showing its resolve to circumvent the ICA Act (1947) in line with BCFL strategy by conducting its own strike vote as an

apparent rider to a vote on Stuart's offer. Stuart complained loudly about the unnecessary 30 day delay.⁵² But his real concern was to force the union into a conciliation procedure resulting in a favourable third party recommendation for the industry and an even longer delay before the union could take a legal strike vote.

The union publicity committee chairman, J. Forbes, gloated somewhat at the "genuine discomfort" of the employers' spokesmen when asked to outline a quicker means than the ballot. It was amusing "to hear them hint at a speedier method but decline to name it. Obviously a show of hands was in mind," Forbes reported in his negotiation bulletin, "but their objections would have been an even more thoroughly ridiculous farce than they were had mention been made of this thought, in light of their loud claims of interest in membership rights last year during the conduct of show of hands votes in some locals on the Sloan Award."⁵³

The union was evidently confident that it had struck on a strategy which allowed it to circumvent the despised labour act, while at the same time honouring the democratic rights of its members. District officers felt they could, with the full support of other members, ignore the law but not the lessons of 1946. More importantly, the 30-day hiatus would allow the union more time to bolster its strike fund which only started to accumulate during May, as well as to join its collective bargaining struggle with the larger Federation campaign against the Act and the coalition government. That same week in which the IWA initiated its strike vote on the coast, however, Harvey Murphy's Mine Mill union signed an agreement with Consolidated Mining and Smelting at Trail and Kimberley for 12½ cents across the board, once again taking some of the steam out of the woodworkers' wage drive. This settlement also left District One as the most likely candidate to go head-to-head with the government in a confrontation over the ICA Act (1947).

The relationship between the coast and the interior which had also complicated matters in 1946, continued to provide obstacles to a coherent industry-wide strategy in 1947. The interior, once again proceeding separately with the two industry associations in

the north and south, had started a month later than on the coast. In fact, the first meeting with the northern operators was on 29 May. After the experience of the year before, the union had little hope of drawing interior members into a strike situation based on the situation on the coast. A weak vote in the interior would be a drag on negotiations with Stuart Research. The strategy for 1947, much as it had been in practice the year before, was to win as much as it could on the coast and use those gains as a basis for a settlement in the interior. At the end of May, interior negotiations recessed until the middle of June.⁵⁴ Separate referenda were held in Prince George and in the southern interior, but these votes were downplayed, and treated as quite distinct from the main coast vote.⁵⁵

The District's position in the interior was particularly weakened by the tenuous hold it had in the Okanagan. In towns such as Kelowna and Vernon, lumber workers composed only a small fraction of the population. Only amongst packinghouse workers had industrial unionism made any further inroads. According to a report IWA representative Thomas MacDonald sent to Dalskog at the beginning of May, both these groups were subjected to concentrated attacks from "monopoly," compounded by the fact that most workers never received any organizational attention. It would be necessary, according to MacDonald, to broaden out an organizational base into other sectors of these communities in order to guarantee the permanent existence of the union in the face of a population that was "very backward, politically, as well as organizationally." In MacDonald's opinion, owing to the scattered nature and smallness of the woodworking industry the only way to establish a permanent organization, without an unrealistic level of expenditure, would be through organizing all groups in the community. "We should organize every unorganized person we can, even though we turn them over to the A.F.L.," MacDonald urged.⁵⁶ That kind of broadly-based, activist approach to trade union practice was beginning to sound increasingly more out of step with the actual practice of industrial relations in the forest industry.

With the strike vote in progress, the IWA moved its publicity machinery into high gear. Mel Fulton, chair of the Speakers' Committee, contacted all local secretaries asking them to arrange for broadcasts on local radio stations of a CCL recording on wages, prices, profits and employment. Local reps were urged to schedule evening meetings in their camps and mills for which the District would provide speakers. Such meetings were scheduled during the first half of June in Duncan, Courtenay, Alberni and Victoria as well as in loggers' local 1-71 and at Hammond Cedar in the Fraser Valley. Notable for its non-participation in scheduling such meetings was the New Westminster local.⁵⁷ Problem mills, particularly those with "weak crews" in the Vancouver local requested District President Pritchett as speaker to help bring workers into line behind a strike.⁵⁸ Speakers were provided with notes on how to present the struggle to its members:

employer moves:

- would like union battle government alone on Bill 39
- obvious for application of Bill 39 ICA Act 1947
- try to force union if a strike occurs to strike at most unfavourable time
- through ICA Act, force provincial vote on acceptance of conciliation award

union moves:

- must link up political fight on Bill 39 with economic struggle
- Bill 39 stands in way of achieving economic demands
- mobilize membership
- vote down employer proposal
- authorize policy committee for strike⁵⁹

That strategy got a receptive hearing in the big logging locals but not in New Westminster where the union strike ballot met with outright rejection by the local executive. At a special meeting held on 30 May, the 1-357 executive endorsed rejection of the employers' last proposal, but voted to recommend a no vote to its members on the strike ballot.⁶⁰ The background to this critical vote leads us back once again to the controversy over the 1946 fighting fund.

At the end of the 1946 strike, the District auditor (Eric Bee of TURB) found at least \$1800 not accounted for by receipts in the accounts of local 1-357. Bee reported the matter

to District Secretary Melsness who seized the books and then submitted the audit to the District. An International investigating committee, consisting of vice-presidents Karly Larsen and William Botkin, Danny O'Brien of the CCL and Dalskog, found evidence of continuing carelessness with the management of funds in the local office, despite warnings from the District executive. Local President Percy Smith, and Secretary Jack Lindsay, as the officials responsible, and both strong District loyalists, were ordered to make up a shortfall of \$877 in per capita tax owing to the District. More significantly, the committee recommended that both be barred from nomination to local office for an indefinite period. Unfortunately for the District leadership, with the two leftist mainstays of the local executive out of the running, the New Westminster opposition bloc, led by Stuart Alsbury and George Mitchell, seized on this issue. They used it, together with the issue of the local's war bonds and general disgruntlement with the conduct of the 1946 strike to win control of the local executive. As an immediate consequence of that turnover, one of the largest and most important locals in the union fell out of step with the District's strike strategy for 1947.⁶¹

Right in the midst of the District One strike vote, from 6-8 June, the BCFL held its important annual convention, the main focus of which was the campaign against the ICA Act (1947). One hundred and one delegates unanimously endorsed an executive resolution calling for united political action "to rally the people of British Columbia to bring about the full defeat of the Coalition government." Full assistance was promised to any union defying the anti-labour clauses of the ICA Act (1947). Member unions were to be assessed a special per capita tax (which eventually raised \$16,000) to help fight the Act. Vice-President McAuslane, in his explanation to the convention as to why British Columbia had been singled out as the testing ground for anti-union legislation in Canada, put the woodworkers squarely at the forefront of the struggle:

Labour today in British Columbia is again spearheading the Canadian Congress of Labour's wage drive for the year 1947. The International Woodworkers of America is negotiating with Stuart Research Agency and

the lumber operators in the Interior. All this is known to Premier Hart and Minister of Labour Pearson, as well as the big industrialists, and they saw the pattern last year. They understood that in the year 1946, B.C. led the wage drive and so big business is vitally interested in the B.C. picture.

Big business, McAuslane explained, simply brought pressure to bear on the Coalition government to introduce "this infamous legislation to stem the tide of organized labour in the Province." By doing so, they also realized that the whole wage drive of Canadian labour in 1947 will be weakened. The most immediate task was therefore to ensure that the woodworkers won their fight for an adequate wage increase, thus establishing the pattern once again for the other CCL unions.⁶² Beyond that lay the forging of a united labour movement, declared the B.C. Lumber Worker, "to defeat the government by attacking them on both the economic and political fronts." To that end a standing committee of 17 trade unionists was elected at the convention, including Pritchett and Greenall, as well as white bloc leader Alsbury.⁶³ The latter felt compelled to dispel any doubts over his full sympathy with the committee's goals by declaring he would work in conjunction with other members of the committee to defeat the labour act.⁶⁴

Back in his own local, Alsbury was somewhat less resolute. At a special local executive meeting held the day after the BCFL convention, Pritchett delivered an address on behalf of the District Policy Committee intended to convince executive members to reconsider their rejection of the strike ballot. The District President, trying to calm fears, noted that the provincial Department of Labour did not consider the ballot illegal. Nor was the purpose of the District necessarily to strike, he equivocated, but rather to use the strike vote as a lever in negotiations. Alsbury, finding himself caught in the middle, could not say yes or no on the motion to reconsider, but managed to quote from the ICA Act (1947) to show that the local executive would be liable to fines for taking strike action on the basis of the present ballot. Most executive members concurred with Alsbury's sentiments. The vote went 17 to four to uphold the earlier decision.⁶⁵

Four days later, Pritchett returned to the scene of an earlier confrontation, a sandlot just off CWL property at Fraser Mills, where he had received a drubbing in 1931. Still

barred from speaking in the plant, Pritchett held this lunch-time meeting a few hundred feet from the mill's back door in order to convince the rank-and-file of the biggest plant in 1-357 to defy its executive and vote for the strike. He explained the two-part ballot, and the inadequacy of the employers' offer designed to split the workers with its percentage terms. The workers seemed more concerned about the implications of the second half of the ballot. One sent him a question on a scrap of paper asking about the penalties in the ICA Act (1947) against striking. Last year, Pritchett told the man, the strike was called illegal; both union and employers circumvented wage ceiling and collective bargaining laws. "Laws are being circumvented everyday," the union president declared, "and we propose to do that in the case of Bill 39 if it is in the union's best interest." Back at the scene of his old stomping grounds, Pritchett, who had been delivering such speeches night and day for a week without rest, adopted a more aggressive stance than he had with the opposition-led executive. Still, there was no applause as the men moved back to work.⁶⁶

With an apparently well-developed intelligence system still intact, in spite of the exposé of April, Stuart had picked up on the difficulties the union ballot was encountering in some areas. Reporting to his clients on 4 June, he noted that union reps had been very active visiting plants, trying to get strike authorization should subsequent negotiations fail. Reports of employee reaction to the ballot indicated confusion. Though workers were expressing a willingness to reject the last offer, Stuart reported a definite reaction against the strike authorization in some plants. He understood the opposition stemmed from the reluctance of workers to face a strike for a small additional wage increase, as well as from uncertainty regarding the union's ability to call a legal strike except in accordance with the Act.⁶⁷ To encourage those workers in their misgivings, Stuart Research placed prominent ads in the press showing what ten percent would actually mean for specific job categories. The IWA ballot was reproduced and criticized for failing to state the details of the employers' offer, and for seeking authorization for strike action prior to completion of negotiations. That was the same pattern, the ad reminded workers, that cost them \$8

million in lost wages the year before. "It is against all accepted principles of sound and fair collective bargaining and threatens new disruption to employment and earning power in B.C."⁶⁸

To get the same message to more isolated camps, Stuart Research sent placards for operators to post: "What the 1947 Wage Offer Means to You."⁶⁹ And on 11 June he circularized his clients for lists of employees regarded as permanent "who are either present or potential leaders in thought among their fellow workers," perhaps 25-30 percent of each company's crew. To these workers Stuart would send, free of charge, copies of the semi-monthly publication Forest and Mill published by the British Columbia forest industry for the purpose of disseminating a wider degree of public and employee knowledge of the forest product industries, "how they work and what they need to make them healthy and progressive."⁷⁰

While both Stuart and Pritchett worked on convincing those wavering woodworkers uneasy about defying the law, a small CCL affiliate at Imperial Laundry in Nanaimo, the Laundry Workers' Union, local one, became the first union in British Columbia to face the full force of the revised ICA Act. When union member Violet Dewhurst missed work to attend the BCFL convention she was fired immediately upon her return. A second absent employee was also fired though she had not attended the convention. Twenty-eight workers went on strike in support of their two fired co-workers, thus laying themselves open to penalties for striking illegally.⁷¹

On 17 June the appointment of a special prosecutor was announced by acting Minister of Labour Kenney. On 20 June charges were laid against the laundry workers, their union, as well as against CCL organizer Radford and Island Labour Council official Percy Lawson who had served as negotiator for the small union.⁷² This would be a test case to see if under the terms of the ICA Act (1947) a union could be held liable in the courts for strike action of its members.⁷³ The BCFL immediately swung into action behind the small coterie of strikers by appealing to all CCL unions to support the strike and send

delegates to an emergency conference in Nanaimo. The 17-member standing committee met on 21 June and drew up a plan of action including the establishment of Fight Bill 39 Committees in all CCL unions, a mass letter-writing campaign directed at Premier Hart, a one-dollar per member fighting fund and a mass protest rally for Vancouver citizens on Sunday 6 July. On 26 June, a special Island Labour Council meeting attended by BCFL officials Pritchett, Murphy and McAuslane and 65 union delegates from 12 CCL and four TLC unions, drafted further proposals to unite all unions behind the Laundry Workers.⁷⁴ This move was in part a response to the Vancouver Trades and Labour Council decision to aid only TLC-affiliated unions, being attacked under the Act. That position had been strongly supported by notable CCF members within the TLC such as Tom Alsbury, Stuart's brother. They followed the party line that changes to the Act would have to await the 1948 sitting of the legislature.⁷⁵ The CCF, always leery that the Federation with its heavy LPP contingent, would preempt its role as parliamentary opposition through more direct forms of action, remained lukewarm on joining the economic and political struggles. Similarly, LPP partisans within the trade unions were happy at any chance to upstage, through more direct militant action, the official opposition in the legislature. That basic political division in the labour movement was at least in part responsible for the positions taken by the executive of IWA local 1-357 on the strike ballot which was coming to a close just as the support campaign for the laundry workers began to take shape.

Two other developments on the larger North American stage unfolding at the same time also served to inject additional significance into the Bill 39 embroglio. June 1947 witnessed the implementation of the Taft-Hartley Act in the United States, with the senate's overwhelming vote to strike down Truman's veto of the Wagner Act amendment. While thousands of workers walked off the job in protest, the CIO General Executive Board resisted calls from communist-led unions such as UE for a 24-hour general strike.⁷⁶ In Ottawa, on 17 June, the federal government's Bill 338, designed to replace PC 1003 in certain areas under federal jurisdiction (most notably the railways) was introduced to

parliament. Many of its provisions seemed to echo the more restrictive, institutionalizing character of the ICA Act (1947).⁷⁷ The Pacific Tribune distilled the historic moment for its readers in a 27 June editorial which gave expression to much of what IWA leaders had been trying to tell their members over the past month or so. History, the editor proclaimed, had "indeed honoured the Nanaimo Laundry Workers with being the first 'test-case' in this deluge of fascist-type legislation against the trade unions of North America." There was only one answer to these "Taft-Mitchell-Hart anti-labour provocateurs. A labour movement united and determined to hurl back reaction...A labour movement prepared to strike not only for wages, but for trade union survival."⁷⁸ The IWA referendum ballot gave workers a real opportunity to declare themselves on this question.

New Westminster was not the only local where opposition was building to the District leadership and its negotiation strategy. In 1946 the Vancouver mill local 1-217 had demonstrated lukewarm support for the District Fighting Fund, and again in 1947 several plants had required Pritchett's special attention in order to try to rally the rank-and-file. Together the two large sawmill locals would account for almost 5000 actual votes cast in any District referendum, equal to the combined strength of the other two large, logging locals, 1-71 and 1-80 (Vancouver and Duncan). The remaining four coast locals' combined balloting strength amounted to less than 2500, approximately equal to the average vote of each of the big four locals. The District ballot would be decided mainly by these four. On 23 June, John McCuish, chair of the balloting committee, announced the results of the referendum vote. All eight locals polled turned down the employers' last offer with a combined vote of 80 percent. But on the crucial strike vote, only 67.8 percent of the membership authorized the District committee to call a strike failing satisfactory concessions during further negotiations. More importantly, serious weaknesses were noted in the sawmilling section of the industry, particularly in New Westminster, where the strike vote was turned down and voting results in some plants posted prior to the announcement of the District-wide count.⁷⁹ While 1-217 passed the strike referendum, it

did so with a low percentage count. Aside from noting 90 percent support for both propositions in local 1-71, no local breakdown was given by the union; however a reasonable estimate can be made based on the local results of elections for District officers held in February-March 1948. For the five top table officer positions, the combined sawmill vote of 1-357 and 1-217 went against all but one of the incumbent slate. Dalskog lost to Alsbury by a significant 2651 to 2007 margin in the presidential race. Only the well-known favourite son, Pritchett, running for first vice-president, eaked past Lloyd Whalen, the Trotskyist on the "white bloc" slate, by a margin of 2472 to 2321. While New Westminster decisively voted against the District executive, in 1-217 Dalskog managed only 56 percent of the vote and Pritchett only 60 percent. Whatever the local result in the 1947 strike vote, it is clear that the union was seriously divided on basic strategy between its two main sectors, logging and sawmilling.⁸⁰ It would have been very difficult to use such a vote as an effective lever in negotiations, let alone as the basis for an actual strike in contravention of the law. The discrepancy between 80 percent and 67.8 percent contained a clear statement from the mill workers that they would, in the majority, abide by the law, and did not intend to engage in another "political" strike like the one in 1946. Rejection of Stuart's offer indicated they wanted to confine their fight to one with the employers only, and within the limits of conventional industrial relations procedures.

III

During the 1946 strike the union had followed two seemingly contradictory paths, the one leading to a trek on Victoria, the other, through conciliation to the Sloan recommendations. It was argued above that this ambivalence was indicative of a union divided between two very different industrial relations realities. That division was borne out even more concretely in 1947, and was reflected as well by the manner in which the District Policy Committee proceeded after the 26 May break in negotiations. With Stuart proceeding to conciliation, the union proceeded to circumvent the ICA Act (1947) by

conducting its vote. During the strike vote, and following the appointment of Conciliation Officer William Fraser, the District Negotiating Committee resumed talks with Fraser as chair.⁸¹ Not having been the one to apply for conciliation, the union could at least argue that it had not actively complied with the Act, but was merely responding to Stuart's move to resume talks. With the expectation in the air that a solid strike vote would push the conciliation process towards the union's position, at an executive meeting the day prior to the release of coast ballot results, Pritchett reported that the employers' attitude had changed somewhat since the District proceeded to referendum. Talks were going well. Stuart Research had agreed to include the furniture section of the industry, and to discuss adjustments for special job classifications such as cook and bunkhouse crews, shingle workers, trainmen and engineers. Progress was also made on hours of work, with the employers looking favourably at 40 hours if the union would agree to optional special arrangements between local committees and management. In the interior, negotiations proceeded with the union reducing its demands in both the wages and hours departments.⁸²

Following announcement of the disappointing referendum results, which the union tried to interpret publicly as a strong mandate to strike,⁸³ District negotiations moved quickly to a settlement. On 30 June, Stuart offered 11½ cents with an optional 40/44-hour week in logging only. The union committee tentatively proposed an optional 40/44-hour week across the industry, based on time and one-half after 40 hours. This offer was coupled with an undertaking to drop the union shop and welfare plan if the employers accepted these terms and dropped their bonding proposal. Stuart asked the union to establish a minimum wage demand based on the condition that overtime be paid after 40 hours on an optional 40/44-hour week. The industry obviously regarded the hours-of-work issue as a cost item. If required to pay extra wages for the last four hours of the working week, then its across-the-board wage offer would have to be adjusted accordingly.⁸⁴

On Wednesday 2 July, just four days prior to the rally scheduled in Vancouver to kick off the Federation's mass campaign against the ICA Act (1947), the IWA and the industry found common ground on a wage/hour combination: $12\frac{1}{2}$ cents per hour increase, and a 40-hour week to be worked within six days beginning midnight Sunday, extendable to 44 hours or longer with time and one-half after 40. Cook and bunkhouse employees (as well as fire fighters, first-aid attendants, boatmen and watchmen) would continue to be exempted from the hours-of-work clause, though one regular day off in seven was provided for cook and bunkhouse men "if practicable." A 44-hour, six-day week would continue to be the norm in both sectors, though the $12\frac{1}{2}$ cent increase would be augmented with the additional overtime built into the new proposal. The 40-hour week as a condition of work intended to provide greater leisure for workers was still left to the individual employer to decide upon based on his production requirements. The optional hours compromise was readily accepted by the District Committee since it allowed the union to claim victory in the 40-hour struggle while at the same time satisfying the desire amongst a large sector of loggers for as much overtime work as was available. Moreover, union shop and the welfare fund (as well as the employers' bonding proposal) were dropped, as were union claims for additional category adjustments in the various trade and piece-work sectors of the industry. Only the operating engineers received special wage adjustments. Employees working on a piece basis would have the $12\frac{1}{2}$ cents consolidated with the 15-cent increase from the year before and paid as an hourly rate of $27\frac{1}{2}$ cents on top of their normal piece-work earnings.⁸⁵ The union regarded this concession as a foot in the door towards the elimination of piece work. For the companies it was a concession that, in many cases, could easily be eroded at a later date by converting the hourly "bonus" back into piece-work terms, with the mutual consent of employees involved.⁸⁶ As with the hours-of-work issue, there was no clear consensus from employees involved in favour of a straight hourly wage. Fallers and buckers were generally the highest paid of the logging crews and did not want to see that position eroded. They were in favour of a daily

guaranteed wage to protect them in the event of poor weather or timber conditions. But they also wanted to keep the piece-rate. For them it was the basis of their higher earnings, but, for the union, a source of speed-up, accidents and a deterrent to an industry-wide application of the 40-hour week. According to Stuart Research negotiator Billings, the union continued to "cater" to the demands of the fallers for fear they might break away and form their own union.⁸⁷ Perhaps, more likely was their transformation into straight contractors, especially with the introduction of the power saw.

With its 12½ cent across-the-board increase, once again District One seemed to have been locked into the same wage settlement that Mine Mill had reached earlier at Kimberley and Trail. Also as in 1946, the coast settlement established the precedent for the interior. Both the north and the south (the Kootenays) settled for 12½ cents and 44 hours (without overtime after 40), with conciliator Fraser playing a key role in the south. All range rates were eliminated in the north, and two weeks vacation won for five year employees, as on the coast. In the Kootenays, the probationary period for new employees was cut from 90 to 60 days. Negotiation in the central interior region of Kamloops-Kelowna, where raiding by the Lumber and Sawmill Workers' Union complicated matters, dragged on longer, with Fraser once again intervening.⁸⁸ The fact that the settlement in the weaker interior locals much more closely resembled the coast settlement than was the case the year before points again to the poverty of the coast terms.

The post-mortem on the settlement was delivered in an article in the Lumber Worker by District Secretary Melsness.⁸⁹ To begin with, he noted the factors working against the union. First, there was the passage of Bill 39. Secondly, unlike in 1946, the union policy committee was not backed up by a strong strike vote at the outset, "nor was there any reserve of funds such as a special fighting fund which carried out the 1946 strike to a successful conclusion." Melsness in effect admitted that by the end of May there was still not a substantial fund. When the employers' dug in their heels at the end of May, he wrote, "it became necessary to take a strike vote and to launch a campaign for the building

up of a fund." The weakness of the strike vote also reflected itself in voluntary contributions to the strike fund. Thirdly, then, Melsness noted the problems in the sawmill locals during the vote, particularly in New Westminster. Nevertheless, he claimed, 12½ cents won without a strike could be considered a tremendous victory. In fact, given the level of lumber prices and profits during 1946-47 upon which the union based its case for 20 cents,⁹⁰ and given the rapidity with which 15 cents had evaporated after June 1946, 12½ cents did not give the average woodworker much to cheer about, except inasmuch as he won it without loss of work.

The greatest victory, "both politically and economically, that has been won by the IWA in all of its history," claimed the District Secretary, was the 40-hour week. By providing more employment, curtailing profits and "spreading out" production, the inevitable crisis of over-production and depression would be postponed and softened—"A highly important political victory" for the IWA. There are two interesting elements to this analysis. First, it ignored the economic reality that, especially in logging, 40 hours would be applied seasonally depending on the requirements of the operation. The industry was already in the midst of an economic boom which had boosted employment in both logging and sawmilling dramatically.⁹¹ In such boom conditions there would be incentive for operators to stretch the work week to the limit that the contract and the law allowed. During periods of contraction, lumbermen would be more likely to pare their work forces to the bone and then use the flexibility of the hours-of-work clause to adjust production as needed. It would be cheaper to offer a bit of overtime when needed to a skeleton crew than to carry a bloated crew on payroll which was underemployed much of the time.

The second interesting element of Melsness' analysis of the work-week victory relates to his definition of an "important political victory." This definition, also implicit in many of Pritchett's published statements and present in most of the wage briefs prepared by TURB, had become a standard part of the IWA's economic and political analysis. Trade unions could most immediately further the interests of the working class, this line

went, not by sharpening the contradictions inherent in capitalism and precipitating an economic collapse. The experience of the last depression had been too devastating to the working class, and the gains made by communist parties in North America insignificant. The relative prosperity of the war years had brought much greater success in mobilizing and organizing workers. An incipient Browderism—not to mention Keynesianism—still lurked within the hearts of most communist industrial unionists in British Columbia, in spite of the new political militancy of the post-war period, and the longer-term goal of defeating American imperialism and monopoly capitalism. For Pritchett and Melsness, the welfare of the industry and of the economy in general depended on ~~higher wages~~, full employment and greater purchasing power to avoid a crisis inherent in production for profit. The true business unionists of the 1950s would simply take this prescription and invert it, bowing to the need for lower wages, longer hours and greater productivity to sustain economic growth. While, no doubt, the Pritchett/Melsness line was a superior “trade union” position, it was difficult to reconcile the general notion of a union framing its economic and political analysis in terms of what was best for capitalist enterprise to continue to expand unabated with the notion of “an important political victory.”

The editor of the Vancouver Sun perspicaciously penetrated through the militant and defiant political stance adopted by the IWA prior to its strike vote and in a laudatory editorial provided the kiss of death to any hopes the woodworkers' union had of leading the crusade against the ICA Act (1947). The lumber industry, the editorial praised, had established the principle after nine long weeks of bargaining, that strikes settle nothing. “Labour and capital are agreed that uninterrupted production is essential to a high standard of living,” the Sun editorial proclaimed. “Full and harmonious cooperation is required on both sides. The road to industrial peace will not be easy...yet the sign posts are now in place,” the Sun predicted. “The IWA and the logging operators have marked it well. Where they have travelled others will be expected to travel.”⁹²

Coming just before a mass protest rally at Vancouver's Exhibition Gardens planned to launch the fight against the ICA Act (1947) into the broader public arena, this praise from the capitalist press pointed to one very harsh reality—the largest, most important union in the province had now capitulated and complied, de facto, with the Act. District leaders such as Melsness and Pritchett claimed that the IWA had circumvented application of the ICA Act (1947). Melsness went so far as to claim that “it is quite apparent that the Coalition Government in Victoria was not prepared for an all out fight with labor, led by the IWA, at this particular time.”⁹³ But clearly the IWA had not violated the Act with its strike vote, and, by continuing negotiations under a government conciliator, had indicated its willingness to comply. The union needed a strong and united membership in favour of striking in violation of the Act, and that it did not have. If the provincial government was not prepared for an all-out-fight, neither were the woodworkers. A solid majority of the rank-and-file would possibly, in due course, have voted to take on the industry in a legal strike over contract demands alone. By tying its early strike vote to the anti-Bill 39 campaign, the District Negotiating Committee preempted that possibility and found itself, with a weak mandate, unable either to pursue its own economic struggle to fulfillment, or to lend its decisive weight to the larger political struggle.

The Vancouver rally against the ICA Act (1947), which had been postponed to 20 July, attracted at most 1200 “Vancouver citizens,” most of whom were probably BCFL officials and union representatives. There was more talk of a one-day general strike, and several more TLC unions broke ranks with their central, throwing their support to the laundry workers.⁹⁴ But with the kingpin in the BCFL campaign, the IWA, buckling under to the Act, the anti-Bill 39 movement lacked real clout. The only direct challenges to the Act involving illegal strikes were not of sufficient economic importance to pose a real political threat to the Coalition government.⁹⁵ After charges were filed against 114 steelworkers for striking illegally, and with his union for the most part out of the direct action, Pritchett took a leave of absence as District president to lead the Federation's anti-

Bill 39 campaign, noting somewhat cryptically that the IWA could no longer continue to exist unless the ICA Act (1947) were wiped out.⁹⁶ In mid-September the Federation tried to re-launch its campaign at a meeting of 150 delegates presided over by Harvey Murphy, with Pritchett giving the main report. Ever searching for the elusive popular coalition of forces, a new demand emerged from the labour central for a special fall session of the legislature to amend the ICA Act (1947) and adjust school taxes according to the demands of the farmers and rural population.⁹⁷ The CCF was notably cool to any parliamentary advice from the Federation and its LPP leaders.⁹⁸

In the absence of any substantial challenge, the government was able to limit public debate to the "cumbersome mechanics" of the ICA Act (1947), its enforceability and possible infringement on the jurisdiction of the courts. The court decision in both the laundry and steelworkers cases had raised serious concerns with these aspects of the statute.⁹⁹ With the appointment on 16 October of Attorney-General Gordon Wismer as the new labour minister, the government hoped to clear up some of these mechanical and legal difficulties and deflect some of the concerns being raised by the reform wing of the Liberal party that the labour act adhere more closely to "liberal, democratic and equitable principles" and be made more efficient in its application.¹⁰⁰ Toward that end, Wismer declared his intention to appoint a Labour Relations Board as provided by the Act and invited nominees from the BCFL.¹⁰¹ The Federation declined the invitation until charges against the steelworkers were dropped, and a moratorium on further prosecutions was declared.¹⁰² After investigating the case against the steelworkers, at the beginning of November, Wismer surprisingly announced the dropping of all charges as well as his intention to amend the Act to remove its "ponderous and unnecessary machinery." Until that was done, no more charges would be laid against individual strikers, though unions and officers would continue to be liable.¹⁰³

Wismer's assurances in hand, Pritchett announced on behalf of the BCFL executive its intention to submit the names of himself, Murphy and Alex Mackenzie as nominees to

the new Board.¹⁰⁴ With this decision, the labour movement left its fate regarding the ICA Act (1947) in the hands of the Coalition government, just then restructuring its leadership after the resignation of Premier Hart. Labour relations policy would be a key issue around which the revamped Coalition under business-minded "Boss" Johnson would define its new political programme.

Only a major economic struggle led by the 30,000 woodworkers in the province might have been able to challenge and expose the basic intent and underlying anti-labour principles of the ICA Act (1947). Because they were small, the laundry and steelworker cases obscured the real issues involved in the fight against the Act, leading to calls from within the Liberal party, the judiciary and the liberal press for reform of the Act's machinery. IWA compliance and the Federation's willingness to participate on the new LRB, only reinforced the notion that the hurriedly-produced ICA Act (1947) could stand up against any future challenges from organized labour with only some minor tinkering. The stage was set for organized capital in the province to proceed with the remaining points of its anti-union agenda. Nineteen forty-eight would be a critical year not only for the IWA, but for the whole labour movement in British Columbia.

Chapter Ten

1947-48: Confrontation

In Chapter Six we explored briefly how shifts in the broader global political-economy influenced left-wing politics in North America and provided a context for a more militant trade union posture during 1946. Nineteen forty-seven brought the intensification of these processes: a full-blown "cold war" and massive assault on trade union and civil rights from rightward-shifting governments across the continent. By the spring of 1948, these developments had produced a general crisis throughout the industrial union movement. As labour centrals and industrial unions in general struggled to maintain their hard-won legitimacy, communist trade union leaders scrambled to adopt strategies that would allow them to reconcile increasingly conflicting political and industrial relations agendas. The tumultuous events in the woodworking industry of British Columbia during 1948 form part of this larger history of capital-labour and geo-political restructuring.

On 12 March 1947, President Harry Truman announced that his administration had adopted a policy of assisting other nations, most immediately Greece and Turkey, that might be threatened by communism. This so-called "Truman Doctrine" was quickly backed up by congressional approval of \$400 million in aid. At about the same time, the United States withdrew from UNRRA for fear that money distributed by that agency was helping the cause of communism in Europe. In place of American support of UNRRA, on 5 June 1947, Secretary of State Marshall announced a plan to assist any European government willing to participate in the task of recovery. Innocuous enough in itself, this scheme (which soon became known as the Marshall Plan), taken together with Truman's "doctrine," and the policy of Soviet "containment" outlined by George Kennan in July, would soon emerge as a full-blown attempt to assert American economic hegemony over western Europe in order to halt the spread of communism amongst its war-torn peoples.¹ By the summer of 1947, the powerful communist parties in France, Italy and Belgium had

lost their positions in coalition governments, knocking the steam out of Stalin's attempts to reestablish a united front policy after the disintegration of the wartime alliance.²

In response to these significant events in the capitalist camp, in late September 1947, the communist parties from eight European nations and the Soviet Union gathered in Poland to found the Cominform (the Information Bureau of Communist and Workers Parties), a more nationalist-oriented successor to the Comintern that had been scrapped during the war. In a keynote address to the founding conference, Andrei Zhdanov, chief Soviet ideologist, reintroduced into the communist lexicon Lenin's "two-camp thesis" of the 1920s, "just as the Truman Doctrine speech had divided the world into forces of good and evil from the American perspective some months earlier."³ Cominform strategy, designed to counter United States imperialism and threats to the USSR, called on member parties, and by extension all national parties, to build popular anti-imperialist coalitions of progressive forces within each country and "assume the role of defender of its country's independence against the encroachments of the United States."⁴

The impact of these developments on the American and Canadian communist parties was electrifying. As was shown in chapter six, Foster and Buck had anticipated Stalin's change in direction in policy statements and strategies adopted over a year earlier. This was particularly true of the Canadian leader who had sounded the alarm as early as April 1946 against the Anglo-American threat to Canada's economic and national sovereignty, calling for a broad people's movement in response. Now, with the official approval of Stalin, both parties moved ahead full throttle. Starobin argues that it was the founding of the Cominform above all that reassured Foster in his thinking and pushed him in the direction of breaking with the labour-Democratic coalition and towards the formation of a third party movement.⁵ Prior to that the American leader had hesitated, as both communists and liberal-centrists in the CIO shied away from an outright confrontation on foreign policy, and the Congress leadership maintained staunch opposition to Taft-Hartley. By October, however, the CIO convention had endorsed the basic principles of, if not the political intent

behind, the Marshall Plan. As more unions moved toward compliance with Taft-Hartley under threat of being denied access to the NLRB machinery, the CIO dropped its hard civil liberties stance on the issue of the non-communist affidavits, leaving it to member unions to decide. As a political confrontation in the all-important labour movement grew imminent, Foster decided to risk a rupture within the CIO by backing a third-party, Henry Wallace candidacy for United States president against the traditional party of labour, the Democrats, now moving to the right under Truman. CPUSA leaders, according to Starobin, "saw in the Cominform's existence and in Zhdanov's advice not to underestimate the capacity of the working class for struggle against imperialism, all the ingredients of a critique of their hesitation and a signal to go all out."⁶

In Canada, the LPP moved equally rapidly to consolidate its defensive position with regard to American imperialism, and adopt strategies toward building a broad popular third-party opposition, complicated somewhat by the communists' uneasy relationship with the CCF. In early October, LPP spokesmen in British Columbia were still slamming the CCF for failing to support fully the struggle against the ICA Act (1947).⁷ With the announcement of the two-camp Cominform line, the LPP, too, shifted gears.

Objective conditions in the post-war Canadian economy resulted in the adoption of federal trade and currency policies that fed the flames of a new-found nationalism amongst Canadian communists. With the breakdown of Canada's Anglo-American trade balancing act, sustained during the war by participation in Lend-Lease, the Canadian economy experienced diminishing US dollar reserves during a period of intensified consumer demand for American manufactured goods. Mackenzie King, in talks with Truman in April 1947, pushed for greater exports of Canadian raw materials, especially minerals, to the United States.⁸ Moreover, the Canadian government, less for ideological reasons than from the sheer economic necessity of righting its trade and currency imbalances, favoured rapid implementation of the European Recovery Plan (Marshall Plan) with Canadian inclusion as a supplier of goods, particularly raw materials and foodstuffs. As a stop-gap

measure, in order to stem the outward flow of dollars, Finance Minister Douglas Abbott, in November 1947, announced the imposition of strict currency controls and import quotas. This plan was designed not only to stop the depletion of US dollar reserves, but also to draw American attention to Canada's plight. It was to serve as a bargaining ploy toward the achievement of the longer term objectives of increased Canadian exports to United States and European markets through some sort of US-Canada trade treaty and Canadian participation in the Marshall Plan. As boosters of Marshall Plan aid, Canadian leaders would find it in their interests to follow the American lead, engaging in the appropriate anti-Soviet rhetoric required to mobilize public and, in the American case, congressional support, for the recovery programme.

The general thrust of Canadian policy was clear to the LPP. Participation in a new aggressive American economic imperialism as summarized in the so-called "Abbott Plan," according to Tim Buck, meant, in the short term, sharp increases in the cost of living, a drastic drop in real wages, and high unemployment. Eventually, the Abbott Plan would lead to a decline of manufacturing, a narrowing of Canada's foreign trade and a "strengthening trend toward economic colonization of this country by United States monopoly capital."⁹ In several long articles in the communist press, Buck outlined his critique of Canadian economic policy. His alternative strategy was to link true Canadian economic development, including manufacturing, to trade with the emerging socialist economies of the "New Democracies" in Europe, the Soviet Union and the "emergent new people's republics in Asia." Against the proposals of American finance-capital that Canada become an industrial hinterland of the United States, Buck countered, "let the people of Canada be aroused to fight to make Canada industrially self-sufficient, nationally independent, and a partner with the nations who are building a new type of economy in a very large part of the world."¹⁰ Provincial communist leaders echoed Buck's refrain. Harvey Murphy predicted a new wave of price increases under the Abbott Plan wiping out all the post-war wage increases won by workers. Provincial LPP leader Nigel Morgan

accused the King government of "cowardly betrayal of the people's interest," and claimed that its adoption of the Tory line of price decontrol would cut purchasing power in half.¹¹

The LPP's "new National Policy" was consolidated in Buck's report to a Toronto meeting of the party's national committee in early January, published under the title "Keep Canada Independent." The Abbott Plan, according to this statement, represented "an abject surrender to U.S. monopoly capital," putting the King government in essential agreement with the Tory camp. In seeking support from "the big business gang," the Liberals had betrayed their "solemn wartime pledges," "torpedoed price controls," and "hitched Canada to the war-chariot of Wall-Street, bent on stopping the spread of the New Democracies in Europe and of liberation struggles in the colonial countries." This new drive of world reaction under American leadership had completely "changed world relationships, changed the conditions of democratic progress and, therefore, has changed the conditions which determine the policies of the labour movement in Canada as in every other capitalist country." Continued progress could be sustained only through the broad popular unity of democratic forces. For the LPP in Canada that meant in the event of federal or provincial elections during 1948 all progressive people were to support CCF candidates in every constituency without LPP nominees, and the number of LPP candidates would be deliberately limited in each province. Nevertheless, precisely because they were now calling for the election of a CCF government, communists would, all the more, have to "sharpen our principled criticism of social-democratic policies."¹² As Penner caustically remarks, however, this principled criticism would quickly become "the dominant theme in the LPP's approach to the CCF."¹³

Both the LPP and the CPUSA had moved to sever popular support from Democratic-Liberal parties now aligned with the interests of US imperialism. The CPUSA looked for the bearer of the Rooseveltian New Deal torch, and found him in the person of Roosevelt's vice-president Wallace, who declared his intention to run for president on a Progressive party ticket on 29 December 1947.¹⁴ The LPP, by the same logic of analysis,

looked to the ready-made third-party alternative, the CCF, as the nucleus for a coalition of popular forces that would include the party of communists. That neither the CCF nor Wallace were particularly anxious to be identified with communist support was irrelevant to Party calculations in 1947 and 1948.¹⁵

Foster got only cool support from communist trade unionists, hesitant in the atmosphere generated after Taft-Hartley, to push their unions into an open break with Truman (their only hope for eventual repeal) and with CIO political policy. Philip Murray, nevertheless, took this apparent communist effort to destroy the Democratic party as his cue to make his long-awaited move against communists in the CIO.¹⁶ In the Canadian political context, of course, support by communist trade unionists of the CCF would not entail a break with the mainstream of the labour movement. But a growing rift in the British Columbia District of the IWA, and in the CCL in general, was exacerbated by the importation into Canada of the CIO's debates over Taft Hartley and the Marshall Plan. For their part, the LPP-led unions aided their opponents by blurring important distinctions between the Abbott and Marshall plans, between Taft-Hartley and the ICA Act (1947), and between the CIO and the CCL leaderships. In this respect they failed in their own mission to "keep Canada independent."

In July 1947, the IWA's left-leaning International Executive Board, in adherence to general CIO policy at that time, announced its refusal to comply with the Taft-Hartley affidavit. In reality, the IWA, in an ongoing battle with the AFL in the Pacific Northwest, was not in a position to rely on militant rank-and-file support in place of participation in elections supervised by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB).¹⁷ The Executive Board soon reconsidered its position. In accordance with a ruling of the CIO Executive Board to leave the question of compliance up to individual unions, it forwarded to the union's annual August convention in St. Louis, a resolution calling for compliance with the Taft-Hartley law in order "to save certain sections of our organization."¹⁸

The political divisions in the IWA executive were reflected in the resolution's wording. It noted that the NLRB, under Taft-Hartley, would not serve labour's interests to the degree it had in the past. The union would comply with NLRB certification provisions by using the Board only when necessary: "In some instances, perhaps, we may be able to strike the employers for recognition, and in other cases we might feel it is suicide to strike for recognition."¹⁹ But regardless of the compromise wording, the political impact on the International Board would be the same. Its communist members would have to sign affidavits or resign. Thus, when the issue came to the floor of the 1947 International convention, it barely passed on a straight right-left split. (The margin of victory for the right may have been not more than that provided by the intervention of the United States Department of Immigration in preventing those District One delegates identified as communists from attending. Jack Greenall, International Trustee, who had entered the country earlier in preparation for the convention, was the only known Canadian communist to attend.)²⁰ Greenall, in 1965, would claim that Karly Larsen himself engineered passage of the resolution through the convention by stifling any challenge from the left on the floor of the convention. According to Greenall's account, Larsen had already made his deal with the International Board, signed the affidavit, and soon after resigned in order to conceal his compliance from his home district. His subsequent reelection as president of District Two (northern Washington) only confirmed his earlier compliance. This more recent rendition of events is supported by Greenall's statement to the 1948 District convention in January. Then he claimed that delegates to the St. Louis convention had not been made aware of what the issues were. When a motion was made to defer action until after the CIO convention, it was defeated, with the International officers opposing.²¹

Lembcke and Tattum do not question Larsen's integrity at the International Convention, though they do accept that he signed the affidavit upon reelection to the presidency of his district. There is even some question as to whether Larsen was still a CPUSA member in 1947.²² If he were not, his resignation from the executive Board

might have been intended to conceal the fact that he had quit the party. Larsen is, no doubt, a shadowy but interesting figure in all of these events. His role in the District One strike of 1946 was less than solid (see chapter seven above). Early in 1948, his alliance with Pritchett and District One leaders would help mislead the British Columbians into precipitate action against the International president, opening the door to a full-scale anti-communist assault on the District.²³

At any rate, if Karly Larsen had worked out his own separate peace with the white bloc, he and Fadling did a good job of concealing it. On 16 and 18 September, Fadling wrote to Larsen and Ed Laux demanding that they sign Taft-Hartley affidavits in accordance with the decision of the convention, or resign from the executive. Larsen's and Laux's joint letter of resignation, printed in full in the B.C. Lumber Worker, appropriately denounced compliance with Taft-Hartley as meaning the destruction of industrial unionism in the lumber industry.²⁴ At the beginning of October, NLRB Chairman Robert Denham ruled that top CIO leaders need not file oaths, but that leaders of constituent unions and locals would have to in order to obtain use of NLRB machinery.²⁵ With 31 October set as the time limit for IWA compliance to prevent dismissal of all its cases, the necessary executive affidavits were filed, excluding the International trustees, who, though technically full executive board members, were not regarded as such by the union. Denham demanded the trustees sign as well, and, on 8 October, Greenall was asked by acting-President Botkin to comply.

Greenall based his refusal to comply on the principle that "a government to which I owe no allegiance, in a country where I haven't a vote, has no right to tell me or any other Canadian what political principles must be endorsed or rejected." He also refused to resign and betray the confidence of the IWA members who voted for him two years before. "Even a moron" could see, he wrote Fadling, that "the gains you hope to make as a result of capitulating to the NLRB will be more than offset by weakened morale within the Union." He gave Fadling his sympathy but not his endorsement.²⁶ Fadling claimed he

protested against the forcing of a Canadian citizen to sign, and requested Denham's interpretation on the matter. Denham ruled that all International officers named in the union constitution must sign. On 25 October, Fadling wrote to Greenall suspending him from office. Four days later Greenall replied expressing doubt that he would appeal the ruling, and giving his appreciation for Fadling's protest on his behalf.²⁷ Rae Eddie, a member of the New Westminster executive; and soon-to-be elected CCF provincial member, was appointed by Fadling to replace Greenall.²⁸

For the time being the matter was laid to rest, though there was some debate as to Fadling's authority to suspend an executive member without going through due process in accordance with the union's constitution. Taft-Hartley had only just begun its intrusion into the affairs of Canadian labour. That piece of legislation and the Greenall affair virtually assured that Ernie Dalskog, nominated at the St. Louis convention for first vice-president would never be elected. Dalskog, and District Two's Walter Belka, running on the leftist slate for secretary-treasurer, were subsequently defeated in referendum balloting by right-wing stalwarts Al Hartung and Carl Winn. Together with Fadling and second vice-president Botkin, both reelected by acclamation, they would compose a solid anti-communist front at the IWA office in Portland. District One's two year honeymoon with the International Board was at an end.²⁹

At the same time that District One had its first direct encounter with "Taft-Hartleyism" (the ICA Act (1947) notwithstanding) through its official organ, the B.C. Lumber Worker, it took up the sword against support for the Marshall Plan within the CCL. In a feature article covering the CCL 1947 convention, the paper took the Congress executive to task for its resolution which put the "seal of approval on American foreign policy, endorsed the Marshall Plan for blackmailing Europe with Wall Street dollars, approved the Mackenzie King government's subservience to the American state department...then echoes the chorus of hate being whipped up by American big business against the Soviet Union." The CCL executive had, in the opinion of District One, "wasted

three and one-half days advancing a programme whose central theme was red-baiting," and "rigged" the convention to win its support. On 28 October the CCL executive demanded a complete retraction, and when this failed to materialize, on 13 March charges were laid against the District. On 17 November Dalskog apologized on the front page of the union paper, but offered no retraction. After further threats, a full retraction was printed on 15 December.³⁰

In offering its principled criticism of the CCL in October, District One could find some support in the fact that neither its parent union nor the CIO had as yet wholeheartedly endorsed the Marshall Plan and Truman foreign policy. Within a month of the retraction, the CIO Executive Board had taken its first steps against the Wallace third-party candidacy. The IWA would soon follow suit. The District quickly found itself censured by the new International Board for interfering in areas of union policy that were the sole prerogative of the International.³¹

When District One gathered in convention in January, foreign policy was featured first and foremost in the officers' report to the delegates. A full and lengthy exposition of the LPP's line on the Marshall/Abbott plans was advanced, including predictions of mass unemployment as Canadian industry was restructured to fit American requirements. The recent spat with the CCL was reviewed. The union's apology and retraction, the officers explained, were given in recognition of the urgent need for the IWA to "stay within the confines of the trade union movement and play its part in the general struggles of the working class of Canada," and of the world. A resolution on Canadian foreign policy, in an elaborate preamble, linked the "Abbott Austerity Plan" to the "reactionary" Marshall Plan's attempts to impose American economic dominance over Europe. The ICA Act (1947) and Taft-Hartley were but the domestic counterparts to the American aim of smashing democratic workers' governments wherever they had been established. The convention called upon Canada to abandon support of the Marshall Plan and adopt a foreign policy based on peace and friendship with "democratic countries" in the interests of

maintaining Canadian industry and agriculture at high levels of production and employment.³²

The priority given these issues by the officers was reflected in much of the debate that dominated the three-day convention over resolution number 31. This resolution gave support to District Two in its initiation of a referendum recall of International President Fadling for setting aside the constitution in his suspension of Jack Greenall.³³ Even before the resolution hit the floor, Fadling had provided, in his main speech to the convention, a lengthy justification for the suspension (see above this chapter). But he had cleverly been placed on the agenda just ahead of Harvey Murphy who lambasted the IWA for being among the first to accede to Taft-Hartley, thereby weakening the general struggle against it. Similarly, Murphy pointed out, "Yours was the first Union that had its officers plugged at the American boarder. Today we can't get across neither." Murphy went on:

It is a bad day when a bunch of us cannot attend the International Conventions and the Executive Board Meetings of the Unions we built. That is going to mean something to Canadian workers because we are not getting our rights, and we are not getting our say, and we are not getting our influence... If those delegates going across to your Convention hadn't been plugged by the American Immigration, perhaps the Convention wouldn't have voted to sign those affidavits.³⁴

No sooner had Murphy sat down than Larsen popped up and gave a rambling dissertation on the Marshall Plan, the Wallace candidacy, Taft-Hartley and District One's recent fight with the CCL, as a preamble to his call for support of the Fadling recall petition. Northern Washington District Council, always a "left-wing stronghold,"³⁵ had already pulled out of industry-wide negotiations on the grounds that the Northwest Regional Negotiating Committee had endorsed Taft-Hartley.³⁶ The recall move was District Two's next step in its retaliatory action against the International for dumping their leader, Larsen.

The debate on the recall motion was long and arduous. It comprises fully 34 pages of the transcript of the proceedings. Greenall, a visitor to the convention (not a delegate),

was granted the right to speak at the very end of the debate. He read to the delegates his eloquent response to Fadling expressing his views on Taft-Hartley. He explicitly refused to take a position on the resolution itself, however, partly because he was the central figure in the dispute, but as well because he likely disagreed with the issue being brought to the floor of the convention at all. In 1965 Greenall would claim that the District Executive foolishly advanced this controversial recall proposal, which had no chance of ultimate success, in an effort to mask its lack of a real programme to offer the membership for 1948.³⁷ There is an element of truth in Greenall's analysis. More precisely, District leaders were trying to reconstitute their position in the eyes of the rank-and-file, and the labour movement in general, as militant, fighting trade union leaders. Their leadership had sustained considerable damage during 1947 as a result of the weak strike vote and subsequent capitulation in negotiations under the rule of the ICA Act (1947). By signing on to District Two's recall, they could at one and the same time retaliate against Fadling for his similar compliance with Taft-Hartley, and against his white bloc allies in New Westminster for their refusal to go along with District Policy during negotiations. To this extent, then, Greenall's assessment was correct. With a similar scenario likely to unfold during industry negotiations in 1948 as in 1947, and for as long as the white bloc held sway over the sawmill workers, the immediate task at hand was indeed to deal with internal union politics as a prerequisite to regaining any real momentum on the collective bargaining front.

A most interesting exchange between George Mitchell and Pritchett, during debate on the recall resolution, illustrates well the predicament of the District officers. Speaking against the resolution, Mitchell condemned the District leaders and the delegates for wasting time with a recall referendum when the urgent task was to put into effect the "slogans around this hall—'No More Exception of 40-Hour Week.'... 'Next in 1948 the Union Shop in Lumber.'" If the union were serious about these gains, exclaimed Mitchell, "we are not going to have much time to push ballot boxes around in the next few months."³⁸

Pritchett, in the course of his long oration in favour of the resolution, answered Mitchell's challenge. The matter of compliance could not be brushed aside by "pointing to the slogans on the wall and saying that we are wasting our time and wasting money..." If the union allowed itself to fall into the trap of compliance with reactionary bills like Taft-Hartley, "those slogans around the wall will never be realized...and they are not worth the paper they are written on unless we fight for our civil rights."³⁹

Pritchett was about to go on to answer Alsbury's charge that the District had already defied the majority will of the CCL convention and been forced to retract, yet was now again about to deny the majority will of the International convention. Mitchell, obviously flustered, interrupted on a point of order:

I want to know if District No. 1 haven't complied with Bill 39 under the sections of the certification, and if we haven't complied and used the Bill to charge bosses with unfair labor practices, and isn't it true that the British Columbia Federation under Bro. Pritchett's leadership as Secretary that he has taken nomination to help administer the Board under Bill 39.⁴⁰

Pritchett unruffled, then proceeded to answer both Alsbury's and Mitchell's accusations with the same point:

As I was saying, there are officers and members of District 1 in Convention that have disagreed with certain proposals that came before these conventions—disagreed violently—but the majority carried, and those officers went out and continued to disagree even to the extent of defeating a strike vote when a strike vote was ordered by a majority.⁴¹

The implication was clear with respect to Mitchell's charge. If Pritchett and the BCFL had been forced to comply with the provisions and participate in the administration of the Act, local 1-357 was largely to blame for its role in weakening the woodworkers' bargaining position in the midst of the broader struggle against the legislation. The Fadling recall referendum, though unlikely to succeed, would hopefully consolidate the rank-and-file around the civil rights issue, and be a step toward rooting out the right-wing opposition and restoring District One to a position of strength in negotiations. If the Pritchett-Dalskog executive could not do that, then their right to continue to lead the District would clearly be

open to challenge. If, in practice, they could perform no differently as bargaining agents than any other compliant union leadership, there might be good reason to replace them given the current anti-communism that was overtaking the labour movement; and particularly if a non-communist proviso found its way into the ICA Act during the next round of amendments.⁴² But, ironically, the District leaders' ability to rally the rank-and-file behind its political programme had been seriously undermined by their participation over the previous eight years in the same processes of institutionalization and accommodation to a legalistic industrial relations system that had led to Fadling's compliance with Taft-Hartley. A strategy of organizing around signed agreements and consolidating industry-wide bargaining through the use of state structures had loosened the District Executive's natural linkages with the rank-and-file and weakened plant and sub-local organization. Moreover, the District executive's confusion over the correct strategy to pursue during the 1946 strike in response to a rapidly shifting political and industrial relations context had done much to pave the way for the white bloc seizure of the New Westminster local, now posing such a threat to their hold on office. Regardless of its fine theoretical logic, the plan to make the recall resolution the centre-piece of the convention agenda, apparently hatched jointly by Larsen, Murphy and Pritchett, was poorly conceived. It ignored the problematic relationship with the rank-and-file, and laid the District leaders open to those very damaging charges of disruption that Mitchell had raised.

The resolution in support of District Two passed the convention with only New Westminster and Kamloops locals, and two stray Victoria delegates, voting against it.⁴³ Fadling and George Brown took it as their signal to begin a major offensive, with aid from the local press and radio, against a District leadership soon up for reelection. The Vancouver Sun kicked off the campaign with an editorial immediately following the convention entitled "Whither the Woodworkers?" In it, District leaders were harshly criticized for their stand on the Marshall Plan, the Abbott program and International compliance with Taft-Hartley, and for trying to lead their members out of the mainstream of

the North American labour movement "on the road that leads to Moscow." The editor concluded, "In the next week or two, as the election of officers for the union proceeds in B.C. sawmills and camps, the actual dues payers will have a chance to show whether they realize where they are being led—and why."⁴⁴

On 13 January, the Sun, on its editorial page, ran the full text of Pritchett's response, together with its own criticism of it. The "road to Moscow" issue, Pritchett began, was wholly false. The District position was squarely in line with the majority of people as evidenced by a Gallop poll showing 63 percent favoured aid to Europe being given through the United Nations. That was also the position, Pritchett noted, of CIO leader Philip Murray. Lifting a section directly out of Buck's December article on the Abbott Plan in National Affairs Monthly, Pritchett explained that even the Whaley-Eaton Business Advice Service agreed that the Abbott programme aimed at closer integration of the Canadian with the American economy, primarily as a source of raw materials. In addition, the IWA International, Pritchett argued, while in favour of obtaining certification through the NLRB, was still on record as being against the Taft-Hartley bill in principle, as were 11 powerful CIO unions, and the CIO executive.⁴⁵

In the struggle for the hearts and minds of the woodworker rank-and-file now underway, it was very important to Pritchett that his District, in standing up for trade union and democratic rights at home and abroad, not be seen as out of step with mainstream thought. It was equally important for the other side, which by now consisted of an informal alliance of International officers, local white bloc members, the press, employers and government officials, to portray the District leaders as agents of a foreign power with objectives at odds with the needs of ordinary workers in a democratic and free country.

Through January the campaign against the District One leadership built. On 21 January, in an advertisement in the still strike-bound Province newspaper, the International announced a new radio programme to be broadcast each Monday evening over station CJOR, entitled, "The Voice of the International Woodworkers of America."⁴⁶ On the 26

January broadcast, First Vice-President Al Hartung offered his interpretation of the Greenall affair. This disruptive tactic was designed, voiced Hartung, to keep the workers' minds distracted during negotiations. "It could be that Joe Stalin feels it would hurt his cause if the workers received more wages and better working conditions," baited Hartung. He warned workers not to be distracted by a "phoney petition" from the central issues of wages, hours and conditions. That was the lesson to be learned from the example of New Westminster the radio broadcast continued. There, an enlightened membership had replaced the "fair-haired boys" of the District Council "with men from the plant who were interested in gaining wages, hours and working conditions." Since then, 1-357 had doubled its membership, cleaned up its financial mess and paid off its strike debts, solely due to the policies of the men recently nominated for District president and secretary, Alsbury and Mitchell.⁴⁷

Stuart Research Service broadcaster Bob Morrison got into the act, boosting the white bloc slate in his weekly radio programme. In his 8 January broadcast, Morrison read the Vancouver Sun editorial, "Whither the Woodworkers?", quoted George Brown's criticism of District One's foreign policy resolution, and agreed with George Mitchell's hope that internal dissension in the IWA "over matters far removed from the field of collective bargaining will not be reflected in the relations between the operators and the bargaining agents of the employees."⁴⁸ Similar support came from Thomas Braidwood, past-president of the Vancouver Board of Trade, the ubiquitous Walter Owen, K.C., and the Vancouver Province in a series of prominent articles.⁴⁹

In the midst of the anti-communist campaign, District leaders did not back away from the issues which were proving so controversial. At the end of January, the "District" candidate for secretary-treasurer, Jack Forbes, penned a lengthy diatribe for the Lumber Worker entitled "The Marshall Plan—A Weapon of Slavery."⁵⁰ Pritchett took to the airwaves over CKWX on 11 February, blasting the "boss lumbermen" for meddling in District elections, and excoriating the local white bloc and International leaders for playing

along. He ended his talk with the regrettable news that the union's predictions concerning the impact of the "Abboft Austerity Plan" were actually being realized. News from the UE in Ontario and the Steelworkers in Vancouver indicated that layoffs were already underway as a result of the diversion of raw materials for processing in the United States. He warned that British Columbia sawmill workers would be next in line with the inevitable opening up of raw log exports across the border.⁵¹

With the International office now firmly back in the white bloc camp, George Brown's campaign against the District's interior organizers was renewed. Following the District convention in January, Tommy MacDonald and Les Urquhart in Kelowna, and Mike Freylinger, organizing in Prince George, were removed from office for supporting the recall resolution and voting against compliance with the Taft-Hartley Act and against the Marshall Plan. These firings were upheld in April by a CIO investigating committee headed by the notorious American anti-communist, Adolph Germer. In the interim Germer steered a motion for full support of the Marshall Plan past the opposition of "progressive" board member Ilmar Koivunen at the International Executive.⁵²

By the end of February, the anti-red campaign in British Columbia was in full swing, with local 1-357 charging that over \$9000 was not accounted for in the District's accounts for 1946-47. On 15 March the District Executive ordered an independent audit of the 1946-47 accounts to counter the charges.⁵³ The New Westminster leaders had learned from local experience what political benefits could accrue over the issue of sloppy financial management, and decided to raise it at the District level during their bid for executive office. The issue would reemerge in April and drag on through yet another official investigation into the summer of 1948, complicating the entire negotiation process.⁵⁴ Its immediate effect, however, was to help erode support for the District slate in the referendum election then underway. As noted above, Dalskog was elected over Alsbury with only 66 percent of the total vote. While Pritchett fared somewhat better against Whalen, Jack Forbes polled only 62 percent in beating George Mitchell in the election for secretary-treasurer.⁵⁵ In the

two important sawmill locals, the white bloc continued to hold its support during January and February elections. The local executive was easily reelected in New Westminster, while Lloyd Whalen polled a substantial 1048 votes in his bid for 1-217 president against Vern Carlyle's 1848.⁵⁶

The International-led attack against the British Columbia communists during the early months of 1948 was but a precursor of a general CIO campaign to purge itself of Party influence. Once again, as with Taft-Hartley compliance, the IWA was at the forefront. Philip Murray led the charge in mid-March by removing the powerful ILWU chief, Harry Bridges, from his position as CIO regional director in northern California. That move, Levenstein estimates, "West Coast anti-communists rightly regarded as a clarion call for a wholesale offensive against the leftists."⁵⁷ That same month, the Marshall Plan received formal approval from the US Congress as the Economic Cooperation Act of 1948.⁵⁸

Harry Bridges had been a longstanding associate of Pritchett. As west coast director he had helped bring the woodworkers into the CIO. During the early days of the IWA on the Pacific coast, Bridges had worked closely with Pritchett, then president of the union, to consolidate the Canadian's position against the conservative Columbia River opposition.⁵⁹ As Len de Caux, a CIO publicist and organizer of the day, remembers them, they were part of a new breed of leaders which had upset the "closed-door pattern" of the old labour bureaucracy: "From the west, and from the left, a handsome Harry and a hardnosed one: Harold Pritchett of Woodworkers, Harry Bridges of Longshoremen."⁶⁰ Before 1940, when John L. Lewis restricted Bridges' activities to California to accommodate the right wing of the IWA-CIO, the two Harrys were able to collaborate.⁶¹ About the same time, Pritchett was finally barred permanently from the United States.⁶² Pritchett's close association with the intense syndicalist, Bridges,⁶³ raises some interesting speculations concerning Pritchett's own conception of the relationship between party and union, politics and industrial relations. Certainly the direction District One followed under

Pritchett's leadership after the war indicates he may have sympathized to some extent with Bridges' conception of the union as a surrogate party.⁶⁴

In February 1948, a state of Washington House Un-American Activities Committee heard over 40 witnesses label Bridges, Pritchett and other top IWA leaders as Communist party members.⁶⁵ Bridges' ouster by Murray the following month was a powerful reminder to Pritchett that a whole history of struggle to bring woodworkers the benefits of industrial unionism within the structures of the CIO and the Roosevelt New Deal, was now at stake.

If the Longshoremen's union had been Pritchett's chief ally during his stint as International president, the woodworkers' head now found his most solid support on the left wing of the labour movement in Mine Mill and its chief, Harvey Murphy. By April 1948, Murphy, like Bridges, was under the gun of the anti-communists, in this case in the CCL. The events leading up to this confrontation are recounted by Abella. In the late fall of 1947, as a result of the Taft-Hartley restriction against communist involvement in American unions, the Mine Mill International sent several of its organizers who were Party members into the Ontario gold mines. In February, Senator Robert Taft brought the issue to the attention of the Canadian government by referring to the exodus north of communists as an indication of the success of the law he had sponsored. The Mackenzie King government, without any protest from the CCL, announced it would seek to restrict such immigration. Mine Mill International, with the reluctant support of Philip Murray, protested against any such restriction on its Canadian operations, and sought further support from CCL officials. The CCL brass, anxious to clear the communists out of Mine Mill, refused to cooperate. Instead, they wrote Murray and all CIO affiliates explaining their position in light of the 1947 convention condemnation of communism. Moreover, on 5 March, the CCL had, in timely fashion, submitted its annual memorandum to the federal government in which it praised Canadian military cooperation with the United States and strongly endorsed the Marshall Plan. Abella claims that the federal government, "taking its

cue from the Congress position," arrested American organizer Reid Robinson and held him for deportation on charges of advocating the violent overthrow of the Canadian government. This over-reaction put the somewhat embarrassed CCL leaders on the defensive and "gave the initiative back" to leftists in Mine Mill such as Harvey Murphy.⁶⁶

Murphy had already made an issue of the IWA and American immigration problems at the District One convention. In mid-March, just as Mine Mill was fighting possible restrictions from the Canadian side, the US attorney-general reversed his recent decision which had granted an appeal from Dalskog, Melsness and McCuish for entry into the country. Once again the three communists from District One were to be barred from the United States.⁶⁷ Whether there was any direct connection between this action and that of the Canadian government is not known. What was clear to Murphy, however, was that CCL officials had now helped precipitate similar problems for American trade unionists with the Canadian immigration department. At the April labour lobby of the British Columbia Federation of Labour in Victoria, he took the opportunity, once again, to sound off on the issue. His drunken oration, known in communist circles as "Murphy's Underwear Speech,"⁶⁸ called CCL officials to task for their role in the Robinson affair. Bill Mahoney, in charge of the CCL's anti-communist campaign in British Columbia, used some of Murphy's more colourful remarks as a pretext to walk out of the labour lobby with a loyal delegation in train, and to start proceedings against the Mine Mill leader.⁶⁹ The outcome of these proceedings would have important ramifications for District One in the coming months. So too would the failure of the Federation's lobby to sway the government on the issue of labour legislation to be tabled in the assembly the following week. That failure was also, in part, a product of the rift that opened between the CCL and communist labourites the previous fall.

In November 1947, shortly after laying charges against District One and before a full retraction was received, the CCL executive took the opportunity to write its affiliates asking them to make independent nominations for representation on the new provincial

Labour Relations Board, if they were not happy with the Federation choices.⁷⁰ On 13 January, Wismer appointed his new LRB under the chairmanship of J. Pitcairn Hogg. As CCL representative, Wismer chose Harry Strange, nominated by a small Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees local, in disregard of his supposed agreement with the Federation that Mackenzie would serve on its behalf.⁷¹ Given that part of the new Board's mandate from Wismer was to design amendments to make the ICA Act (1947) more workable,⁷² the rejection of the CCL nominee was considered by Pritchett to be an indication of more trouble to come.⁷³ Indeed, he was quite correct.

In December, Wismer had told the Mine Mill district convention he favoured making the supervised strike ballot discretionary, as it had been prior to 1947.⁷⁴ In late January, Finance Minister Anscombe calmed business fears by stating that the supervised ballot would remain as it was.⁷⁵ Not to be outmaneuvered, Pritchett announced that the IWA had no objection to government supervision per se as it actually strengthened the effect of any vote as an expression of the real will of the membership. But, he reserved, any vote should be run by the union according to its constitution, with supervision only by government officials.⁷⁶ Given the weakness of the 1947 anti-Bill 39 campaign, the recent meddling of the CCL in Federation affairs, and the renewed demands coming from organized business groups for even tighter restrictions on unions, Pritchett was whistling in the wind.

On 27 February, Hugh Dalton of the CMA, and T.G. Norris, Vice-President of the Vancouver Board of Trade, presented a brief to the LRB on behalf of the usual group of forest industry, mining and other business associations. Among the more significant recommendations was a proposal for an LRB-ordered vote of all employees affected on any employer proposal for settlement of a strike. Another would have given the LRB power to revoke the certification of any trade union on strike illegally. On 27 March, a further missive was sent directly to Wismer suggesting certain changes in government policy with respect to labour, most notably that the ICA Act (1947) be amended to include a Taft-

Hartley-type provision that would exclude from recognition under the Act any trade union whose officers had not filed a non-communist affidavit with the LRB.⁷⁷ The employers did not win Wismer's support on this last point, though some Coalition members announced their intention to fight for such an amendment when the bill came before the legislature.⁷⁸

Even without an affidavit provision, Bill 87, as the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1947, Amendment Act, 1948 was known, cut far deeper into trade union power than had Bill 39 the year before. The editor of the B.C. Lumber Worker bemoaned that, "Bill 39 provided the pattern and was the entering wedge, but foul though it was, its implications were moderate to what has followed as an inevitable consequence of permitting it to remain in full force and effect."⁷⁹ The granting of the two key employer demands for a discretionary LRB-ordered vote on an employer offer during a strike, and for cancellation of certification as a consequence of striking illegally, more seriously undermined a union's strike weapon than did any of the voting provisions or penalties implemented the previous year. These changes were hardly ameliorated by the shortening of the minimum period prior to striking from 79 to 57 days after the start of negotiations. Furthermore, the employer push to have the unions fully incorporated under the law was carried a step further with the removal of section 47 of the Act, clearing the way for civil litigation for any alleged breach of a collective agreement.⁸⁰

IWA compliance with the new labour act in 1947 had been a major setback for the British Columbia labour movement and played a major role in paving the way for Bill 87. IWA compliance with the ICA Act (1948), however, would be tantamount to compliance with the Taft-Hartley Act and would seriously discredit the leadership of District One in its growing battle with the white bloc. And with the CCL operatives gradually eroding the power bases of left-wing unionism in British Columbia, control of the all important woodworkers' union was a strategic necessity for both sides in the fight. The outcome of

the 1948 District negotiations, to be conducted under the newly-amended Act, would be critical.

Chapter Eleven

1947-48: Regrouping

District Council One met in its quarterly session on 19 October 1947, at the height of the Greenall affair. The BCFL fight against the ICA Act (1947) was ostensibly still raging under Pritchett's leadership, in spite of the IWA settlement. A week before, the LRB had been given legal clearance to proceed with prosecution of the steelworkers, and any others illegally on strike, which at the time included furniture and packinghouse workers and boilermakers.¹ A long discussion ensued regarding the International position on the Taft-Hartley bill. Pritchett, pointing to the current British Columbia strikes, urged the need for economic action of the trade union movement to defeat these bills. IWA acceptance of Taft-Hartley contradicted and undermined the fight against the ICA Act (1947) in British Columbia. If the American union movement were defeated on Taft-Hartley, it would not be long before British Columbia and the rest of Canada adopted a similar provision, Pritchett predicted. Mitchell and Alsbury once again argued that District One was already in compliance with the Act inasmuch as it was using the certification and unfair labour practices provisions. Dalskog jumped to the defence. Yes, the District was using the Act, but had never said openly, and before the public, that it was complying with the law. "We have requested the government," Dalskog argued rather opaquely, "to prosecute employers, and that puts ammunition in our pockets to be used against the Bill."²

In the minds of District One leaders on both sides, the interconnection between Taft-Hartley and the ICA Act (1947) was very immediate. For Alsbury and Mitchell, the British Columbia law, while bad, was to be obeyed until changed through conventional political channels. The use of collective bargaining and economic action to try to effect political change went beyond the kind of pure-and-simple vision of trade unionism they held. If Fadling could use defiance of the law as a vehicle to rid himself of communists on his executive board, then so might the New Westminster faction use the issue to further their goal of seizing control of the District. The ICA Act (1947) did not provide as neat a

mechanism as did the American law with its affidavit provision. The British Columbia white bloc would have to pursue different tactics. On the one hand they would try to tar the District leaders with the Taft-Hartley anti-communist brush. On the other hand, they would make it as difficult as possible for District One to defy the Act through economic action. The passage of Bill 87^a would of course make their whole project much more straight forward.

From the perspective of the District officers, by the fall of 1947 they had lost a battle over negotiations, but were still engaged in the larger war against the ICA Act (1947) through the BCFL, and through the localized economic actions of their own union. Together with the Fadling recall, those actions were designed, in part, to regain some momentum amongst the rank-and-file for the broader union agenda. The passage of Bill 87 in April solidified the linkage between Taft-Hartley and the British Columbia Act and set the stage for the coming struggle with the industry and the white bloc.

Nineteen forty-eight negotiations would be about which vision of trade unionism, which approach to industrial relations, was going to prevail in District One. What made the position of Pritchett and company so untenable was that they were swimming against a tide that up to 1945 they had quite willingly allowed to sweep them along toward the institutionalization of industrial relations practice. Only when that tide smashed up against the shores of Taft-Hartley, the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, did the District Council decide it was time to jump ship. Unfortunately for them, there would soon be nowhere to jump. But in the last half of 1947, with the spring offensive for the 40-hour week clear in their memories, there still appeared to be some room to manoeuvre. The master negotiations concluded, District One continued its project of broadening the process and content of collective bargaining by attempting to bring several outstanding sectional issues into the framework of the master agreement through on-the-job action. At the same time they might add a little more weight to the larger fight against "Taft-Hartleyism" in British Columbia.

As the workforce in wood expanded dramatically after the war, while trade union practice was growing more bureaucratic, the District cadre was not unaware of potential dangers. The more the process of contract negotiations became centralized and focussed on the bargaining table, the weaker the union's position became with respect to issues that were not of an industry-wide nature. One of the lessons of the 1946 strike that Pritchett alluded to in his frank assessment was the need to broaden out and decentralize responsibilities, to involve more members more directly in the process. The 40-hour week struggle was partly a response to that recognition, and District leaders were pleased with its success. Bert Melsness expressed this feeling well in his assessment of the 1947 settlement:

The 40-hour week was not won by talking in negotiations or by proving the point through statistics...the pressure of job action forced the employers to recognize the fact that the workers were going to have this desirable condition of work regardless...action on the job was echoed in the negotiations chamber.

Similarly, the operating engineers won a special category wage revision because they had "showed a desire to fight and were forcing their committees in the various operations to take up their grievances." Conversely, the inability of the negotiations committee to win the demands of other special classifications such as shingle packers and sawyers, cook and bunkhouse workers, and train crews was, according to Melsness, "the result of inactivity on a broad basis amongst these workers."³

Shingle sawyers and packers had, in fact, been agitating through their particular plants for some months prior to the 1947 negotiations. Spokesman for local 1-217, Vern Carlyle, maintained they had been holding back in the interests of the whole union. But skilled shingle workers were growing restive. On the floor of the January 1947 District convention, Carlyle demanded the union take immediate action, before the master negotiations, to address their concerns. He noted that since the union had become organized more attention had been paid to raising the wages of unskilled and semi-skilled workers. That fact, combined with the deterioration of timber quality (related in part to the

export of the better cedar logs to the United States), changes in grading rules and production methods had caused a severe reduction in the wages of sawyers. Moreover, TURB estimated that shingle mill wage increases in general, including common labour rates, had fallen behind those in sawmills during the course of the war by 7.6 percent. Carlyle considered the situation "very serious" for the union inasmuch as "if the I.W.A. is not able to gain for her workers in that industry satisfactory wages and condition, we have no doubt in our minds but what the A.F.L. will line up with the bosses and give them certain results."⁴

Clearly alarmed, the union immediately demanded guaranteed hourly wages for shingle sawyers and packers, an increase in the piece rate, and pay on an hourly basis for machine preparation, to be negotiated under the section of the contract allowing revision of rates once annually by mutual consent. Stuart refused to consider the demands. He interpreted the wage-opener clause to apply only to individual plants where anomalies existed. The union was asking for an across-the-board adjustment for the entire shingle industry, which could be considered only when the master agreement came up for revision.⁵

When it did come up, however, the settlement excluded any special consideration of shingle workers. Stuart's only concession was a suggestion that in cases of exceptionally poor timber, or, where earnings of sawyers and packers fell for reasons beyond their control, plant crews could seek a remedy through their grievance committees.⁶

The union, however, could not rest easy with that little. The shingle sector, out of which Pritchett himself had come, had been the original nucleus of the union. With growing disenchantment in the two large milling locals it was important to keep the shingle workers on side by responding to real rank-and-file concerns. One way to counter the drift toward compliance with legalism in the mills would be to demonstrate that militant on-the-job action could still get results. Moreover, Pritchett himself was actively involved through

the Federation in the anti-Bill 39 campaign, just then reaching its peak, and wanted to keep his union in the fray after the industry-wide settlement.

On 9 July, only six days after signing the 1947 agreement, the District Policy Committee sent a memo to all members. Taking Stuart at his word, since the industry would not negotiate the shingle demands on a District basis, the union would have to negotiate with each operation individually. The Policy Committee instructed that these demands be presented by plant committees immediately, and be backed up by stop-work meetings of entire crews.⁷ Carlyle, president of 1-217, wrote all his shingle chief stewards on 10 July providing more explicit instructions: call an immediate meeting of the crew, elect a negotiating committee, and, "while your committee is interviewing management, sawyers and packers and the whole crew if possible wait around outside the office to hear results." This action was to be repeated once each day until a settlement was reached.⁸

Stuart, soon apprised of union plans, wrote to Pritchett a week later denying that his suggestion regarding individual plant grievances was to be "interpreted as an invitation to union representatives" to negotiate the demand for guaranteed hourly wages in every shingle plant at once. Definitely, the shingle manufacturers were not prepared to make any further across the board concessions beyond 12½ cents. "The contract was concluded and the wage clause initialled by both parties on that basis," was Stuart's last word on the matter.⁹ The industry's categorical refusal to negotiate did not deter District One.

Through July and August the union proceeded with its stop-work strategy at various plants, thereby contributing in a small way to the effort to oppose the ICA Act (1947). Employer representatives contended that these so-called half-hour grievance meetings were, in fact, "activities intended to restrict or limit production," and therefore in violation of the ICA Act (1947), as well as the collective agreement.¹⁰ Stuart tried to assure the industry that the union's tactics were not paying off inasmuch as the shingle operators had refused any concessions and employees were being docked for time off the job.¹¹ In fact, the union's tactics did produce results. On 18 August the shingle operators

agreed to resume industry-wide talks. Three days later, the fight against the ICA Act (1947) entered a new phase when over 300 members of the United Steelworkers of America struck five Vancouver iron and machinery plants prior to taking a government-supervised strike vote.¹²

Having forced the shingle operators back into negotiations, it was another matter for the District Committee to wrest substantial concessions from them. Though the union offered to drop its demand for a guaranteed hourly wage in exchange for a boost in the piece rate, pay for preparation time and a bonus for sawing unbolted timber (timber not already cut up into short pieces), the industry remained opposed to any across-the-board increase beyond some compensation for preparation time.¹³ The industry also threatened to halt further negotiations unless the union terminated its job-action tactics. In order to remove any obstacle to a successful settlement, the District Policy Committee recommended that locals call off stop-work meetings. In some plants these actions were leading to division on crews between the sawyers and packers, and common labourers who were not covered by union demands.¹⁴

Perhaps an even more significant factor in determining District strategy at this point was the announcement the day before, on 2 September 1947, that Premier Hart had launched the "second largest mass prosecution in B.C. history," by approving charges against 144 steelworkers, two union officials and two USW locals.¹⁵ Union members and officials, if found guilty, could have been fined \$50 and \$75 for each day of the illegal strike, and the union as a whole, \$125 per day. Though District One's sudden halt to job action may only have been coincidental, subsequent events in the shingle negotiations indicate the steelworkers' case had a salutary effect on the IWA.

Two more meetings with Stuart resulted in further compromise by the union on the piece-rate increase, but continued refusal by the industry to consider a blanket raise. On 10 September, with the operators willing to concede only some unspecified recognition for preparation time, it was mutually agreed to proceed to binding arbitration as a way of

settling all matters under consideration.¹⁶ That decision effectively removed the shingle crews from any further direct involvement in the dispute, or from any further participation in the larger action against the ICA Act (1947). It would be fully six weeks before the arbitration board met to consider the case. In the interim, the shingle operators had time to reassess the situation. With board chairman J. Edwin Eades pressing the employers to confirm the points to be arbitrated, the shingle operators held a series of meetings. They assessed the likelihood of a strike if they backed out of the hearings, and the degree of solidarity to be expected in their own ranks in resisting one. It was generally agreed that the industry lacked a solid front. Several operators would likely cave in if a strike resulted from refusal to go ahead with the arbitration. Still, though accusations of bad faith and an industry-wide strike were considered likely consequences, the operators' policy committee was swayed by the outspoken and aggressive representative from BSW's Red Band operation. Charles Plant strongly resented the notion of a guaranteed hourly wage, and he was quite prepared to stand up to a strike. As far as Plant was concerned, the indecisive operators could make their own deal with the union.¹⁷ Accordingly, the industry counsel appeared before the board, argued ingenuously that the union had already dropped the issue of a guaranteed rate, and claimed the operators had never agreed to arbitrate that demand nor an increase in piece rates, both major matters already settled in master negotiations. Only the issue of preparation time outside of established shifts was currently a matter of dispute.¹⁸

The shingle operators, obviously a disunited group, had apparently been rushed into arbitration by the union and Stuart, without full consultation or consideration.¹⁹ Stuart had initiated the arbitration and confirmed in writing to the union the matters in dispute.²⁰ The union had then waited six weeks to hear that the industry was no longer interested in binding arbitration. Here was an obvious issue over which to strike against an evidently divided industry with some reasonable hope of success. Unfortunately for the union, the shingle crews themselves were divided. Furthermore, while prior to the war strikes during

the term of agreement were common place and an accepted part of the industrial relations process, by the fall of 1947 they had been ruled out. In April, the loggers had taken their Saturday "holidays" with a feeling of considerable immunity from legal consequences. The moral authority of PC 1003 had worn thin, and the imposition of charges and prosecutions under wartime emergency regulations designed to limit interruption of production had appeared highly unlikely. By October, that moral authority had been transferred to provincial jurisdiction by Bill 39, and given renewed application to peace-time conditions under the ICA Act (1947). Trial runs were in progress against two unions. As well, the coercive nature of the Act had been internalized by a sizeable proportion of the rank-and-file, particularly in the sawmill locals. Adherence to the law had been adopted as a matter of policy by the New Westminster executive. Fadling's suspension of Jack Greenall on 25 October only served to exacerbate the state of internal tension in the District. Half-hour stoppages in scattered plants were one thing. The District leadership was not in a position to withstand mass prosecutions of shingle workers following a full-scale illegal strike, with all of the political consequences entailed. At any rate, the prosecution of the steelworkers' rank-and-file, together with the six week delay in the shingle case, had no doubt dampened whatever enthusiasm had existed amongst the crews for job action in July and August.

On 31 October, a week after the collapse of arbitration proceedings, the District settled with Stuart Research. There would be no guaranteed wage. The piece-work rate for sawyers was adjusted, though only half as much as originally requested, with an additional piece-work (not hourly) increment to cover preparation time. Premiums for sawing unbolted timber were left to individual plant committees to negotiate up to a maximum of two cents per square.²¹

These gains were minimal. Nevertheless, the union could claim a partial victory inasmuch as militant action by plant employees had forced the shingle operators back to the bargaining table to make an industry-wide adjustment over and above the 12½ cents per

hour—something they had adamantly opposed in June. This victory, however, would be the last of its type the District leaders could legitimately claim.

The limited success of stop-work action in the shingle mills encouraged the District to attempt similar tactics in the much safer milieu of the logging camps. Trainmen, who were responsible not only for hauling logs, but also logging crews to and from work, customarily worked 10 hours per day at a lower hourly rate than paid for logging work of comparable skill.²² Moreover, the union contended that between 1934 and 1944, trainmen had steadily lost ground to loggers insofar as most wage adjustments had been in terms of a flat amount per day.²³ Since the advent of industry-wide negotiations the union had failed to win any special adjustment. Stuart considered the union case to be phoney since the actual take-home wages of train crews were amongst the highest in camp for an allegedly less exacting job. As evidence he noted that trainmen had stuck to their jobs during the war years when many opportunities had existed for them to change.²⁴ He was adamant that trainmen's hourly wages had to be kept lower than the pay of comparable jobs in the woods. If not, trainmen would then take home more per day than loggers who would begin clamouring to catch up.²⁵

No matter how legitimate its case, the union had a poor bargaining record on this issue. The employers remained adamant knowing that a majority of train workers would not carry out the instructions of the union, which entailed strict adherence to the eight-hour day. As part of its effort to shore up its position as bargaining agent with the rank-and-file, the District leadership made a decisive move in the fall of 1947. Since most companies were working their train crews over eight hours without the agreement of the union, crews were instructed to implement the eight-hour day in order to disrupt logging operations and force the operators to open up the wage scale for renegotiation.²⁶

The problem with this tactic was that the train crews were extremely reluctant to cut their take-home pay by reducing hours. But they might be prepared to do so only for a short time in order to pressure the companies to negotiate.²⁷ At Western Forest Industries

in Cowichan Lake district, trainmen quit work on 14 October while union officials negotiated for a wage revision. Unfortunately, while the company was still considering the proposal two days later, the trainmen approached management and asked to return to their normal hours. The company refused to reopen wage talks.²⁸

Several conferences were held in the Courtenay and Duncan locals in the latter part of October, and plans made to implement the eight-hour day in several of the big camps between 10 and 19 November.²⁹ At BSW's Menzies Bay camp, two crew members were dismissed when they acted on union advice to work the eight-hour day. T.J. Noble threatened that if the matter were taken any further with the union he would ask the Department of Railways to suspend the men's certificates. Logging superintendent J.W. Challenger retaliated by laying off one entire side of the operation. A reduction in production, he explained, was warranted by the eight-hour train crew day. It remained closed until January, though the eight-hour day was never put into effect.³⁰ As in its 1942 fight with the union over recognition, BSW was quite prepared to curtail or sacrifice production at its secondary Menzies Bay operation in order to stop union action which might have affected major camps in the Alberni area (see chapter three above).

With train crews themselves reluctant participants in the union strategy, it was too much to expect significant support from logging crews in the face of such employer reaction. Out of 17 operations targeted by the union, only 10 or 11 had participated in job action. In general, train crews were reluctant to go for the shorter week without an increase in pay first. Dalskog reported to his executive that the whole strategy of pressuring the employers to open wage talks had failed. During the first week of December a special trainmen's conference was held in Nanaimo to review the situation. The conference attracted delegates from only one-half the operations with train crews. Nevertheless, it drew up another militant plan including on-the-job action in support of a District Council request to Stuart to reopen talks on an industry basis. Though some crews favoured

dropping the matter until the next round of industry negotiations, Dalskog felt that the only way to force the issue onto the table in the spring was "through action taken now."³¹

Stuart, making use of his usual channels of information, reported to his clients on 6 December that IWA job action tactics were "not bringing any comfort to those crews who have heeded the union's advice." Most crews were not complying, and those who had were suffering substantial loss of earnings. Union officials, he noted, had admitted at their recent conference that this job action was badly timed. There would be no negotiations with the IWA on this matter he assured the operators.³² When Dalskog wrote Stuart on 9 December 1947 demanding immediate negotiations to adjust trainmen wage schedules at 12 specified companies, Stuart politely informed him that the matter had been settled with the signing of the master contract.³³

All that remained, in lieu of economic action by the rank-and-file, was arbitration. But without Stuart's willingness even to open negotiations, the only thing left to arbitrate was the BSW dismissal of trainmen Callander and McEntee. Hearings were conducted through January-March. Stuart noted that the union had taken advantage of the case "to stage a full dress presentation" of their arguments regarding trainmen's wages in testimony covering several hundred pages.³⁴ Dalskog reported to his executive that the District had been able to extend the scope of the arbitration from one of unfair dismissal. If the board considered all the evidence, the union would be able to utilize the proceedings "to an advantage in our whole struggle to achieve the just demands of the trainmen." But, he continued, "Arbitration in itself isn't something that we are going to have a very good chance of accomplishing anything on, unless in conjunction with it we have the activities on the job as well."³⁵

In this instance, the union did not have even the minimal support it had in the shingle case, where the threat of strike action had some effect in moving the operators. Despite the creative approach of the union, the arbitration proceeded like any other dismissal hearing. In the end, even the union nominee found in favour of the company's.

right to dismiss. He ruled that on the union's most important point, company discrimination against employees for union activity, "I can find no proof that they did anything except take full advantage of an excellent opportunity."³⁶ The only small concession salvaged by the union from the trainmen debacle was an admission by Stuart that the door was not "barred and bolted." Though the operators were "somewhat incensed" at the trainmen's rather unsuccessful job action, the union had at least demonstrated that there was an unsettled problem that would "fester till settled." The possibility of future adjustment remained.³⁷

Dalskog's attempt to put the best face on it notwithstanding, the union's final resort to arbitration proceedings in which the employer obviously had the upper hand, was an admission that its strategy of countering the over-centralization of collective bargaining by mobilizing the rank-and-file was faltering. Despite these setbacks, in the fall of 1947, the District Council persisted in its struggle to resist and even reverse the imposition of sharp new definitions and limitations being placed on trade union practice and rights.

The next move against the union, in what was beginning to seem like an orchestrated assault, originated with the BCLA. At the end of November, Sid Smith from BSW, who was Association secretary, reported on a meeting held by the Truck Loggers where a raise in camp board charges was announced for 1 January. There was some concern that such a move would drive up wage demands. With legal clearance from Stuart Research that such increases were in no way restricted by the collective agreement, the BCLA decided to hold a special session.³⁸ On 2 December, the matter was aired thoroughly with one operator expressing concern that "the action contemplated would result in opening the wage scale 6 months ahead of time." Van Dusen from H.R. Macmillan Industries firmly rejected the notion of coordinated action, fearing it might lead to the incorporation of the board issue into industry negotiations. Lacking a firm consensus, the Association approved in principle a plan to raise board charges to meet increased costs, but implementation was left to the discretion of each member.³⁹ BSW was the first company

to act. It boosted rates for board and lodging from \$1.50 to \$2.00 per day, again leading the way with its Menzies Bay operation. Just before a shut down due to heavy snow, crew members there voted to refuse to sign back to camp unless the board rate was reduced.⁴⁰ No doubt, the company had anticipated possible disruptions, which it was best able to withstand at Menzies Bay. Several other companies soon followed suit, until the increase had become quite general throughout the coast district.⁴¹

The same dramatic leap in prices that prompted this move by the logging operators was having a serious impact on real wages as well. During the last three months of 1947, according to TURB statistics, the cost-of-living index had risen 6.6 points, as against seven points for the whole of 1946. The 1947 increase, the union researchers estimated, equalled the entire cost-of-living increase during the war period. The union used this data, together with the "illegal" board rate hikes to justify a demand for an interim wage adjustment under article IV (2) of the collective agreement. A similar request for adjustment of the interior wage scale was put forward to Ruddock of the CMA.⁴²

Now the union understood, and, had previously acknowledged during the shingle arbitration, that that section of the contract was not designed to permit general wage adjustments during the term of the agreement.⁴³ Dalskog knew Stuart's position had been that the clause did not allow industry-wide adjustments even for shingle sawyers and packers, let alone for the entire workforce.⁴⁴ The union president evidently had little hope of gaining Stuart's agreement to an interim across-the-board wage adjustment when he sent his request off on 22 January. Indeed, after consulting with the industry committee, Stuart shot back that Dalskog's suggestion fell outside the parameters of adjusting any anomalies or inequities in wage scales of individual companies.⁴⁵

Still, Dalskog had good reason to make the request, which was bruited loudly on the front page of the 28 January edition of the Lumber Worker. In part, it was a "tit-for-tat" response to the boost in board costs. More broadly, the interim wage demand was designed to counter the onslaught of adverse publicity from the local press, Stuart Research

and the International launched in January in concert with the hotly contested campaign of the white bloc for District office. The District Executive had been accused of following the road to Moscow, and of neglecting the bread-and-butter issues of pure-and-simple trade unionism, in favour of a political agenda that was out of step with the mainstream of public and trade union opinion. Mitchell had pointed to the "slogans around the hall" at the January District convention, and accused the officers of wasting time trying to recall Fadling. Now here, in bold print, was evidence that the District Executive was doing the job it was elected to do. It was keenly aware of the effect of the rising cost-of-living index on real wages, and had taken immediate action through conventional collective bargaining channels to remedy the situation.

When it was announced that Stuart had rejected the proposed negotiations,⁴⁶ several logging crews took it as a signal to launch further job action in opposition to the effective wage cut of 50 cents a day embodied in the board hike. Crews at Menzies Bay, Smith and Osberg on Cracroft Island, Alice Lake Logging, D and E Logging, and at four Queen Charlotte Islands camps, engaged in "sit-down" strikes. Events at Smith and Osberg escalated with the company shutting down its operation. C.C. Smith, part owner of the firm, was also president of the Truck Loggers. He was intent on enforcing the current round of hikes initiated by his Association. The crew moved its pickets to the industry hiring hall where they stayed until early April. The union demanded that Stuart negotiate but he refused either discussions or arbitration on a matter that he considered outside of the collective agreement.⁴⁷

The District Executive was caught short by this rank-and-file action that it had not authorized. Similar action in the shingle and trainmen disputes had brought small returns while exacerbating divisions in the workforce. The executive considered that problem at its 15 March meeting. With Stuart proving elusive, the question arose of how to fight the increase. It was not a major issue, Dalskog noted, but logging crews would be divided over it nonetheless since married men did not usually eat in the company cook house, and

their food costs had already risen sharply. Under these circumstances, the Executive did not consider it feasible to shut down all logging operations. With elections on, master negotiations approaching, and the District Council under attack by the forces of "Taft-Hartleyism," it was agreed to advise local 1-71 to call off the Smith and Osberg strike. Since the employers were apparently trying to draw the union into an illegal strike prior to the main negotiations in order to dissipate its strength, the Executive decided to fight the matter through legal channels. They would try, with the help of Gordon Sloan, to get it referred for interpretation by the Joint Industry Committee. If that did not work, court action would be launched to force an arbitration and to obtain a restraining order against the increases.⁴⁸

Local 1-71 President Nels Madsen and Dalskog were dispatched to Sandpoint on the Queen Charlottes. From that point, in a style reminiscent of the old organizing days, they "hiked through five miles of mud trails to connect with Aero Timber's boat and speedier service to Cumshewa," where they addressed a meeting in the Aero camp. Dalskog explained the problem of possible divisions in the ranks. He outlined the danger of allowing the employers to lay charges of an illegal strike which would weaken the union's position and discredit it in the eyes of the public just prior to negotiations. The two intrepid officers then proceeded over the following few days to seven other camps to deliver the same message. The Lumber Worker reported that "in all cases where the men had struck, they voted to return to work. At a later date the fight will be resumed on the workers' terms."⁴⁹ On 12 April Stuart happily reported to his clients that the agitation against the increased board charged had subsided. Most workers affected, he explained with authority, regarded the increase as overdue, and did not expect any special wage consideration because of it in the upcoming negotiations.⁵⁰ To make matters worse, the District's restraining action had come too late to avoid legal consequences. Under the terms of the ICA Act (1948), Smith and Osberg obtained a writ for a damage suit against the local union, its officers, and members involved in the stop-work action at its operation.⁵¹

There was something both ironic and pathetic in the Lumber Worker's description of the local and District presidents sloggng through miles of muddy terrain to reconnect with the Queen Charlotte Islands rank-and-file, only to explain that their actions were inopportune, and might upset the course of industry-wide negotiations. It recalls scenes from the early 1940s when the crew of the "Logger's Navy" made similar expeditions up the rainy coast to sign up these slippery loggers and establish a rudimentary local organization around which to negotiate the first signed agreements. It also recalls the events of 1943, when District officers worked feverishly to coordinate the pent-up militance of the Queen Charlotte Islands loggers with high-level conciliation proceedings in Vancouver and Ottawa. The result of that successful channeling of rank-and-file militance had been the first coast-wide woodworkers agreement.

In the early '40s the union had patiently and labouriously utilized a system of arbitration to gain recognition and consolidate its organizational structure on an industry basis. By 1947-48, that industrial relations system was being refined by the state in the interests of increased productivity and sustained capital accumulation. In response to Taft-Hartley and Bill 39, to the bureaucratization in its own ranks resulting from its earlier successes, and to political attacks on its credibility as a trade union leadership, pure and simple, the District Council adopted a strategy of integrating the rank-and-file back into the industrial relations process. That strategy quickly ran aground in the face of employer determination to roll back union gains, as well as new legal restrictions, and an acceptance of the new politics of industrial relations by a large sector of the workers influenced by the International-New Westminster bloc.

Furthermore, not only had the once useful system of arbitration turned against District One. Suddenly brought to light during the struggles of 1947-48 were weaknesses in its very industrial-union structure, papered over during a period of wartime consolidation followed by the "triumph" of the 1946 industry-wide strike. What was supposed to be an industry-wide collective agreement contained serious exemptions. What was supposed to

be a province-wide organization was split into two or more distinct bargaining entities. What was supposed to be an industrial union in which different production sectors, with distinct interests, supported one another's struggles, was shown to have serious weaknesses and divisions. These problems were only exacerbated by the political fight that had intruded into union affairs after the 1946 strike. In short, at a time when British Columbia District Council One of the IWA was facing its most critical test, the very foundations upon which it was based, and out of which it had grown, were rapidly crumbling away.

Chapter Twelve

1948 Negotiations: Legalism Triumphant

As noted at the conclusion to Chapter Ten, the outcome of 1948 master contract negotiations would be critical in determining the future direction of the IWA in British Columbia. The District leadership was already beleaguered by internal divisions as well as external attacks from the state, employers, its own International office and the larger labour movement. During the few short months between April and August it would face a combined assault from all those elements on its integrity, on its political affiliation, on its trade union programme and its ability to implement it. Previous analysts have examined this fateful year largely from the perspective of trade union "politics," meaning a struggle between communists and anti-communists for control of the union. This aspect, while certainly important, lacks real explanatory value. The questions which so bedevil writers on the subject—why did the communist leaders of District One leave the IWA in October 1948, and why did the rank-and-file not follow them?—have not been properly answered because analysts have neglected to study the industrial relations history of this important period. After all, the success of the communist leadership was based not on the political loyalty of the workers to the Communist Party line, but rather on the ability of these leaders to develop and implement a trade union programme that met the needs of the rank-and-file. Even the muting of a militant stance during 1944-45, as much as it fit into a larger political strategy, was acceptable to the rank-and-file in terms of the internal logic of the trade union agenda in the British Columbia lumber industry. The post-war catch-up strike of 1946 had almost complete mass support of the workforce up to the point where the major collective bargaining objectives had been achieved and individual resources were running low. The prolongation of that strike, however, opened the door to divisions within the union, which were only exacerbated when the combined forces of capital and the state retaliated in 1947-

At the January 1948 District convention, despite indications of slipping support and the initiation of a new offensive by the International office, Pritchett had defiantly informed Mitchell that the bargaining slogans around the hall would never be realized so long as political and civil rights of workers were being trampled on by the forces of reaction, imperialism and monopoly capitalism. The economic struggle could never be won on its own. But neither could the political one. As 1948 negotiations drew upon them, District One's leaders faced the ever more daunting task of continuing their programme of combining both within the narrowing legalistic framework of collective bargaining. To cease that struggle implied not only defeat in the immediate fight against a bad law. It also meant renouncing an entire past of militant, political trade unionism aimed at achieving the legal entrenchment of the collective bargaining and trade union rights that were currently under attack. It was upon those achievements that their identity as trade unionists and their claim to continue to represent the woodworkers as bargaining agents rested. To be forced to renounce that past, to accept a complete separation between economic and political action, would be to adopt the pure-and-simple trade unionism of their adversaries. In subsequent District and local elections, one slate would be the same as the next. An activist political cadre would be submerged in the "Taft-Hartleyesque" consensus politics sweeping the CIO unions. On the other hand, to strike out in a bold and militant direction in defiance of the law, without the solid backing of the rank-and-file, could result in prosecution and possible decertification. This scenario was all the more likely given an alternative leadership faction waiting in the wings, backed up by the support of International headquarters. It was in the middle of this conundrum that District Council One opened negotiations with Stuart Research at the end of April.

The District Negotiating Committee for the coast talks, composed of Dalskog, Pritchett, Melsness, Vern Carlyle, Stewart Alsbury, I.J. Gibson from Duncan and Allan Dunn from the interior, entered negotiations with clear direction from the April Wage and Contract Conference.¹ The ICA Act, consolidated in 1948 to include both the 1947 and

1948 amendment acts, still required a minimum of 57 days between the beginning of bargaining and a legal strike.² But to avoid the situation of the previous year when negotiations were prolonged by a multiplicity of major demands, the conference put forward just two: 35 cents across the board and a union shop. Beyond these, four secondary issues were to be pursued: a welfare plan, a five-day work week with no exceptions to the 40-hour rule, reduction in probation for seniority, and an increase in the night-shift differential. Other sectional and regional questions, such as the trainmen's hours and wages, the Queen Charlotte Islands differential, board charges and guaranteed daily wages for piece workers were to be handled supplementary to the main negotiations.³

With the amended ICA Act firmly in place, union strategy would have to be modified, but militant tactics not necessarily eliminated. Given the obvious difficulties in circumventing the conciliation provisions of the Act, Dalskog and Pritchett, in line with conference strategy, explored with the committee ways of expediting compliance without losing momentum. By shortening time spent in negotiations, it might be possible then to proceed through conciliation as a preliminary to further action. Under a provision in the ICA Act (1948), the LRB was empowered to by-pass the conciliation officer and appoint a board directly.⁴ All of these steps, of course, depended on cooperation from Stuart Research. The committee was soon disabused of any illusions on that count.

Stuart entered these negotiations on 3¹ May with the deck stacked. He not only had the amended ICA Act at his back, but also could take satisfaction in the fact that District One officials were under siege from the International office in Portland.⁵ As he told his clients in January, the dispute between the two political elements in the IWA was "warming up," with accusations against the present District leaders of "disruptive tactics at a time of approaching wage negotiations."⁶ Moreover, in April, the American woodworkers settled for 12½ cents and little else, down from an opening demand of 32½ cents.⁷

Stuart's clients were in an aggressive mood. With Stuart, on the industry negotiating team, were employer advisory representative Prentice Bloedel, Stuart Research

associate J.M. Billings, and legal advisor Wilf Heffernan. They quickly put a damper on union plans by refusing to divide up the negotiating agenda between industry-wide and sectional issues, and by insisting on dealing with minor items first. While Stuart brought a multiplicity of issues to the table himself, it would be 26 May before the union would hear his wage proposal. In the interim, his committee flatly refused to discuss union shop, and brushed off the welfare fund as an individual company matter not appropriate for industry negotiation.⁸ As well, Stuart issued advice to his clients not to comply with any union requests to check off special strike fund levies. He justified this advice on the spurious grounds that "any strike without due process of law being observed would be illegal," and that the calling of any strike, legal or not, terminated the contract.⁹ Such a belligerent feeling of invulnerability to strikes was clearly a product of recent labour legislation. The union complained quite correctly of contract violation. Stuart was quickly put right by legal counsel upon whose advice, a week later, he informed clients they must honour all such properly submitted requests.¹⁰

The check-offs in question had resulted from a decision taken by the District Policy Committee to beef-up the regular strike fund with a special "fighting fund" for a "fighting program," based on a day's pay or \$5.00 maximum per week. The current fund was sitting at about \$70,000 at the beginning of May, and slowly accumulating at the rate of \$6000 per month. The union hoped to increase it to \$200,000 by 20 June, the day the current contract expired. Local quotas for the large logging and sawmill locals were set at over \$20,000 each.¹¹

Once the union's opening strategy had been quickly derailed by Stuart's stalling and intransigence, the committee cautiously looked for a new approach. With the Smith and Osberg suit for damages fresh in their minds,¹² and the white bloc ever attentive, the committee members moved tentatively to draw the rank-and-file into the negotiating process by establishing the union shop on the job. A plan was drawn up whereby local action committees were to make a final sign-up effort, encourage all members to sign for check-

off, and then set a date for "a gate showing of union cards" as a demonstration of solidarity with the demand. When the organizational campaign had reached its peak, union members would be asked to vote in a referendum ballot for or against the union shop. The results were to be submitted by 15 July to the District office. The views of plant management on the subject were also to be canvassed for the record. The ever-vigilant Alsbury raised the point whether the ballot was to be merely an expression of member opinion, or an expression of determination to achieve demands by any means possible. He was placated with a warning to local members to avoid any illegal strike action.¹³

At the same 11 May committee meeting where these creative tactics were first discussed, International President Fadling made a pact with Pritchett that both sides should lay aside public displays of intra-union differences for the duration of negotiations.¹⁴ Three days later, Fadling turned up at a New Westminster executive meeting and stated that the B.C. Lumber Worker had to be cleaned up.¹⁵ He was apparently referring to an Everett story reprinted in the 5 May issue extolling the Northern Washington District's resistance to the Taft-Hartley "slave law." District Two had broken away from north-west region-wide negotiations over the International's compliance with the law. This move was reportedly vindicated by the winning of a complete settlement, including "a form of accumulative check off" that ran counter to the Act, while the other district councils were still "wound up in red tape."¹⁶ Fadling waited almost two weeks after the story appeared. Then in a move intended to support the white bloc's efforts, he included in his radio broadcast a blast at the Lumber Worker for printing untrue reports concerning the District Two 12½-cent settlement which, he argued, "kneels to the Taft-Hartley law."¹⁷

The same day, 17 May, the District Executive met to consider the progress of negotiations. The committee reported it was evident that employer strategy was to delay as long as possible dealing with the main demands in order to drag out negotiations to the actual termination date of the contract. The CMA's Ruddock was using similar tactics at Prince George. With any hope gone of rushing quickly through conciliation, the union

was now working toward 100 percent organization in the locals and a \$200,000 strike fund while it waited for the industry offer.¹⁸ It came on 26 May: eight percent, with a floor of 10 cents for those at the lower end, on condition that the union drop all its major demands, including union shop, welfare fund and the hours-of-work amendments.¹⁹

The union was being asked to take an increase in percentage terms, well below the 12½ cent rate established in April in the American lumber industry and duplicated early in May by Mine Mill at Trail and Kimberly.²⁰ No consideration at all was to be given to any of the other substantive demands put forward by the Wages and Contract Conference. But without a strike vote in hand, or a substantial strike fund, and with one important local executive, backed by the International, opposed to anything but the strictest observance of the law, the District committee had very little bargaining power.

In 1947, at this point in negotiations, a strike vote had been taken which proved to be disastrous. Now, the committee needed some alternative vehicle through which to exert pressure on the industry and build support among the rank-and-file. Pritchett suggested that if this was Stuart's final offer, it be put to the membership with a recommendation to reject. Alsbury immediately wanted assurance that the vote would not be a strike vote, and was told it was definitely not.²¹ Stuart was informed that the union was not breaking off talks, merely recessing to poll its members.²² Stuart was not about to be fooled. He quickly informed his clients, "in view of the union's stated intentions to collect as much money as possible while the matter is being voted on, it is not likely there will be any resumption of negotiations, as this might have a depressing effect on collections."²³

Indeed, as Alsbury suspected, the break in negotiations, the vote in conjunction with a stepped up campaign to meet the 20 June target of \$200,000 and the union shop referendum were designed to put the woodworkers on a strike footing without actually taking a vote. Even the wording on the ballot was purposely drawn up to illicit a positive "yes" response, similar to that on a strike referendum, to the question: "Do you favour rejecting the operators proposals."²⁴ Alsbury took exception to the wording and informed

his local executive that the wording had still to be finalized by the District Policy Committee. He favoured a simple ballot with a "no" vote on whether to accept the employers' offer. He also informed his colleagues that while it was essential to build a strong strike fund, it should be called a strike fund and not a "fighting fund." Alsbury sensed that the momentum on the committee was shifting in favour of his opponents. He asked his local executive to back him in his move to demand that an International officer be present in negotiations, as the committee, as yet had had no representation from the International office.²⁵

At the 31 May Negotiating Committee meeting, Alsbury raised these issues of terminology. He reminded the committee that the wording on the ballot had still to be decided by the full Policy Committee, and complained of the confusion caused amongst some of his local members by the use of the term "fighting fund" in the union leaflet. As petty as these issues seem, it is a measure of the white bloc's power, as well as the District committee's desire to maintain a united front, that they were given consideration. At the 2 June Policy Committee meeting, a special sub-committee consisting of Alsbury, Higgin, Pritchett and Bob Range from Prince George, was struck to re-word the ballot. The committee recommended reproducing the bosses' proposal with the question "Are you in favour," so to reject would require a "no" vote.²⁶

On the surface unity prevailed. Behind the scenes plans were afoot. When the Policy Committee asked permission to use the International's weekly radio time slot during negotiations, Fadling gladly agreed. He also announced his intention to go on tour with Nels Madsen of local 1-71 to take the ballot, as he wanted to "see some of the country."²⁷ A week later, at his local's 11 June executive meeting, Alsbury happily reported that the referendum ballot had been drawn up "in accordance with our wishes." At the same meeting, however, George Mitchell's motion carried, authorizing the local to take legal action against the District Council to obtain a copy of the independent audit which had been

submitted on 17 May, since the District officers refused to comply with the local's request to see it.²⁸

The same day, Stuart circularized his clients with the news that negotiations were still recessed as IWA officials were engaged with their referendum ballot, while at the same time trying to stir up some enthusiasm for the strike fund "which is reported to be meeting with disappointing results."²⁹ If Stuart were getting some special information in this regard from sources within the union, he did not really need their help. On 22 June, Stuart heard from the District committee that it was prepared to resume negotiations now that sufficient ballots had been received to indicate a substantial majority against acceptance.³⁰ That was to be expected. What Stuart really wanted to know for certain was the degree of support amongst the rank-and-file for strike action as expressed through voluntary strike fund contributions. In 1947, the union's published strike vote results told him that support was lacking for a strike. This year he would have to make his own assessment of union bargaining strength based on the degree of financial support members were willing to provide in association with their rejection of his offer. From this data, it might also be possible to gauge to what extent the rank-and-file had been affected by internal political divisions exacerbated by recent allegations of missing funds. Accordingly, he wrote his 172 clients, requesting information regarding the response to the union's drive for its Fighting Fund. Companies were asked to show total number of employees, the number of contributions through the check-off to the Fighting Fund, and the total amount contributed.³¹ The data gathered, to the extent that it accurately reflected membership support, indicated to Stuart that he could sit tight, in spite of the members' overwhelming rejection of his offer, and wait for the union to make the next move. Based on his returns, it appeared to Stuart that the union had neither the financial resources nor the membership support to wage a successful industry-wide strike on the coast.

Serious flooding in the Fraser Valley during the latter part of May and into June closed many operations there, so check-off results from these operations compiled up to 28

June did not reflect employee support. With loss of income over several weeks, however, these workers would be disinclined to contribute later or to go on strike. The woodworkers in the locals affected, mainly 1-357 and 1-367 (Mission), were not known for their avid support of the District Council at any rate. The flood could be largely disregarded as an important factor affecting the significance of the returns.

Stuart received reports from 127 operations employing 20,371 persons. Of these, 80 operations reported no contributions at all through the check-off. Forty-seven operations reported contributions by a total of 2899 employees, amounting to \$15,726. Of all the employees covered by these reports, 14.2 percent contributed. The average contribution per contributor was \$5.42, just over the minimum requested by the union, but well below a day's pay for a common labourer earning 95 cents per hour. The average contribution per employee was 77 cents.

Being aware of the important sectoral divisions in the workforce, Stuart had the data broken down into logging and milling components. The results reflected the same unevenness in support for the union that showed up in the 1947 strike vote. As would become evident later, this was largely due to a total boycott by the New Westminster local. At any rate, reports from 57 logging operations employing 6971 workers showed 30 camps with no contribution. Twenty-seven camps reported contributions by 1777 employees of \$10,852, meaning just over 25 percent of loggers involved contributed an average of \$6.11 each. Overall average contribution from all loggers covered was \$1.56. With reports in from 70 mills employing 13,400 persons, 50 mills reported no contributions, while 20 reported contributions by 1122 persons, or 8.4 percent of the total, amounting to \$4874. Average per contributor was \$4.34. Average per employee was 36½ cents.³²

While the New Westminster boycott no doubt skewed the results, the discrepancy between millworker and logger support for the union was borne out by returns at the end of July submitted for B.C. Forest Products mill and logging divisions. In this case, 204 of

1147 mill employees contributed a total of \$635, while 156 of 437 loggers contributed \$1201. Mill results here were affected by an apparent boycott by the Hammond sub-local, an anti-District stronghold in local 1-367 (Mission).³³ Similarly, BSW showed contributions of \$1927 from 355 of 905 loggers at its Bloedel and Franklin River camps, but only \$220 from 39 contributors out of 622 employees at its Port Alberni sawmill. Because of outstanding support from its Victoria Lumber Company, H.R. MacMillan Export returns showed a somewhat closer ratio: 280 of 759 loggers contributed \$1475; 352 of 1573 mill hands gave \$1626 to the union in May and June. Overall percentages and average contributions were possibly misleading due to incomplete returns from some operators that were shut down, or whose employees paid cash directly to the steward. A reliable gauge of support can more definitely be obtained from these operations where the check-off was, without doubt, in operation. At Elk River Timber only 85 of 415 loggers checked-off for the fund during May and June. At Alberni Pacific's camp 27 of 240 employees contributed, at CFP's Englewood Logging Division, 198 of 893, and at its Eburne Sawmill, as of 13 July only 7 of 620 had paid into the fund.³⁴

What significance could Stuart (or the union) attribute to these findings? For the employer, they indicated that for whatever reason, the union had insufficient funds to shut down the industry with the expiry of the current agreement on 20 June. At the rate it was going, it would take the union all summer to reach its target. Secondly, the data indicated a real lack of support for a "fighting fund" style of campaign. Union members paid their dues each month, 25 cents of which went into a strike fund. That "legitimate" strike fund was quite carefully being linked by white bloc proponents to legal strike action in full compliance with the ICA Act; action which would likely not take place given the obstructive provisions of the Act. The Fighting Fund, for good reason, had become associated with "illegal" or "political" strikes carried out in defiance of the Act. The executive members of 1-357 who held back from the District whatever small contributions they did receive from their membership, realized its purpose and endeavoured to obstruct its accumulation.³⁵

Stuart could take comfort in the knowledge that Bills 39 and 87, with the assistance of the white bloc advocates of pure-and-simple unionism, had done a good job of disciplining the rank-and-file. The chances of a strike, at least prior to the full working out of the conciliation and legal strike vote provisions of the law, would be an unlikely event in 1948, or henceforth.

For the union, the June returns indicated the necessity to continue to "play poker"—to bargain by bluffing rather than with real economic clout. Indeed, even by the end of September, total voluntary contributions had reached only \$33,785. The total strike fund by that date had reached only \$120,000. None of the big four locals met their quotas. While 1-217 fell almost \$20,000 short, even the Duncan and Vancouver loggers fell \$11,000 and \$5,500 short respectively.³⁶ At a time when District One was paying out over \$100,000 a year in per capita payments to the International, and receiving little back in the way of support or services,³⁷ its ability to raise the necessary funds to make up for this deficiency had been seriously affected by interference from that same International organization and its New Westminster loyalists. The idea of somehow gaining control over those outgoing payments to bolster the District's bargaining power was beginning to seem very appealing, if not necessary.

Still, a strike at this time, especially a short strike, was not entirely out of the question if considered only from the perspective of finances. And if a short strike was not completely unaffordable, then the threat of a strike, or even of a strike vote might be used to good effect, given unity in the ranks. But returns indicated a marked lack of unity for a "fighting" approach to collective bargaining, not only from the New Westminster and Vancouver mill locals, but quite generally across the industry. The Lumber Worker tried to cover up this problem with the excuse that large donations to a flood relief fund had "slowed up contributions from the sawmill end of the industry in Vancouver."³⁸ But even the normally loyal Island loggers seemed to be affected by a creeping legalism upon which the employers now hoped to capitalize.

In the midst of the strike vote, three companies led by BSW's owner, Prentice Bloedel, who sat on the industry negotiating committee, sought to utilize some creative tactics of their own to undercut the union's drive for the five-day week. Just as the union sought to use on-the-job action to reinforce its demands for union security, so would Bloedel, in a reverse manner, use employee compliance on the job to undermine the union's position on the work week. With the consent of their crews, operators at Bloedel's Menzies Bay camp, at Aero Timber on the Queen Charlottes, and at D and E Logging at Fraser Creek all made application to the Board of Industrial Relations for temporary permits to work a 48-hour week. In the case of Bloedel, the application involved 100 rigging and road men for the duration of the year. The Lumber Worker, correctly seeing this as yet another splitting move, spluttered that it was not surprising this had been led by BSW, the firm which had "spearheaded every new speed-up method" on the Pacific coast.³⁹

Not only did the union have weak links in its ranks, but they were weaknesses of which the employers were aware and around which they could structure their negotiating strategy. The most profound division, of course, was the factional one that had been made most public. Nevertheless, even if its bank account was meagre and its membership increasingly disaffected, the District Council still had in hand a strong rejection vote on Stuart's offer. The District Committee decided to use this vote as the basis of an aggressive plan to force Stuart out of his stand-pat posture and into conciliation.

Upon the union calling its recess, Stuart had sent out a bulletin to his clients for circulation among workers with "a factual report of negotiations." Copies were to be distributed to all employees or to a select number depending on the situation in each operation.⁴⁰ When talks resumed on 24 June, the union first hit Stuart with the 95 percent rejection of his offer. It then took him to task for trying to undermine the ballot by communicating to employees the precise stenographic record from negotiations, in violation of the unfair labour practice provisions of the ICA Act. Since Stuart refused supplementary negotiations, but had not yet included several categories in his wage offer, the union told

him the next move on wages was his. The District negotiators hoped to put Stuart on the defensive and force him to apply for conciliation. Through subsequent meetings on the same and following days, the union negotiators continued to push Stuart. They warned that if he continued using the negotiation record for his own purposes they would invite in union stewards, the press, or perhaps have the entire proceedings broadcast over public radio.⁴¹ As a prerequisite for a union counter proposal on wages, the committee demanded an across-the-board industry proposal applicable to all employees including fallers, cookhouse crews and train crews. In addition, any settlement would have to be retroactive to 20 June and include an extra adjustment for trainmen, and guaranteed hourly rates for falling and shingle crews above the overall increase. All other union proposals, including union security, would have to remain open for further negotiation, while Stuart would be required to drop his bonding proposal.⁴² Union strategy was charted by Pritchett at a 24 June committee meeting. If Stuart disagreed with these conditions, as he likely would, then the committee would move to recess negotiations for a full Policy Committee meeting and possible consultation with the membership. "If we can make Stuart believe we are going to take a strike vote," Pritchett conspired, "we might force him to apply for conciliation—this would be preferable to us applying."⁴³

Why was it preferable? At this point, for the union to apply for conciliation was a sure sign of weakness. Not only would it indicate to Stuart, and to all woodworkers, a willing and active compliance with the obstructive terms of the amended ICA Act. As well, once the union had initiated statutory conciliation proceedings under the Act, it would in effect forfeit its ability to take a strike vote until the full procedure had been concluded. If the union could force Stuart to apply, it could passively comply with the Act without forfeiting its authority with its membership to hold a strike vote of questionable legitimacy in the midst of proceedings. Given the relatively weak bargaining position of the union, it did not want to proceed through a conciliation board hearing without a strike vote, or at least the threat of taking a strike vote, in its hand. Both sides in negotiations knew the

union was being structured into compliance with the law. They were now jockeying for position at the starting gate. The question of who applied to Mr. Fraser loomed large.

On 21 June, the day the District received the results of the referendum ballot on Stuart's offer, the District trustees released the long-awaited auditor's report on the alleged missing funds. The District executive had been concerned about the impact of the report on its campaign to build up the Fighting Fund, and so had withheld release as long as possible. That strategy had so irked local 1-357 leaders, that they had taken legal action during the balloting to try to obtain a copy.⁴⁴ As the District committee moved aggressively to push Stuart into conciliation with threats of a strike vote, the New Westminster executive, on 25 June, took action to refer the audit to a full local meeting, and in light of the report's findings, to set up an investigating committee, "this not to conflict with negotiations." This last proviso was undercut somewhat by a further recommendation from Alsbury that Fadling now attend all meetings of the negotiating committee and all sessions with the industry spokesmen.⁴⁵ On 28 June, George Mitchell, accompanied by Fadling, took the local 1-357 request for a full investigation to the International Board meeting in Portland.⁴⁶

Meanwhile negotiations continued in Vancouver on 29 June. The union refused to move on its wage demand until Stuart met its prior conditions. Stuart refused even to discuss these conditions until he received a counter wage proposal. According to plan, Dalskog thereupon announced that in view of the 95 percent rejection of Stuart's offer, and the industry's refusal to agree to any of the union's conditions under which it had agreed to make a counter offer, the Negotiating Committee would ask for a recess in negotiations to call in the full Policy Committee and possibly consult with the membership.⁴⁷ Immediately following that session, the Negotiating Committee reassembled with Ellery Foster from the International Research Department conspicuously in attendance for the first time. Foster was a professional forester as well as an avowed anti-communist. He had worked for the American War Production Board prior to coming to the IWA, and supplied much of the

material for the International radio programme, "The Voice of the IWA."⁴⁸ His presence in Vancouver at this juncture pointed to a move by the International office, in conjunction with the white bloc, to take over control of the negotiations from the District committee. Dalskog dutifully reviewed progress to date for Foster's benefit, and then proceeded to call a full Policy Committee meeting for 2 July to consider the union's future course.⁴⁹

It is difficult at this point to discern just whom Dalskog and Pritchett were trying to outflank, Stuart or the white bloc. The stated objective in the Negotiating Committee was to make Stuart believe they were intending a strike vote so he would immediately apply for conciliation in an effort to undermine it. It is possible that Dalskog and Pritchett actually had a strike vote in mind, but were trying to move toward it without arousing the white bloc. In any case, whether it was further to impress Stuart with their seriousness to pursue the vote, or actually to prepare the groundwork for taking one, the day following the declaration of a recess, Dalskog and Pritchett met with Fred Smelts, employer representative on the LRB, and Bill Fraser, Chief Conciliation Officer. The LRB, only recently formed, had as yet no machinery in place for taking a strike vote, especially one that could involve thousands of woodworkers in hundreds of locations across the province. Smelts asked the union for its position on a plan under which the Board might appoint a District officer as chief returning officer with power to deputize other union officials in each area. Appointment by the minister of a person to supervise a secret vote was provided for under section 75 of the ICA Act (1947). Smelts' proposal would have allowed union officials, under oath, to take their own vote as they always had. The knotty problem of whether union officials could, under the IWA constitution, supervise a ballot which included non-union employees, was overlooked in these preliminary discussions.⁵⁰ Smelts' proposal indicated to Pritchett and Dalskog that by virtue of its recent creation, and the failure of the Department of Labour during the previous year to establish appropriate administrative machinery, the LRB was still largely dependent on union assistance in carrying out the infamous supervised strike ballot. That advantage might be used, together

with another loophole in the Act, to circumvent the intent of Bill 39 with respect to its cooling-off provisions. The architects of the bill had intended that any strike vote taken must follow the issuance of a conciliation board report to both parties. But the wording of the Act was not specific on that point. It was emphatically clear that no strike could occur until after the report had been filed and until after a supervised strike vote of all employees affected had been taken. It nowhere stipulated that the strike vote had to occur after the conciliation board report had been filed. That employees were apparently to vote on the report could have in part obviated the need for such a stipulation, but not entirely. The Act was also vague on whether a full vote of employees was required on a report.

All of these highly obscure legal points would not be terribly relevant here were it not for the fact that they became important issues within the District Policy Committee as it tried to chart a path between the provisions of the ICA Act, and the obstructive tactics of the white bloc. The ambiguity of the Act with respect to the timing of the vote, taken together with the LRB's dependence on the union for supervision, suggested to Pritchett and Dalskog that their ability to take a strike vote on their own terms, or at least to threaten to do so, had not been entirely removed by the passage of Bill 39, provided that there was unity on the committee around pursuing such a tactic. A strike vote in hand would certainly give the union more leverage over the outcome of conciliation hearings.

That this strategy was not so farfetched was indicated to Pritchett by the fact that in a recent dispute at the Silbak Premier mine, Mine Mill, under Murphy's direction, announced it was proceeding unilaterally to take a strike vote without applying for government supervision. In subsequent negotiations with the union, the LRB agreed to appoint a union officer as returning officer. This case indicated to Pritchett that the conciliation machinery could still be circumvented by a union whose membership was willing to back its leaders in pursuit of militant and creative tactics without fear of possible legal ramifications.⁵¹ There were, however, significant differences in the two cases which Pritchett could not for long overlook. Mine Mill had a solid union shop at Premier, and

any vote of employees affected was synonymous with a union vote. The same would not apply across the lumber industry where large pockets of non-union employees existed.⁵² Secondly, Mine Mill did not have to contend with an opposition faction in its midst, intent on discrediting its leaders' ability to pursue collective bargaining to a successful conclusion. All these considerations were still somewhat academic on 30 June, however. At this point the committee still had the intention of forcing Stuart to apply for conciliation under threat of a strike vote. If it was successful with that, the committee might then consider whether actually to proceed to a vote, depending on the outcome of talks under a conciliation officer's supervision.

To help turn up the heat on Stuart, on 30 June the B.C. Lumber Worker ran three front page stories designed to project an impression of militant determination and strike readiness. First, the paper claimed that the New Westminster charges with regard to District finances had been exploded inasmuch as the summary balance sheet of the independent audit differed from the TURB audit by the insignificant amount of \$72 for the year 1946-47. The article noted that the accountants could not substantiate any charges of misuse of funds, and concluded that the discovery of a \$72 discrepancy did not warrant the expenditure of \$1615 for an audit undertaken on the basis of "irresponsible and derogatory charges." And to confirm the fact that these charges had been misplaced and without effect on the membership, just beside the column on the audit, the editor ran an upbeat report headed "Strike Fund Meets Wide Response." It claimed that already a considerable number of coast camps had exceeded their quotas, in some cases, by as much as 200 percent. Check-offs for July promised better results. All of this good news was meant to back up the feature story that, with food prices leaping skyward and the bosses stalling on wages, the "Union's Patience is Wearing Thin." A victory in 1948 negotiations, readers were informed, "may yet demand a showdown action by the Coast membership of the IWA."⁵³

None of this news was terribly pleasing to Fadling. He, along with Virgil Burtz, International Director of Research, was back in town for the 2 July District Policy

Committee meeting called to decide the union's next tactical move. Dalskog opened the meeting by stating he believed Stuart was attempting to force the union to apply for conciliation. To counter that move, Dalskog proposed to offer Stuart a settlement at 27½ cents (down from the original 35 cent demand), on condition that it be retroactive to 20 June, apply to all workers, and be paid on an hourly basis to piece workers. Further, to get that offer, Stuart would have to agree to a five-shift work week (now extended to Saturday eight A.M. from Friday midnight), drop his bonding proposal, continue negotiations on the union shop, and agree to have a subcommittee of union and management study the welfare fund proposal as a basis to further negotiations the next year. After presenting Stuart with this proposal, which he certainly would not accept, the union would take it to the membership. Pritchett supported the proposal, noting that it materially strengthened the union's position with the general public and should be followed up with a real campaign amongst the membership and in the community, exposing Stuart's stalling tactics. He suggested the normally bi-weekly Lumber Worker come out weekly during this period.

At this point, Fadling stepped in to dump cold water over the union's new initiative. While he agreed with most of the programme, Fadling announced that he had definitely disagreed with the last ballot, presumably because of its association with building up the Fighting Fund. Furthermore, just as the union was about to pick up its publicity effort to rally support for a programme Fadling claimed he agreed with, the International President announced that in view of the recent trustees' report on the audit to the District Executive and the article about it in the Lumber Worker, use of the International time slot on CJOR would cease for the time being. Fadling was not about to have the "Voice of the IWA" be used to rally the rank-and-file for a strike vote around a set of District One demands that were still quite attractive to workers on the job. The implications of this move were clear. The District was in for another earful of International red-baiting over the radio waves. Apparently forgetting conveniently who had first raised the issue of District financial

management in the midst of the recent executive elections, Fadling made his intention known. It was a mistake to publish the results of the District audit when "in death-grips with the employer," he informed the Policy Committee. Raising these issues was harmful, but once raised they had to be answered. The meeting then ended with a report from Dalskog on the meeting with Smelts and Fraser. It was decided that the District officers would investigate the matter of strike vote supervision and report to the quarterly council meeting on 18 July.⁵⁴

That evening with the full Policy Committee sitting in, the District negotiators presented the new offer to the employers' representatives. The meeting ended quickly with Stuart rejecting most of the union's pre-conditions to its wage proposal item by item.⁵⁵ The District was not ready to take its case to the public. Fadling beat it to the punch.

The next day in a column written by Jaek Webster,⁵⁶ it was announced that a four-man committee named by Fadling was set to investigate the finances of the British Columbia District following charges made by local 1-357 that more than \$9000 was unaccounted for in the 1946-47 statements. The column went on to quote a statement issued by Fadling to the Vancouver Sun in response to the story in the B.C. Lumber Worker. "What seems odd to me," Fadling told Webster, "is the fact that the district officers knew that we intended to make this investigation within the organization when they came out with the public statement trying to absolve themselves of charges which were never made." He noted that the International had intended to investigate these internal matters quietly, in order to protect the funds of the membership as well as the integrity of the District officers, and regretted that the latter had chosen to make the matter public beforehand, "as it is liable to have adverse effects upon present wage and contract negotiations."⁵⁷

With these comments of Fadling's, union intentions to force Stuart into applying for conciliation under threat of a possible strike vote were seriously damaged. The internal cleavage in the union had once again shown its ugly head to the world, this time at a critical

juncture in negotiations. Two days later, when Dalskog, Pritchett, Carlyle, Higgin and Melsness together with Alsbury and Fadling, all sat down at the table across from Bloedel, Stuart and his associates, the employers' representatives must have been grinning inside. After a brief flurry of activity following its rejection ballot, the District's offensive had suddenly been derailed, before it really got underway. Fadling, together with his research department, and supported by Alsbury and his white bloc, was poised to take over the negotiation process as a prelude to a possible take-over of the District Council itself. For the District leaders, the collective bargaining process had suddenly become not just a struggle for union security, compensation for steeply escalating living costs, and against the union busting provisions of the amended ICA Act. On the line now was their very survival as bargaining agents for the British Columbia woodworkers. If Fadling and company could take over control of the collective bargaining process, the very flesh and bones of any trade union, they were well on their way to controlling District Council One.

The meeting lasted less than an hour. Stuart was firm. He was feeling no pressure from anyone but his clients who insisted that there be no further offer on wages until the union dropped completely its demand for a union shop and accepted that a welfare plan was not on the collective bargaining agenda at all.⁵⁸ Meeting immediately afterward, the Negotiating Committee heard Dalskog, in desperation, once again try to chart the course ahead: charge Stuart with bad faith bargaining, call in the employers directly, arrange a province-wide broadcast, explain the situation to the membership so they will demand a strike vote. But discussion of strategy quickly gave way to mutual recriminations over the recent publicity regarding District finances. Melsness finally got the committee back on track by observing that they were straying far from the business of "our future program as to negotiations, but the issuance of the big headlines in the Sun has definitely done a lot of harm." It was then quickly decided to adopt Dalskog's suggested proposal of 25 cents per hour, and a modified union shop giving current non-members permanent exclusion.⁵⁹

During the next four days negotiations proceeded apace, but the District committee had lost any momentum it thought it had at the end of June. Over the course of these four days, Pritchett and Dalskog dropped from full union shop to Dalskog's modified proposal, then offered binding arbitration and finally non-binding conciliation on the issue. In the process, Stuart went up one more cent on his floor to 11 cents, or eight percent, effective the date of acceptance. Meanwhile, Fadling quite deftly insinuated himself into the negotiation process. While the District members of the committee hammered away at Stuart on the main items, to no avail, Stuart and Fadling tried to move the stalled talks forward on the less consequential matters. Fadling fit himself into what had been Stuart's approach from the start: settle the secondary items first, as a basis for final agreement on the major ones. This approach earned the plaudits of Alsbury who told the 9 July meeting of his local executive that he thought "we are fortunate" to have Fadling at negotiations. Just who the "we" referred to Alsbury did not make clear.

At the 8 July negotiating meeting, after Dalskog and Stuart wrangled over cost-of-living figures to no avail, Fadling piped up with, "Let us see how far apart we are. We have made a counterproposal for piece-workers," (allowing individual employees to opt out of an hourly rate) "which should remove the employers' objection...and should be followed by a counterproposal on wages." The following day, Stuart conceded the principle of a uniform increase to apply to all occupations, including cook and bunkhouse workers. When Stuart suggested that both sides drop their hours-of-work proposals, and write the 1947 clause back into the agreement, Fadling exclaimed, "now we are getting somewhere," even though the day before the union had, in Fadling's own estimations, "already come a long way" on its hours demand.

But even Fadling could not get around Stuart on union security; indeed he had no desire to. If District One won union security under a defiant communist leadership, Fadling's position on compliance with Taft-Hartley would be materially weakened, as would the position of his British Columbia supporters. He let Stuart know where he stood

on the matter by predicting that "the day will come when we will have full union shop here and the Employers will say they are glad of it." Obviously for Fadling and for Stuart, that day was not at hand.⁶⁰

Unfortunately for Fadling, Stuart would go no further on wages until the committee dropped union security. Both Stuart and Dalskog knew that the union could not strike over wages alone, especially if Stuart responded with an expected 12½-cent offer. Once union security was dropped entirely, any opportunity of using a strike vote to put pressure on the industry or on a conciliation board disappeared with it. That might have been fine with Fadling and Alsbury, but not with the rest of the committee. Even Fadling, sensing Stuart was taking advantage of a situation in the union he himself had helped bring about, blurted out, "we have a right to know what we can get by dropping our proposals—that is only fair. We hold you responsible for a deadlock."⁶¹ Dalskog then played his hand, but got no further.

Dalskog: Let's call a spade a spade. You are using an unknown wage increase as bait.

Stuart: That is exactly how it was done last year.

Dalskog: But last year we gained the 40 hour week. This year nothing.⁶²

After sitting in session with Stuart all morning and afternoon, the union committee retired to its chambers briefly to hear Pritchett give his prognosis. Since Stuart would not budge, nor be pressured into applying for conciliation, the union had no choice but to apply for conciliation itself, or take a strike vote. In 1947, an unsupervised vote in so-called defiance of the conciliation provisions of the law had not worked. The 1948 strategy called for "massaging" (my term) the ICA Act and the LRB in order to get a "legal" vote, but on the union's terms. Pritchett felt fairly certain that the issue of supervision was not a sticking point with the LRB, based on his conversation with Smelts, and on the Mine Mill example at Premier. Interpreting rather liberally (Alsbury asked him to get it in writing), Pritchett told the committee that the Board had definitely stated "a union can take a strike vote within the law, but can't use it until all legal angles are complied with." For Pritchett,

that was about as far as the union could hope to go in 1948. But it was better than the "nothing" that Dalskog had observed they had gotten so far. Taking a strike vote would not interfere with either negotiations or conciliation, Pritchett assured the white bloc members. "But this vote will materially strengthen our hand, although both Stuart and ourselves know that it would be almost impossible to strike now."⁶³

But a strike vote, even hedged in by all Pritchett's assurances, was a weapon the white bloc was loathe to put in the District Executive's hands. Alsbury did not trust the executive not to use the vote in contravention of the law. More to the point, if the District won a settlement in excess of 12½ cents by virtue of "defying" the ICA Act, then it would tend to vindicate their entire position on compliance with Taft-Hartley, on the Greenall affair, the Fadling recall and on Northern Washington's allegedly superior settlement in the American negotiations. As long as District One was reasonably well assured of gaining the equivalent of the northwest regional increase through total compliance with the law, then the white bloc and Fadling would oppose a strike vote that might give any extra advantage to the District Negotiating Committee.

By 13 July, both Stuart and the District committee agreed that negotiations were deadlocked. Final submissions had been made and a recess declared on the understanding that the present contract would remain in force until terminated by either side.⁶⁴ The District's position was clear. It would notify the Minister of Labour, Wismer, that negotiations had broken down, and that the District Policy Committee was proceeding immediately to conduct a strike vote. If Pritchett's scenario proved correct, the LRB would move quickly to sanction the vote. While deputized union officials conducted the ballot, government-initiated conciliation proceedings would begin. For this strategy to work, it was absolutely vital that Fadling and the New Westminster local be on-side. It would be difficult enough getting a strong vote under current conditions without their organized opposition to the procedure. During three crucial meetings on 13 and 14 July, the District Policy Committee tried to hash out a compromise on a strike ballot that would both be

acceptable to the white bloc and would give the union some real bargaining power during conciliation.

Alsbury and Fadling refused to give Pritchett what he optimally wanted, a ballot authorizing the Policy Committee to take whatever action it deemed necessary to achieve the union's demands. Once sanctioned by the LRB, such a vote could stand as a club over a conciliation board to be used immediately in the event of an adverse report. Even without LRB approval, such a vote could exert pressure on a settlement provided the union stood solidly behind it. Alsbury immediately declared his inability to vote for anything contrary to the law without further instructions from his local. Even if the vote were legal, he feared it could be used illegally. Fadling noted how many times it had been said that the IWA could not itself challenge the ICA Act; though he admitted such a ballot might be acceptable if it were only being used to force the operators into conciliation. Pritchett pulled out the Act and began reading all the pertinent sections to do with conciliation boards, reports, strike votes, legal and illegal strikes. Dalskog then took over, reading further on supervision of votes, and provisions concerning conciliation officers, boards, and pre-strike votes. All of this textual analysis ought to have pleased Alsbury. The previous year Pritchett had gone to his local and urged the employees at Fraser Mills to defy the law by voting for a strike.⁶⁵ Now, thanks in part to Alsbury's work in opposing that strategy, members of the District Policy Committee got to witness the spectacle of the two top officers of the District pouring over sections of the despised ICA Act in an effort to convince them that, in fact, the identical strike vote in 1948 would be very much in compliance with the law. Alsbury waited politely for the readings to end and then replied that "nothing you read has convinced me we can legally take a vote."

When the meeting reconvened later in the afternoon, Pritchett and Dalskog got down to business. Pritchett read the draft of the telegram to Wismer notifying him of the vote. Dalskog laid the District's position out clearly for all to see. Twelve and one-half cents would be the most they could get in return for dropping all other demands. The

committee could not possibly recommend that to the membership, nor could it present a real strike threat once only wages remained to be settled. "So whether we like it or no the next move is ours." Implicit in Dalskog's remarks was a challenge to Fadling and Alsbury either to admit they would be pleased if the current negotiations ended with a settlement of 12½ cents and nothing else, or drop their objections to the ballot. Neither Alsbury nor Fadling were bare-faced enough to admit their intention to prevent District One from exceeding the American ceiling, but neither were they prepared to surrender their defence of absolute compliance with the law, fast becoming the touchstone of legitimate bargaining authority throughout the North American trade union movement.

Alsbury's next move in this elaborate game of industrial relations chess was to agree in theory to strike for union shop, a decent wage and all the rest of the union's proposals if the Policy Committee would agree to comply with all procedures laid down by the ICA Act prior to striking, and to provide copies of the meeting minutes where this condition was accepted to all Policy Committee members. Given Pritchett's current interpretation of the Act, provided the vote was sanctioned by the LRB, the District vice-president was prepared to go ahead on the basis of Alsbury's suggestion. When Higgin, from the Courtenay logging local, queried Alsbury as to whether the committee would be bound by his motion if the union was about to be "smashed" if it did not strike, Pritchett quickly moved to shut him up by noting that in such an event the Policy Committee would meet to consider the situation. Now, Pritchett rushed on, the committee should pass the motion unanimously and go out and use all its strength to get a 100-percent vote. Fadling, however, had not been swept along. Picking up on Pritchett's quick reply to Higgin, he demanded that the membership must have a say in any change of policy, particularly considering the internal situation in the union, and the fact that the laws in the United States had written out union maintenance clauses where unions had violated the labour act. Pritchett, seeking unity at all costs, proposed that Fadling, Dalskog and himself meet privately to try to thrash out a policy that the committee could follow and be bound by. To

add further reassurance, when discussion arose as to the effectiveness of stop-work meetings to take the vote, Dalskog quickly urged that the taking of this ballot be done in a manner above reproach. A subcommittee of three—Higgin, Alsbury and Carlyle—were elected to draft the precise wording of the ballot.⁶⁶

With the wire announcing the strike vote on its way to Wismer, the Negotiating Committee reconvened the following morning to hear from the subcommittee. On the top half of the ballot there was no disagreement—the employers' offer, yes or no. On the bottom half, Higgin and Carlyle had recommended: "Do you authorize your District Policy Committee to call a strike when and if it becomes necessary?" Alsbury wanted it worded so that a strike could only be called by a unanimous vote of the Policy Committee. As an alternative, Alsbury would submit a written statement to the committee secretary to sign outlining the conditions under which he would support a vote. This statement was apparently so outrageous that even Fadling advised the rewording of certain phrases. Pritchett suggested that only "Brother Alsbury," not the committee, need sign the statement. The ballot stood as worded. But, to provide some semblance of unity, a motion was carried incorporating the concerns of both Alsbury and Fadling that the committee would comply with the procedure laid out in the ICA Act, and in case of unforeseen developments would return to the membership for further instruction "prior to further action on an industry-wide basis." Moreover, copies of the meeting minutes were to be sent to all members of the committee and to the secretaries of all locals. Alsbury, Carlyle and Higgin were elected as the official tabulating committee.⁶⁷

While Pritchett had been enthusiastic to proceed on the basis of Alsbury's more general condition of the day before, that all procedures of the ICA Act be complied with before striking, he appeared less enthralled with the motion that came out of the 14 July session. Pritchett was prepared to negotiate his way through the various loopholes in the Act. At any rate, no serious consequences would ensue unless a strike were actually called on the basis of the vote, an event he considered unlikely. The purpose of the vote for

Pritchett was to secure for the union a weapon to help speed along proceedings and exert pressure on any recommendations flowing out of them. To fulfill that purpose, at least the threat of a strike had to be real. Hedged in by the requirement of full consultation with the membership prior to being utilized in any manner that might possibly be construed to be in contravention of the Act, the current ballot would be next to useless. Once these conditions had been thoroughly publicized throughout the locals, as Alsbury and Fadling would ensure they were, the operators would be apprised of the hollowness of the union's move, and of the obvious lack of unity and trust around the District strategy. What is more, even with Alsbury's support, there was some risk that the vote would not be overwhelmingly affirmative. It hardly seemed worth taking that risk for a strike ballot that would give little or no real advantage to the District Committee. In addition, the District still had the International investigating committee breathing down its neck. Meetings held on 12 and 15 July with the District Executive had not been pleasant and indicated that were the District committee to try anything the least out of step with the law, the full force of the International's red-baiting propaganda would be unleashed on it once again. With the District quarterly council meeting only four days away, and locals 1-217, 1-71 and 1-85 calling once again for Fadling's resignation over his Vancouver Sun statement on the audit, Pritchett, Dalskog and associates were doing some fast thinking.⁶⁸

Already, in late June, as the battle over the audit raged, the District Executive had taken tentative steps to assert its autonomy with respect to the International. Failing some mutual agreement on a constructive organizing policy in British Columbia, in line with the District programme, the District Council affirmed it would establish its own organizing department. This action had been prompted by Brown's dismissal of three organizers in January and his subsequent appointment of six new International organizers loyal to Portland. In addition, the District Executive proposed a broad campaign to open the border to trade union delegations. It urged that, in line with the 1947 convention resolution to make International conventions biannual, the 1948 meeting be postponed until border

restrictions were lifted. The scheduling of the Portland convention, quite intentionally it appeared, on the same dates as the CCL convention, only added insult to injury.⁶⁹ The disastrous course of coast contract negotiations brought the whole matter to a head at the July quarterly council meeting. To interfere with District organizing policy and to cooperate with the government in excluding British Columbia delegates from participation in conventions was bad enough—but not sufficient to cause a real break. International interference in the collective bargaining process, designed to hamper and ultimately discredit the District negotiating committee and enhance the position of the white bloc/Fadling coalition on a programme of compliance with the “slave laws” was too much to tolerate. From control of District organizing, and now District collective bargaining, it was a short step to control of the District Executive.

The only effective means the District had of fighting the opposition and maintaining its position with the rank-and-file was to demonstrate its effectiveness in the collective bargaining process. Since the spring of 1947, District leaders had been endeavouring, with mixed results, to consolidate ties with various sections of the rank-and-file over collective bargaining issues by pushing against an increasingly restrictive industrial relations system. To carry that struggle forward required an element of unity. Since 1947, the Fadling/white bloc coalition had worked to undermine that unity by playing on the mistakes of the 1946 strike and on fear amongst the rank-and-file that non-compliance with the law would ultimately cost the union much that it had gained over past years. By July 1948 the District Committee had been reduced to the level of bickering over the wording of a strike ballot that it knew it probably never could use for purposes other than merely threatening job action. When Alsbury and Fadling succeeded in defusing even the threat of a strike, the District Executive drew the line.

The 18 July quarterly District Council meeting was asked to pass two main resolutions. The two were tightly connected. The first order of business was a motion to apply for conciliation immediately and to hold in abeyance the taking of a strike vote. The

second order of business was the passage of a motion demanding the restoration of full District autonomy, the cessation of interference from International officers, the immediate withdrawal of International organizers appointed without consultation of the British Columbia membership, and finally, the resignation of International President James Fadling. If these demands were rejected, as they obviously would be, the District Council was instructed to take whatever steps it deemed necessary to protect the membership and save the union.

Dalskog gave a lengthy account of the negotiations to date, which served to justify and support both of these items of business. In detail he described for the delegates Alsbury's obstructive tactics as the Policy Committee moved toward a strike vote. Dalskog acknowledged that a long shut-down over the winter, the flood and now the fire season had all played into the employers' hands. Moreover, he had the amended ICA Act at his disposal "and all the reactionaries inside the Government behind him." But, Dalskog added, "I think we have to be frank about this—the fact of the matter is that the question that has been raised by 357 in regards to the finances of this District and the suspicion that has been cast upon the integrity of the District Officers in regard to this matter, has created dissention and argument that is favourable to the employer." The forces aligned against the union, the President continued, realized that it was the largest in the province and the backbone of the economy. They realized that "this union had led the fight not only on the economic front but also on the political front in fighting for favourable legislation." The employers would be quite happy, he warned, if they could manoeuvre this union into a situation where they could remove the leadership of District One "and start the process of disintegration of this organization." In view of all these conditions, and in view of the conditions laid down by Alsbury and Fadling that "we proceed through all provisions of the ICA Act prior to a strike vote being used, and possibly need another 'official' strike vote," he moved that the District Council apply for conciliation and hold the strike vote in abeyance.

George Mitchell, not one to back down from a fight, jumped up and demanded that in view of the publicity already given to the intended strike vote, someone must take responsibility for the change in District policy. Pritchett shot back, that Mitchell must, for one. Pritchett then reviewed the history of the last few months, including, during District elections, the press and radio campaign of the bosses that had been generated out of white bloc charges of missing funds. Who was responsible for the scuttling of the strike vote? Alsbury and others who engaged radio time to smear District officers, was Pritchett's short answer. The employer could now afford to stall, concluded Pritchett, because he was happy that within the previously united ranks of the IWA there was now "a weakness displayed." The District Executive had requested the International to withhold its "so-called investigation" until after the contract was signed, he reminded, rather than add more fuel to Stuart's fire. Instead, Fadling made a public statement relative to the investigation and its purpose. Pritchett then proceeded to give his lecture on the ICA Act. The LRB, he noted, was much concerned as to how it could possibly take a vote of members in this industry because it would take an army of people to do it. The only possible way for the union to take a vote would be to rely on the active membership in each operation. Under the ICA Act, the government had set up a cooling-off period designed to aid employers through its dampening effect on workers. This conciliation procedure could only be shortened, Pritchett urged,

by a Union that is prepared to go out and fight for the preservation of the best interests of the workers militantly, who recognizes that the law has been established by a Government hostile to labour, doing the bidding of big business, placing restrictive laws upon the Statute Books; an organization that recognizes such a situation, that is prepared not to be so legalistic minded that they consider that every letter of the law must be fulfilled, a law that is made on behalf of the big business.

Then he gave the example of Mine Mill as the type of union that had attempted such tactics by proceeding militantly to take a strike vote regardless of the law. It was up to the membership to take the lead in speeding up the process of conciliation and voting, and so undermine the advantage to the employer that had been built into the Act. Alsbury meekly

responded that the only proper way to remove the obnoxious sections of the Act was by voting out the people responsible for writing it. It was correct to comply with the Act, he said, in order to get public support.⁷⁰

That last exchange between Pritchett and Alsbury expressed succinctly the essential rift in the union. It took the appearance of partisan conflict between LPP and CCF supporters over the issue of political action. With its base in the trade union movement, the LPP naturally ran up against the CCF with its focus on the legislative and electoral process. But underlying that surface phenomenon was an essential difference over the relationship between the economic and the political struggle, which divided the two camps in the IWA in a much more immediate way than did party affiliation. While the woodworkers' union passed through the AFL on its way to the CIO, its roots were in a much more militant, if not syndicalist tradition. That connection was not so traceable through individual leaders as it was through the traditions and customs of the job, particularly in logging. Pritchett, Dalskog, Bergren and others had worked hard in the early years to harness that "syndicalist beast" and tie it to a new, disciplined mode of trade unionism within the more highly-organized structures that resulted from state intervention in the industrial relations process. They spent many long months, if not years, campaigning amongst legislators, and amongst the rank-and-file, to generate support for a "Canadian Wagner Act." By July 1948, when he stood before District delegates and denounced the legalism of the white bloc, it must have occurred to Pritchett that he had travelled a long way in the course of a decade; but so had the law and the industrial relations apparatus that he had so ardently championed during the dying days of the New Deal. The white bloc leaders were the natural successors to the highly structured, institutionalized, bureaucratic trade unionism that Pritchett, Morgan and cohorts had helped produce.

Alsbury and Mitchell, in thought if not in person, represented a different strain that had also come into the early CIO structure. They, like Philip Murray and others, essentially embraced the pure-and-simple trade unionism of the American Federation of

Labour, and displayed a dislike for political theory. The political alliance between the CIO and the Democratic party during the Roosevelt era, and to a lesser extent between the CCL and the CCF parliamentary wing in Canada during the war, served to mask, and at the same time reinforce, the fundamental aversion that these trade unionists had to a synthesis of economic and political issues. During the 1946-48 shakedown of the labour movement, these basic differences in approach to trade union practice were forced to the surface once again. They were differences that were rooted in the post-war world, not only in global confrontation between American imperialism and Soviet socialism, but more fundamentally in perceptions of the relationship between labour and capital. For Pritchett, that relationship was not static, but one that could be at least altered and reorganized, if not completely abolished, through continuous struggle. For Alsbury, Fadling and the like, the class relationship was an essentially fixed, unalterable structure within which organized labour had won a place. Their job was to maintain it. If in the context of post-war reaction that meant compliance with the "yellow-dog slave-law," then comply they would, in the interests of the working class. For the District cadre who had built the IWA in British Columbia, compliance meant retreat, and retreat within a dynamic model of class relations was the precursor to defeat. Rather than sit back and watch their hard-won achievements be destroyed by a coalition of industrial capitalists and pure-and-simple trade unionists, they were prepared to risk all and start again from scratch. The period from July to October 1948 would see them travel the road to severing connections with both the mainstream labour movement, and the legalistic industrial relations structures within which they had carried out that struggle for over a decade. Dalskog started the process in motion with his announcement in the Lumber Worker that the District had applied for conciliation and was holding the strike vote in abeyance: "This is not a retreat, but an offensive in another direction...The time will come when we'll disregard the legalistic 'letter of the law' approach to the ICA Act. But first we've got to have full unity in our ranks."⁷¹

Chapter Thirteen

1948: The Split

To recount with too much detail the events which transpired between the July and October quarterly District Council meetings would, at this point, be anti-climactic. It is important to emphasize, however, that the decision to form a new independent Canadian union of woodworkers did not have its genesis solely in the heads of provincial communist conspirators, nor was it simply a response to a CCL-CCF-white bloc attack against the left-wing of the British Columbia labour movement. Irving Abella, in his chapter on the IWA, carefully traces the role of CCL operatives, in conjunction with the IWA head office, in systematically eliminating the communist leadership in British Columbia. But because his approach completely ignores the fundamental issues of industrial relations and collective bargaining, Abella cannot explain fully the decision taken at the 3 October District Council meeting.¹ Similarly, Lembcke and Tattum overlook the particular industrial relations history of the woodworkers in British Columbia. They try to explain disaffiliation only in terms of a response to the anti-communism emanating from an International white bloc gripped by a cold-war hysteria that reinforced its own inherent conservatism.² As much as the insights of these authors are of value in constructing a total picture, they do not explain the formation of the Woodworkers' Industrial Union of Canada.

The split in the IWA was primarily about two different visions of trade unionism. The decision to form a dual union was taken out of frustration. By the summer of 1948, the Pritchett-Dalskog leadership could proceed no further with its trade union agenda. These men could either change their programme or change their union. Neither choice was particularly satisfactory. There was not a clear consensus as to how far and how fast to proceed. But by July the wheels were in motion. The events of the ensuing weeks only accelerated them.

The resolution passed at the 18 July District Council meeting amounted to a declaration of open warfare. With the strike vote shelved indefinitely, the contract dispute

proceeding to conciliation, and the District calling for Fadling's resignation, all pretences of unity were dropped. With Ellery Foster's assistance, the "Voice of the IWA" took to the air on 19 July, seeking to establish the legitimacy of the white bloc as representative of the true interests of British Columbia woodworkers, and of the public at large.

The International's broadcast outlined the devastating liquidation of the province's forests in the interests of profit, a trend only to be enhanced by the so-called sustained yield plan of Gordon Sloan. These same huge corporations that were refusing to make a decent contract settlement with the IWA, were also refusing to practise scientific forestry. The greed and recklessness of these firms were causing people to adopt radical political solutions. "People wouldn't become communists or socialists," the "Voice" told its listeners, "if the free enterprise system would do a decent job of managing its great industries. Workers wouldn't turn to communism if the employers gave them the wages and benefits that their labour produces." The IWA would continue its efforts to settle the negotiations without a stoppage if possible, and to save the forests and get them under proper management, the "Voice" pledged.³

If the International was to succeed in taking the union away from the current leadership, it could not, apparently, do so merely by discrediting the integrity of the District Executive. It also had to offer a positive and attractive programme of its own to the woodworkers, to demonstrate a real alternative trade union leadership. In this respect Fadling and the International officers had more finesse than the New Westminster bloc. Fadling had done a credible job in negotiations. On the committee, he had guided Alsbury's performance, attempting to curtail his excesses. The International "Voice" was quite adept at packaging the anti-communist line within a constructive trade union programme, be it with respect to forestry policy or collective bargaining strategies. It had to be skillful to counter the efforts of the District Council's chief labour intellect, Al Parkin.

Parkin was in charge of the Educational Department, put together the "Green Gold" broadcasts, and was editor of the Lumber Worker. He had the ability to express complex

historical and theoretical questions in language that was accessible to the rank-and-file. During July, Parkin ran a series of three articles in the union paper entitled "What's Happening in the CIO." In the first two, he explored the history of the CIO's involvement with the New Deal, the coming of Taft-Hartley, and the knuckling-under of union leaders to a policy of pure-and-simple unionism. On 28 July, he began his third installment with the challenging declaration that any examination of CIO and CCL policy in 1948 revealed certain alarming features which only served "to underline the need for some counter action by the rank-and-file membership that will restore the splendid traditions and policies of the past." After criticizing the CCL for its anti-communist campaign, and its support of the Liberal government's austerity plan and "big business" foreign policy, Parkin went on to revive the whole debate around District Two's non-compliance with Taft-Hartley. The results of negotiations in the American districts had proven the wisdom of that move. Northern Washington walked off with 12½ cents, other category increases, plus an irrevocable check-off of dues. In exchange they voluntarily surrendered the union shop provision in some cases in order to avoid dangerous entanglements with Taft-Hartley. The other districts, which thought they were being so clever in protecting their bargaining agency status by complying, were now suffering the consequences: "After backing down on a question of basic trade union principle...they now find themselves having to back down on the fight for wages and conditions."⁴

Claude Ballard, International Assistant Director of Organization, was quick to answer Parkin's charges in a 15-minute broadside over CJOR radio on 9 August, which was given full coverage in the Vancouver Sun. After defending both the Marshall Plan, and the CIO-CCL support for it, Ballard went on to answer Parkin's charges concerning the northwest regional negotiations. Bad as the Taft-Hartley Act was, it continued to provide for recognition of trade unions as bargaining agents, Ballard reminded. Moreover, it went beyond The Wagner Act and gave all unions complying with its terms the right to secret ballot election on certification votes. While compliant districts were getting union

shop clauses and protecting earlier gains, District Two lost its maintenance of membership clause gained during the war. Ballard concluded: "It is this substantial progress of so-called "white bloc" districts...and not the backsliding of the Northern Washington district—that is helping to build a case for the union shop in the British Columbia district." The lesson for Canadian woodworkers was clear—to win union security, denied to the current leadership year after year, follow Fadling and the policy of the local white bloc.⁵

The implications were not lost on Dalskog or Parkin. In a wire allegedly sent to Fadling published in the Lumber Worker on 18 August, Dalskog protested that the 9 August CJOR broadcast and subsequent press release in the Sun "adds strength to employers' adamant refusal to meet membership's just demand. Continuing such disruption on eve of industry conciliation can benefit only employers." Commenting further on the broadcast, Dalskog was quoted as asking,

Is Brother Fadling afraid that the B.C. membership may win bigger results than were gained across the line that he permits such attacks to be made? Was it his intention to tell the employers of this province that a wage increase of 12½ cents an hour would be acceptable to the International officers?⁶

The fight for control of the woodworkers in British Columbia, which had marked much of the negotiation process, now spilled over into subsequent proceedings. By 3 August, William Fraser had gone through the motions of conciliating the dispute and had recommended referral to a conciliation board. The District committee met the following day to consider its nominee. Alsbury suggested William Mahoney, the Western Canadian Director of the CCL currently engaged in a campaign to clean communists out of the British Columbia labour movement. The committee declined the suggestion, appointing instead Harvey Murphy, well-known friend of the woodworkers, and one of Mahoney's chief targets. Alsbury protested, emphasizing the value of Mahoney's CCL connection.⁷

With conciliation proceedings underway, the District committee had seriously to consider once again the question of a strike vote. The union had announced publicly the

vote was in abeyance. Still, the possibility of a "legal," supervised vote was quite real, depending on the outcome of conciliation board hearings. If they were going to have their vote supervised, Pritchett and Dalskog wanted to clarify LRB regulations. Given the inadequate machinery of the LRB, if the union were not to do the supervision it might never get a vote and never be able to strike legally. Shortly after the quarterly council meeting, Dalskog met with Smelts of the Labour Board to discuss the vote. It was agreed to have the Board chairman draw up an affidavit to be sworn by members of the union, and to meet again to approve it.⁸

Pritchett and Dalskog met with Smelts and Strange (CCL representative on the Board) on 2 August to consider the affidavits. The law itself gave little direction concerning the vote. The ICA Act (1948) empowered the Board to make whatever regulations it deemed proper "for the purpose of establishing supervision."⁹ Immediately it became apparent that union officials under oath would not be prepared to administer a vote that included non-union employees. Pritchett and Dalskog pointed out that any union officer seen supervising a ballot cast by a non-union worker would "ruin all chances of his reelection to office." That discussion led to a consideration of whether a strike vote would be legal under the Act if non-union employees did not participate. Further, would an industry-wide positive vote be binding on such plants as Eburne Sawmills, with a high proportion of non-union workers, where a vote might be rejected by a majority of employees. Smelts and Strange, the Vancouver subcommittee of the Board, referred the whole matter to a full meeting of the LRB.¹⁰

On 9 August that body met to draw up regulations. Past practice in the industry, by agreement with the minister, had allowed for individual units to transfer their bargaining power via the local union to the District bargaining committee. That would no longer be the case. The Board ruled that votes be tabulated unit by unit (meaning by individual operation, plant or camp) and that each respective unit would decide its own action. A strike vote, to be legal, had to include all employees in a unit whether union or not. If a

unit voted against a strike and then was struck regardless, the strike would be illegal and could lead to decertification.¹¹

As Dalskog and Pritchett continued to insist that any ballot be of union members only, the Board met several times through August, hearing from Heffernan of Stuart Research, Ruddock of the CMA and J.C. Stewart of the Industrial Association of British Columbia, in an effort to work out machinery for conducting a full vote of all employees involved. It was finally decided to use Pacific Lumber Inspection Bureau employees to supervise the vote in the mills, and government log scalers in the camps. Both employers and the union would be permitted one scrutineer in each location.¹²

The outcome of these meetings represented another considerable setback to the union's ability to continue to act as bargaining representative within the parameters of the ICA Act and regulations. Any subsequent strike vote would now be weighted down by thousands of non-union votes. White bloc penetration of individual plants might further splinter a strike vote already seriously divided by industry sector as in 1947. What followed logically from strike votes by individual units, was contract approval by unit, given the power of the LRB to order a supervised vote on any offer made during a strike. From there it was only one step to individual plant contracts and the disintegration of industry-wide bargaining and the industry collective agreement which had been the union's crowning achievement during the war.

The issue of compliance with reactionary labour legislation had grave implications not only for the District Executive, but for all unionized woodworkers in British Columbia, making a mockery of the claim so confidently broadcast from Portland that the International's policy was paving the way for union security in District One. A strike vote, even in compliance with the ICA Act, and its new regulations, was out of the question not just in 1948, but so long as the woodworker union in British Columbia remained under the influence of the "Taft-Hartleyites" in Portland and New Westminster. If action to "save the

union" had, in July, appeared necessary at some indefinite time in the future, by the end of August it looked like that time had arrived.

During that month, as well, the white bloc took its campaign to the Mission local, 1-367, always a weak link in the District. Between 1946 and 1948, the local, under direction of its president, Freylinger, and Business Agent Shelley Rogers, had withheld per capita payments to the International. An audit earlier in the year by TURB had revealed over \$6000 in dues collected but not forwarded, as well as generally sloppy bookkeeping practices. Rogers was asked to resign in May. White bloc proponent and International organizer, Neil Shaw, was chosen to replace Rogers at the August general meeting, but the local executive refused to accept his appointment. Fadling took to the air with the news that in a move similar to that in New Westminster two years before, the rank-and-file with the assistance of an International organizer were ousting the communists from control in an effort to build the local up into a real union. In every issue, he boasted, the members voted for labour's interests against the Party line.¹³

The following month the Freylinger slate won reelection, but under a cloud of suspicion, as, in the president's words, "a large number of ballots were disqualified because of improper balloting in the sub-locals." Shaw claimed that over 50 percent of eligible voters had been disqualified, and, at Hammond alone, over 400 ballots had been tossed out. Shaw referred the matter to the International Board. The newly-elected slate immediately moved to suspend dues payments to the International until its present disruption in the British Columbia District ceased.¹⁴

Incompetent local administration had cost the District dearly in New Westminster. Now, Mission was on the verge of falling to the white bloc, and the latter's efforts in 1-217 were being stepped up. On 29 August the Vancouver mill local became the target of a white bloc "rump" meeting organized by Mahoney, Mike Sekora, Alsbury and International First Vice-President, Al Hartung. The intention was to establish an alternative local structure that could seize control at an appropriate time. Lloyd Whalen was elected chair of

the rump committee which also consisted of financial and recording secretaries. The meeting had been publicized widely throughout the local and was followed by a second one, at the end of September, attended by at least 25 people, called to discuss the conciliation board award.¹⁵

The events of August were indeed very alarming to the leaders of District One. After the July quarterly meeting, there was apparent consensus on the District Council over the need to move the woodworkers out of the IWA. Even Pritchett, long committed to international unionism, had become convinced that the writing was on the wall.¹⁶ Any differences were over tactics. Pritchett and Bergren, with long, painstaking experience in building a union from the ground up, knew the problems inherent in constructing a new organization. Gladys Hilland, too, based in the less than solid Vancouver mill local, favoured a gradualist approach. These trade unionists would have preferred to spend as long as possible preparing the groundwork for disaffiliation, and for the establishment of a new union within the existing structure of the IWA in British Columbia. The continued inroads of the white bloc, and the clear intention of the International to hold a special convention in 1948 to deal with problems in District One, undermined that approach.¹⁷ Pritchett was a man with a strong belief in, and respect for the rank-and-file. It was he who had pushed hardest, during 1946-48, for a strategy of bringing the increasingly bureaucratic District office and Negotiating Committee back into touch with the membership. Despite the obvious message delivered to the District Executive by the 1947 strike vote, the 1948 election results, and the Fighting Fund campaign, or perhaps because of these, Pritchett would have preferred to build a strong base of support amongst the workers on the job prior to moving out of the IWA. But he was caught. According to John Stanton, Pritchett was no fool:

He would know full well that a lot of bureaucracy had encrusted his union in 1947 and on into 1948 and his natural inclination would be to oppose that and go back to the rank-and-file, but he was trapped....like so many other individuals, even though they are the leaders of an organization they can

only go so far and they can get trapped, and I think Pritchett was trapped in the bureaucratic problem.¹⁸

When the decision was definitely taken to preempt possible International action, and carry the disaffiliation motion to the October quarterly District Council meeting, is not absolutely certain. The evidence suggests that the final decision was made at a meeting in which Pritchett, provincial LPP leader and local 1-71 Vice-President Nigel Morgan, and Mine Mill leader Harvey Murphy were involved, some time after Mine Mill's and Murphy's suspension from the CCL, and prior to the September BCFL convention. By most accounts, Murphy had a large say in the decision. He was the provincial Party's expert on trade union matters and tended to dominate Morgan.¹⁹ He was not terribly beholden to the Party's line at any time, and in particular, in 1948, with respect to unconditional support of the CCF.²⁰ On the other hand, he likely took some inspiration from the Party's hard anti-imperialist policy that emerged after the war. The 24 August announcement of the expulsion of Murphy and Mine Mill from the CCL was a turning point for the IWA. Expelled from the mainstream of the Canadian labour movement, and on the way to becoming a "dual" union in both the United States and Canada by virtue of CIO-CCL-sponsored Steelworker raids,²¹ Murphy and his union now represented a powerful and attractive pull on the woodworkers' leadership. Murphy had finished his rousing speech to the January District convention with the assurance to the delegates that the British Columbia District of the IWA "has no more loyal supporter...as myself or the Mine Mill and Smelter Workers' Union in British Columbia which will always be there by your side, a little bit ahead, maybe—we hope—but we will be there all the time fighting against the boss."²² Mine Mill was now also just "a little bit ahead" of the woodworkers in taking its leave, albeit involuntarily, of the mainstream labour movement. In August 1948, if District One wanted to continue to fight alongside Mine Mill, it would have to do so outside of the CCL. Murphy, with Morgan in tow, was able to override Pritchett's weakening resolve to stick it out a little longer in an effort to build a broader base of

support. That the Mine Mill/Murphy expulsion from the CCL was the turning point for District One is also indicated by the course of the conciliation board proceedings then underway.

The lumber operators based their case against union security on the argument that there existed in District One of the IWA "a bitter internal quarrel over the question of disposition of Union funds, and over the attitude of the Communist part of the membership in regard to the Marshall Plan and other matters." It was public knowledge that charges and counter charges had been made. The operators contended that the safety of the industry could not be jeopardized by such factional quarrels within the bargaining agency. One group, "given complete control," by virtue of the union shop, could expel members from the union who held key positions in particular operations, causing disruptions to production and loss of employment to other workers. In evidence, they provided a leaflet entitled, "The White Bloc," distributed by the District Council throughout mills in New Westminster during July, which indicated there was "serious internal trouble" in the union.²³ To further the point, Heffernan submitted to the board newspaper accounts of International statements and radio broadcasts recently directed against the British Columbia District.²⁴ Implicit in the industry presentation was the argument that union security could only be considered once internal disruption had ended. Since the disruption stemmed largely from the "activities of the Communist part of the membership," and its disposition of union funds,²⁵ if District One wanted ever to be given union security, it followed that the communist leadership would first have to go. That in essence was the message of the International, now clearly expressed by the industry as well.

Just so the workers and public would not miss the point, Bob Morrison, in his 27 August broadcast on the proceedings, asked how anyone could imagine that, with respect to the union's welfare fund demand, the coast operators "would pay large sums of money into the custody of a group of IWA officers who are in difficulty with their own

international office over finances, and in disfavour with large sections of their own membership over their political loyalties.²⁶

The District Executive had been baited like this before during negotiations, but had never allowed itself to be drawn into an out and out public battle over the issue of leadership. Now, however, with the Mine Mill ouster, and the decision taken to disaffiliate, the gloves were off. On 27 August, after Heffernan read into the record of the conciliation board proceedings the contents of the controversial District leaflet, Murphy suddenly dropped his guise as objective board member, and responded that if there were no discrimination against the union, there would be no need of union security. When he then accused the employers of having "stool pigeons" in the union, Heffernan denied it and blustered that it was scandalous that a man sitting on the board would accuse him of having stool pigeons.

To back up Murphy's charge, Dalskog and Pritchett proceeded to put before the board the McAllister labour-spy affidavits, and Dalskog's now-famous photographs of the graveyard entrapment of Noble from the year before. At the following session, the union brought as its first witness, Stella Munro, who had been secretary to the manager of BSW, Syd Smith, from 1942-45. She testified to having seen personal correspondence sent to Smith giving information regarding employees in the company's camps, as well as a letter outward advising against the hiring of an individual on account of union activities. Heffernan immediately asked for a recess until 16 September to allow for T.J. Noble, who was out of town, to appear and answer union charges.²⁷

At this point in the proceedings, Dalskog, Pritchett and Murphy knew full well that they would not get any concessions on the union shop, no matter how many spy plots they publicly unveiled. All the other contract issues had been heard by the board. These theatrics, which could only delay a final report and settlement, were not intended to influence board chairman Bird, who had already stated he regarded such evidence as irrelevant to the issue of union shop and a matter for the LRB.²⁸ The union executive, in

conjunction with Murphy, had decided to use the forum of the conciliation board to whip up some visceral reactions amongst the rank-and-file against the bosses and those "stooges" from the white bloc who were in bed with them. Dredging up the old graveyard shots and accusations of an elaborate network of spies and informers at the beck and call of Stuart Research, was a tactic intended to help pave the way to disaffiliation, part of a strategy designed to carry as many woodworkers as possible militantly and defiantly into a new all-Canadian industrial union. But "the long arm" (to borrow Stanton's phrase) of the lumber bosses intruded into these plans. Less than an hour prior to the scheduled airing of Al Parkin's evening "Green Gold" broadcast on 2 September, station officials notified the union's commentator that four pages had been completely deleted from his prepared script. The censored material dealt at some length with the labour spying evidence presented to the board three days before. The union met a similar setback when it tried to get its labour spy case into print in the form of full page newspaper advertisements. Both the Sun and the Vancouver News Herald allegedly turned down the ads.²⁹

Two days after the muzzling of Parkin, delegates to the British Columbia Federation of Labour assembled in convention with the suspended Mine Mill delegation looking on as guests. This was the occasion, according to Abella, where an "overconfident Pritchett," miscalculating his support, made the "fatal mistake" of moving to seat the 10 local 1-357 delegates whom the convention had voted already to exclude. The result was the capture by the CCL of the majority of executive seats. The way was now clear, according to Abella, for Mahoney's drive against the main bastion of the left—District One of the IWA.³⁰

Abella's analysis of Pritchett's behaviour makes no sense. On the one hand, we have an overconfident, almost careless Pritchett, willing to risk handing over the Federation to the anti-communists for no apparent reason. On the other hand, Abella presents us with a defensive, cautious Pritchett, opposing the hotheads in District One who would risk all by rushing headlong out of the IWA and the CCL without consolidating rank-and-file

support.³¹ What he forgets is the fact that the decision to leave the IWA in October had already been taken. While Pritchett may have resisted, it was characteristic of the man, once a course had been chosen by his comrades, to support it fully.³² His action at the Federation convention only makes sense if he was already on the road to disaffiliation from the IWA and the CCL. With Mine Mill and the District One leadership gone, the BCFL would soon fall to the Congress anyway. To try to exclude the New Westminster delegates on spurious grounds would only be playing once again into the hands of the anti-communists.

The adjourned conciliation board reconvened for its final two days of hearings on 16 September. Press reports gave little coverage or credence to the testimony of Don McAlister, while Noble's and Stuart's denials were treated at great length. Bird at one point was quoted as suggesting that the proceedings were being reduced to a farce, an opinion apparently shared by the Hammond sub-local of 1-367. It took the opportunity of publicly asking for the resignation of Pritchett and Dalskog for mishandling the hearings. Fadling, in a statement issued to the press on 29 September, called the board proceedings a "three ring circus" which made a "laughing stock of the IWA and the whole trade union movement." He also labelled the wage settlement obtained "very mediocre."³³

In fact, with some hard bargaining by Murphy, in consultation with the Policy Committee, the board's wage recommendation exceeded District expectations, and Fadling's ceiling—but only by one-half a cent. Pressed to get a settlement approved in time for the 3 October council meeting, the Policy Committee remained in constant session while Murphy, working feverishly, kept it apprised by phone of his progress. On 19 September, after eight phone calls in the space of three hours, Murphy had managed to mediate a settlement that he could sign as union representative, thus dampening any dissension that might have been fuelled in the logging locals by a minority report. Murphy bargained cleverly, offering to sign a unanimous award which excluded union shop in turn for inclusion of cook and bunkhouse workers in the overall wage settlement.³⁴ On wages,

the board recommended 13 cents or 11 percent, retroactive 75 days prior to signing. According to Murphy's assessment, the reason the operators went up so high on wages was that they had "no intention of giving in one inch on Union Security..."³⁵ The industry won its point on piece workers, with the increase given in terms of production rather than hours, in most cases. Train crews received extra increases, however, 10 cents for engineers and brakemen, and five cents for other crewmen. The union could even justify accepting a percentage increase, given the relatively high 13-cent floor, since it would help alleviate grievances of skilled workers, while not penalizing unduly the lower unskilled categories.

The morning following the settlement, the Policy Committee voted unanimously to accept the offer, and recommended all locals accept on or before 27 September, in the usual manner, "without worrying about the Government at this time." Murphy was voted a \$500 honorarium for his efforts in helping obtain "one of the highest settlements reached in Canada," an acknowledgement which particularly irked Alsbury. The New Westminster President got in one last parting shot, stating he would vote for the motion to accept the award, but wanted to "register my protest that the espionage incident and the 'White Bloc' leaflet were introduced, as they did not contribute to our benefit."³⁶

On 27 September, the Policy Committee announced unanimous acceptance by all locals. On 29 September, the Lumber Worker reported the signing of the new agreement, declaring "the basic 13 cent boost is one-half cent higher than last year's and higher than the increase won in Washington and Oregon." The main factor in preventing an even higher settlement, the paper declared, was internal disruption headed by Fadling and the "self-styled" white bloc in New Westminster. Members were warned that now, with the coast settlement, at least, behind them (the interior locals had still to sign), "We must decide our position very soon... We all want to maintain international affiliations. But we cannot permit such affiliations to be used as a means of destroying us."³⁷

On 1 October, with union acceptance confirmed, several BCLA-affiliated companies announced a boost in board rates in their camps of 50 cents, in order to pay for the increased wages to cook and bunkhouse workers. This action was particularly galling to the union since Murphy had consented to a unanimous report in order to get the cook and bunkhouse workers included in the overall increase. Even the Vancouver Sun criticized the employers' move, as over 300 loggers in at least four different camps, took job action in protest.³⁸ As the delegates assembled for the historic October quarterly District Council meeting, this latest bosses "splitting action," made possible only through union disruption, provided grist for the orators' mill while they warmed up for the main business at hand.

The resolution on board rates noted that after long negotiations including conciliation under Bill 87, and with the ink not dry on the settlement, the operators took this "underhanded action" knowing they would have the full support of local 1-357 and International President Fadling, together with the "reactionary" Coalition government. It resolved that members should stay in camp and fight this struggle, and offered full support to any workers finding it necessary to take action to safeguard the 1948 wage settlement.

Pritchett led off the speeches on the resolution, reiterating the union position that board charges should be part of collective bargaining. The LRB had been notified of this recent move, but little could be expected from it as it was presently constituted "under this phoney act, under this Taft-Hartley Act." Now, he did not propose to win this struggle with a "Taft-Hartley" programme, and that was precisely what the resolution stated, according to Pritchett. "We are not going to import Taft-Hartleyism into Canada. I am very happy that the International President is here to hear that...I am charging the International President of climbing in bed with the Taft-Hartley Act." Since the union did not intend to have a "Taft-Hartley policy in this province," it was necessary to vote in support of the loggers who will

carry the fight and ask those loggers not to leave the job. In some instances it may be necessary to have job stop-work meetings. In other instances...a successful slowdown will be necessary, in other instances, work one day

and not the next; in other instances, protest meetings and strong logger delegations to the camp push and the general manager, keeping the heat on everywhere, mobilizing the entire membership because this only affects a section of our membership, mobilizing the sawmill workers behind it....."

Even before the disaffiliation motion had hit the floor, Pritchett had given his own "rank-and-file" statement of what the Woodworkers' Industrial Union of Canada was all about; what the new union's "Declaration of Independence" would mean when translated into action. That Declaration was the distillation of a programme that Pritchett had stood and fought for over the course of two decades, a programme that had been seriously compromised both by the success of his own efforts and by those who had taken advantage of his, and his comrades hard work—opportunists like Fadling and Alsbury who had infiltrated the union bureaucracy, probed at weaknesses in the union structure and bargaining strategy, and were poised to grab it all away from them. "Whereas this Union belongs to us the woodworkers," began the disaffiliation motion, "we will not allow the bosses, the agencies of the government, nor the labor fakirs to lay hands upon it."³⁹

Chapter Fourteen

Epilogue: The New IWA

Many of those on the left of the labour movement in the 1940s and 50s viewed the 1948 split as one of the worst mistakes the party ever made, spelling the end of radicalism both in the labour movement and in many communities where the IWA formed a nucleus for left-wing political organization.¹ This kind of analysis must be tempered by the conclusions reached above as to the conditions under which the split took place. The departure of the communists from the IWA was not the cause, but a symptom of a more general structural change going on in the labour movement. Had they managed to stay within the IWA and the CCL, District One's leaders would have done so on much different terms than before. There is most certainly a question to be asked with respect to the consequences of the split—but it must be reformulated. What must be examined is the longer term impact on the IWA of the triumph of pure-and-simple trade unionism, and the eventual ascendancy of full-blown business unionism in the province's most important industry.

It is outside the parameters of this discussion to try to examine in depth the impact of this development on the British Columbia labour movement in general. One detail of note, however, points towards a new direction in the province after 1948. It came in the submission made by the BCFL to the cabinet in 1949, and then to an ICA Act Enquiry Board set up in 1951. In both instances, the Federation, supported by the IWA, voiced its usual objections to the supervised voting provisions, the protection to craft unions and so on; all good trade union concerns which emanated from a desire to be treated as responsible bargaining agents for their members. One item on the agenda in 1949, and after, that would not have been considered previously, was a suggestion to amend the definition of a trade union so as to include the phrase: "(An organization etc.) which has as its primary purpose the regulation of relations between employers and employees through collective bargaining." This suggestion certainly appealed to the 1951 enquiry board, and it was

incorporated into its recommendations. Given the power of the LRB under the ICA Act to revoke the certification of any labour organization that it deemed had ceased to be such, that definition would serve as a clear warning and threat to any trade union inclined to engage in economic action that might be construed as having a political purpose. Even the otherwise retrograde Labour Relations Act passed by the Social Credit government in 1954 did not go quite so far, preferring the more liberal amendment: "(An organization etc.) that has as one of its purposes the regulation in the Province of relations between employers and employees through collective bargaining."²

Now, the new direction in the labour movement after 1948 manifested itself most clearly at the top, amongst the labour bureaucrats who drafted such policy recommendations. Behind those leaders, in the IWA at least, marched much the same contingent of woodworkers, many of whom were used to a somewhat different drummer. Just as the process of establishing a new, lean and militant Canadian union could not be instantaneous, so too, the full integration of the IWA membership into a new trade union practice would come about only gradually as well.

In 1949 however, there were already portents of things to come. The operators, pressing their advantage, had included a reversion to the 1946 wage rates and erosion of the 40-hour week amongst other offensive contract proposals. A majority conciliation board report recommended no wage increase. The District Policy Committee was directed by local meetings to reject the award and call for a strike vote. The Negotiating Committee officially requested such a vote, whereupon the LRB called it in for further discussions. Without consultation with either the Policy Committee or the local membership, the negotiators accepted the proposed LRB terms of settlement, which were slightly better than those the board had recommended, but still provided no wage increase. The Policy Committee later supported the negotiators' action. Criticism from parts of the union was deflected in the name of the Committee's "responsibility to the membership" to look after their best interests.³

In light of the poor state of the union there was some justification for avoiding a strike at this point. The membership, nevertheless reasserted itself at the following convention, with the adoption of a "No Contract, No Work - Union Shop" programme. By mid-1950, the union was in better shape in terms of membership and finances, and was able to push a bit harder, this time rejecting a conciliation board award of nine cents agreed to even by its own nominee, Eugene Forsey. The union challenged the LRB to take, at long last, a supervised strike vote in the woodworking industry. In the largest government-supervised strike vote to that date taken in Canada, between 70 and 75 percent of woodworkers voted to strike. Thirty-two of 209 units voted against. At the height of a rising market curve, the industry came up with three and one-half cents more, and a modified union security proposal. These concessions staved off a strike four hours prior to the contract expiry deadline adopted by the convention.⁴

With many WIUC adherents drifting back into the IWA, and with a maintenance-of-membership clause now in hand supported by an understanding that the employer would "co-operate with the Union in obtaining and retaining" its members, the union bureaucrats moved to assert control.⁵

Midway through the contract year, in February 1951, the union responded to a suggestion from Forest Industrial Relations (the successor company to Stuart Research, usually referred to as FIR) to extend the agreement an extra year on the basis of a nine-cent increase retroactive to 1 January 1951, and a cost-of-living bonus adjustment in July 1951 and January 1952.⁶ In working out this settlement, which initiated a pattern of tying wages directly to the economic cycle, the union executive praised itself for "shrewd bargaining" in light of a possible wage freeze due to the Korean War. The membership did not uniformly share this view of a stand-pat settlement which provided a degree of economic stability to both itself and the industry, but also suspended bargaining on any other contract issues for two full years. The deal passed by only a 9781 to 5549 margin.⁷

While the 1950 interim agreement started the ball rolling, 1952 was the pivotal year in the march toward full business unionism in the IWA. Once again, the District convention adopted a "No Contract, No Work" policy, now backed up by a District strike fund that had reached "sizeable proportions."⁸ On directions from the convention, the delegated Wages and Contract Conference forwarded to the District Policy Committee an ambitious proposal calling for incorporation of the 14-cent January cost-of-living bonus into the wage rate, plus an additional 35 cents, union shop, welfare plan and other lesser demands. At the same time, the industry, with British and American sales beginning to slump, called for a wage cut.⁹

Negotiations were followed by conciliation, with Lawrence Vandale, financial secretary of the New Westminster local, serving as the union nominee. When the conciliation board was slow getting underway (hearings began on 3 June), the District Policy Committee recommended to the District Council flexibility with respect to the 15 June strike deadline of the convention.¹⁰ The 7 June majority award, accepted by the industry, called for a wage freeze with a continuation of the cost-of-living adjustments, and nothing else of significance. Vandale refused to make a recommendation, noting in his minority report, much to the chagrin of some union members, that neither side had yet to bargain seriously. "It may be necessary," he wrote, "for both parties to 'pocket their pride' in an effort to arrive at an equitable solution."¹¹ Taking its cue from Vandale, the LRB stalled when the union requested a strike vote without first voting on the award. Instead the LRB gave an extension to the conciliation board to pursue a settlement. The LRB and the employers apparently felt they could use the imminence of the union's own strike deadline against it and force a quick settlement.¹²

Meanwhile the District Council met in quarterly session, and considered the Policy Committee recommendation to be flexible on the strike deadline. After several attempts at reconciling the convention's "No Contract, No Work" dictum with the provisions of the ICA Act, by a margin of one vote the Council decided to abide by the policy of the union in

the event that it conflicted with the law.¹³ Accordingly, the week prior to 15 June, the union held its own strike authorization vote which came in 93 percent in favour of a strike.¹⁴ Bound by the Council decision, the Policy Committee refused to discuss lifting its deadline with the LRB, though it considered scaling down its demands. FIR refused further negotiations with the deadline pending, and the LRB finally approved a strike vote for the following week, but too late to comply with the District deadline.¹⁵

On 15 June the coast local of District One, against the better judgement of the Policy Committee, embarked on its first industry-wide strike since 1946. FIR immediately labelled the strike illegal, which technically it was. The Vancouver Sun urged the LRB to hold a vote, since the union vote had been held prior to the full release of the conciliation board reports.¹⁶ The LRB attempted to draw the industry back into negotiations, intending to defer questions of legality during the talks. FIR refused negotiations until a legal vote on the award had been held.¹⁷

Unfortunately for the District leaders, this strike, which none of them really wanted, occurred at a unique moment during which a virtual power vacuum prevailed in the province. It took over a month after the defeat of the Johnson administration before some very complicated and arcane voting procedures yielded the result of a Social Credit victory. During that period no political authority existed to intervene in the dispute. Finally Gordon Sloan stepped into the breach, and on 12 July offered to mediate.¹⁸ Twelve days later, he recommended a fully retroactive five and one-half cent increase with an option for either party to reopen negotiations in December. The cost-of-living bonus would be maintained, and three statutory holidays thrown in to sweeten an otherwise mediocre monetary award. Full union shop was denied on the convenient pretext that the union had engaged in an illegal job action. With that salt rubbed in its wounds, and several members facing prosecution, the union accepted Sloan's offer on 28 July. Three days later the 45-day strike ended.¹⁹

The Sloan award was not a settlement worthy of a 45-day strike. The strike and the award produced dissension in the union which surfaced towards the end of the year as the biannual District elections approached. The strike had been a disaster yet it provided an opportunity for those in charge of the union to tighten their grip and launch out more aggressively on a course already well charted prior to 1948, but now bogged down in "too much" rank-and-file involvement in collective bargaining under the ineffective leadership of Alsbury.

During the fall of 1952, the District Executive undertook a major review of negotiation procedure. In the past, the union bargaining agenda emerged out of local resolutions put to the District convention. All those approved were forwarded to a delegated Wages and Contract Conference, which established priorities, and elected a Policy Committee to carry them out. From the Policy Committee, a negotiating team was elected to do the actual bargaining on its behalf. This procedure, while it ensured the drawing of local and sectoral rank-and-file concerns and demands into the collective bargaining, often created problems when it came actually to negotiating a settlement. In 1952, this procedure "tied the hands" of the Policy Committee when it needed a few extra days to work out a deal and avoid a strike. The District Executive, in the months following the strike, moved to reorganize the process so as to give more control and authority in determining and implementing proposals to the District Policy Committee. Now, under the executive proposal, the Policy Committee would be set up at convention. Contract resolutions would be referred to it, from which a "programmatic resolution" would be forwarded to the Wages and Contract Conference for approval. In negotiations, the Policy Committee would be delegated sufficient authority, if it were in "the best interests of the membership," to deviate from the original demands to make a satisfactory settlement.²⁰

The Executive proposal for a revamped negotiation procedure was brought to the January convention and passed with little contest. The delegates were sufficiently impressed, in the aftermath of the 1952 strike, by the eloquent arguments of Lloyd Whalen

against a "pseudo-militant policy that we 'should take her out come hell or high water.'" In a knock at Alsbury, who in his report to the convention had tried to defuse possible criticism, Whalen asserted that "if we make serious errors then I think we should assume just criticism for them" and respond accordingly. Why, he asked, when they all knew that the LRB and employers "were conniving to put our Union in an embarrassing position and they set a trap for us..." had the union stepped into it. There were also strong words from Executive member Stuart Hodgson against a policy that allowed the Committee to be trapped by a No Contract-No Work dictum from the membership—a mistake, he feared, "that had led to a lot of the dissension that is in the Convention at the present time."²¹

That dissension figured predominantly in the ensuing campaign for District office, and provided for a restructuring of the Executive in line with the new, tighter policy on contract negotiations. In recent balloting for International office, Fadling, who was considered by some to be not effective enough in rooting out the communists from the union (a weakness attributed in part to his drinking and gambling habits) was replaced by hard-liner Al Hartung, a long-time rival for the presidency.²² Alsbury, who had been closely identified with Fadling, was not a very effective leader himself; good at back-room intrigue, but a weak figure when it came to directing union affairs.²³ During the course of negotiations, he had discredited himself by allowing Joe Morris to take the lead in carrying out what was considered a central function of a District President.²⁴ At the same time, Alsbury had to assume responsibility for the mistakes that had been made. In August, International Vice-President Claude Ballard came north in the midst of the strike post-mortem controversy and accusations, and blasted the District leadership, while explicitly minimizing the negative impact of Morris' role.²⁵

Morris had gotten into some difficulty during the course of the strike over an "indiscreet" (in Ballard's terms) set of private negotiations carried out with Arthur Sereth, the manager of Eureka Sawmills near Nanaimo. Sereth had "hot" lumber tied up behind IWA pickets at the Nanaimo assembly dock. He approached local I-80 Vice-President and

Business Agent, Tony Poje about a possible deal. On Poje's advice, Sereth contacted Morris, President of the local and Vice-President of the District. While his company was part of the FIR group, Sereth was growing impatient and was prepared to sign an individual deal if the terms were right. District One had a long-standing practice of using such individual deals with weaker independents, signed on the union's terms, to put pressure on the master negotiations. It was not unheard of for a union negotiator to undertake such talks. Morris, however, fell into the trap of discussing a settlement on Sereth's terms of a five-cent increase and four statutory holidays, which he said he would submit to the Negotiating Committee. There may indeed have been some justification in Morris' mind, as one injunction had already been served against the District officers and union members in Ladysmith by Coastal Towing. A few days after his discussions with Sereth on 11 or 12 July, a similar injunction order on behalf of Canadian Transport was filed against 1-80 pickets including Poje, at the Nanaimo dock. By this time, however, Sereth had apparently decided he could not bargain apart from FIR, and asked Morris if it would be possible to submit a similar offer on the union's behalf for consideration by FIR President, J.M. Billings. Morris later claimed he suggested the matter should proceed no further. But in a signed affidavit, which Sereth presented to FIR, Morris was quoted as agreeing to have the proposal submitted to FIR on the understanding that it would still need Executive approval.

It is possible that Morris did consent to its submission, despite his denials. It is also possible that Sereth, in conjunction with FIR, had concocted the whole scheme in an effort to force the union into a compromising position which might lead to a master settlement. At any rate, after taking the union's latest master offer to FIR for consideration, Gordon Sloan, who at this point was acting as mediator, returned to tell the union Committee it had been rejected in view of Morris' offer to Sereth, a client of FIR. According to Alsbury, who later tried to use the issue to shift the blame for the poor settlement onto Morris, Sloan labelled the union's wage demand "ridiculous" in light of

what Billings had told him about Morris' alleged proposal. When Sloan's final settlement proved to be very close to the terms Morris discussed with Sereth, and a very long way from the union's original request, the District Vice-President appeared ripe for attack.²⁶

A full investigation was launched, in the midst of which came a call from at least one sub-local in Courtenay for Morris' resignation, initiated by an Alsbury loyalist, and election running mate, Jacob Holst. The District Investigating Committee was not receptive to Alsbury's allegations, implying he had been responsible for distributing copies of Sereth's affidavit around local 1-363. With Ballard intervening on Morris' behalf, charging that the case against him had been motivated for political reasons, the August quarterly District Council meeting voted to uphold Morris' version of events. That was the beginning of the end of Stuart Alsbury.²⁷

The Morris-Mitchell election slate struck back against the Alsbury faction in a manner which reflected the degenerative condition of District leadership in general. Mitchell smeared his rival for secretary-treasurer, Lawrence Vandale, with a familiar charge that the local 1-357 financial secretary had "jockeyed the records" with respect to strike fund payments, in the amount of \$10,000. Well-schooled in the ways of the old white bloc, Alsbury and Vandale promptly took out an advertisement in the New Westminster Columbian which distorted Mitchell's charges, saying he had accused Vandale of stealing \$10,000 from the local. Vandale also distributed through various locals copies of a letter obtained from International Secretary-Treasurer, Carl Winn, listing payments received by negotiators during the strike. Morris topped the list, receiving at least 50 percent more than any of the others. It was implied that he had failed to repay the District as he should have out of respect for striking workers. Investigations were launched into both episodes with Mitchell being exonerated of accusations against Vandale's honesty, and Vandale chastised for making official union correspondence available to the public.²⁸

The outcome of the District elections was consistent with the results of these various investigations. The incumbent slate, with Morris now at its head, defeated Alsbury's "new

look" slate, but only by the narrowest of margins—6679 to 6381—in the case of the presidential contest.²⁹ It was predictable, but nevertheless ironic, that in its official organ of loggers' and millworkers' clubs, Timber-r-r, the LPP backed Alsbury over Morris as "more likely to carry through the desires of the membership." In particular it quoted a Morris resolution submitted to a local 1-80 meeting, calling on the 1953 District convention to put major emphasis on improved working conditions, "and to consider monetary gains to be of secondary importance in consideration of the economic condition of the lumber industry."³⁰

With a new president in place, committed to a business-like approach in negotiations, and a new streamlined negotiation procedure designed to place more control in the hands of the District policy bureaucracy, the way was clear to forge ahead and carry to its logical conclusion the capture of the union in 1948 by the white bloc forces of pure-and-simple trade unionism.

The union went into its 1953 negotiations led by Carl Winn, International Secretary, as its chief negotiator.³¹ District elections were still in progress, but Winn was firmly in the Morris camp, and could be relied on to steer the Negotiating Committee in the correct direction. The Wages and Contract Conference had put forward a demand for 15 cents across the board—the lowest proposal since 1949. In order of priority there followed six paid statutory holidays, a fare allowance for loggers, and union shop.³² In a District press release issued just prior to proceeding to conciliation, the union announced that the importance of that year's negotiations was emphasized by the fact that Hartung had assigned Winn and E.W. Kenney, the International's Research Director, to present the union's brief to the board.³³

On 2 July, the Lumber Worker reported acceptance of the unanimous conciliation board recommendation of a five cent an hour increase with incorporation of the current nine cent-bonus into the base rate, taking it to \$1.49. That meant that at the expiry of the sixth contract year after the white bloc took over the union, the basic wage paid to woodworkers

would have risen a total of 41 cents per hour. The cost of living increments were terminated, and certain category and seniority adjustments made. The editor of the union paper opined that, "It is an occasion when it pays to grasp the substance instead of reaching for the shadow."³⁴

To dampen any possible criticism of the Policy Committee's recommendation of acceptance, after newly-elected President Morris outlined the terms of the award over the union's "Green Gold" broadcast, Carl Winn took the microphone to urge acceptance. His speech marked the official beginning of a new era of business unionism in the British Columbia lumber industry. He conceded that not all members were pleased with the decision against extra holidays and the union shop. But weighing the adverse factors of the award "against the dire results another strike in the industry this year would have on the overall economy of B.C.," it was necessary to take a "long look at some other important considerations." These considerations related to the "very definite hope that a new pattern of labour-management relations arose from this year's negotiations." That pattern, if it materialized, Winn assured his listeners, would mean a big step toward stabilizing the lumber industry in the province. He then got to the crux of the new direction he was advocating:

To speak of "cooperation" between labour and management in this industry, after some of the things which have transpired over the years, probably borders on "heresy" to many of our people....

Both this Union and the Employers have been irresponsible in the past in meeting some of the problems of this industry squarely and trying to solve them realistically. The International is completely convinced that we have now reached the point where both sides must put their houses in order and work together for the betterment of this industry....

This is our industry just as much as it is the Employer's.... We have just as much at stake in its success or failure as have the employers. It is to our benefit that this industry continues to "boom."

It is to our benefit that this industry be expanded and well managed. It is to our benefit that it be able to operate on prices that keep it competitive in a world market and still bring a reasonable profit.

It is to our benefit that the Employers are aggressive and progressive in the marketing features of the industry. It is to our benefit that the Employer makes money....

The Employers have been reluctant to take this step, of joining forces for the common good, and so has this union—up to this time. Now we—the union—are taking the initiative in this direction because we see in such a course the distinct and important possibility of strengthening the economy of this great industry.

If this result can be obtained, our Union members and their families are going to gain far more than they ever will under a short-sighted policy of “let the Employer worry about his business and we’ll tend to ours.”³⁵

Winn’s speech was greeted with considerable delight by local scribes. Sun staff reporter Chris Crombie documented it in full, calling the speech an “unprecedented move to develop a ‘strong pattern of cooperation’ between management and labour in British Columbia’s vast lumber industry.”³⁶ Columnist Elmore Philpott noted that for years he had been trying to sell the same message—that labour, management and the general public had to put their heads together “to nail down the British Commonwealth market for wood products...If we don’t grab and hold those markets—make no mistake—Russia will be right there to grab them, on a barter basis.”³⁷ No sooner had the applause died away, than the interior industry broke out in an ugly and violent dispute, the result of which could only have confirmed for both the business unionists and their corporate supporters, the wisdom behind the proposed “new pattern” of industrial relations.

The interior strike of 1953 grew out of long-felt injustices amongst elements of the local leadership and rank-and-file as to their inferior status in relation to the coastal workforce. During the late 1940s and early 50s, with production and employment expanding far more rapidly in the interior sector than on the coast, workers began to feel the inequity of their position more acutely, and a growing confidence that they could do something to correct the balance. This militant perspective was reinforced by inter-union rivalry, most particularly in the southern interior, where both the AFL and the WIUC still had a noticeable presence. Nevertheless, the interior remained unevenly developed

industrially and unevenly organized by the union. Its condition played right into the hands of LRB strike vote regulations which required balloting on a unit-by-unit basis. The union adopted a strategy of taking votes in only selective operations in order to forestall a disaster. Even then, some of the votes went against strike action. The overall strike vote in the south was almost evenly split with 19 of 39 units voting to walk out at the end of October.³⁸ In the north, overall balloting showed almost 70 percent in favour, but again 14 of 34 units voted not to strike, and not all units were balloted.³⁹

The workers tried to expand the strike through illegal picketing of producing plants. Several injunctions were served against such picketers in Kelowna, Quesnel and other points. With violence erupting in his home territory, Premier Bennett intervened, meeting four times with the two sides in an attempt to bring them to mediation.⁴⁰ Meanwhile the union newspaper was aglow with stories of an operator's "strike breaking plot" based on highly confidential correspondence from the Interior Lumber Manufacturers' Association outlining procedures to be used in getting evidence against illegal pickets.⁴¹

Finally, in December, County Court Judge, Arthur E. Lord of Vancouver, was appointed by the government as a one-man industrial enquiry commission into both northern and southern disputes. After a strike lasting over three months, the workers eventually won a five and one-half cent increase—one-half cent less than had been recommended by a conciliation board in September.⁴² In his report, Lord made note of affidavits presented to him listing "such a series of unlawful acts, including violence, assault and damage to property on the part of members of the union as to show a complete disregard for the laws of this country." As a result he could not even consider the issue of union security. "It would be unfortunate," he declared, "to let the union members feel that they had ground out an agreement from the employer as a result of unlawful acts." Morris and Winn could not have agreed more.⁴³

The 1953 events in the interior provided even further justification for the new pattern of industrial relations advocated by the union leaders. To Morris, Hartung and

Winn, the strikes were a legacy of a bygone era, and spoke to the urgent need to organize the interior properly in order to bring the workforce into line with the new direction they were trying to chart.

The 1953 interior strikes, as well as the coast shutdown of 1952, also provided an opportunity for the new Social Credit regime to put its stamp on the province's industrial relations system with a revamping of labour legislation. The fact that the leaders of the strongest union in the province had just opened the door to a new era of labour-management cooperation assured Bennett, and his minister Lyle Wicks, that there would be little resistance to their new Labour Relations Act (Bill 28 as it was known) passed by the legislature in April 1954 to replace the ICA Act.

The lead up to the Labour Relations Act had begun shortly after the Social Credit party gained power. Towards the end of 1952, Wicks had informed labour leaders that at the expiry of the term of the present Labour Relations Board, on 12 January 1953, he intended to curtail its powers considerably. Only the chairman would remain full-time. Labour and management nominees would serve on a per diem basis as needed. Wicks intended to transfer certification and administration to his department staff, and to give increased authority to conciliation officers to settle disputes.⁴⁴ Employer groups had lobbied for the elimination of conciliation boards altogether, and their replacement with small subcommittees of the LRB.⁴⁵ In general, the minister's intention was to curtail the power of boards with union representation on them, and centralize control of most vital aspects of labour relations concerning bargaining, conciliation and industrial dispute enquiry under his own authority. That was indeed what the new Act did.

Conciliation officers were given the authority to act in place of a conciliation board where they considered referral inadvisable, by making recommendations with the same force and effect as those made by a board.⁴⁶ Whereas the ICA Act had not directed a union as to the method of approving or rejecting a board report, the Labour Relations Act now instructed a vote of "the employees in the unit affected," as in the case of a strike vote under

the old Act. Now non-union employees could decide on contract issues, removing an important incentive for joining a union where membership was not required.⁴⁷ The Act's strike control provisions built upon those of the ICA Act. The effect of any strike vote would expire after three months, and 48 hours written notice of intention to strike became mandatory.⁴⁸ Adjudication as to the legality of a strike was taken from the jurisdiction of the minister and given to a supreme court judge. Before, discretionary power to cancel certification on account of an illegal strike had rested with the LRB. The Board had refrained from using it except in cases affecting small groups of employees. The IWA strikes of 1952 and 1953 had indicated the inability or unwillingness of the Board to act in this regard.⁴⁹ Now, where a judge certified a strike to be illegal, he was also given the discretionary power to decertify, and declare assignments of wages and collective agreements null and void.⁵⁰ The Labour Relations Act was, in short, a thorough revision of the industrial relations statutes and included changes to various other parts of the law, such as those dealing with certification.⁵¹

On 18 June, Lyle Wicks announced that the government-appointed members of the Board of Industrial Relations (already responsible for administration of such things as the minimum wage and hours of work regulations) would assume in entirety the newly-defined duties of, and, in effect absorb, the LRB. While the Board of Industrial Relations had on it members with trade union backgrounds, this was the first time since the inception of the LRB that labour did not have its own nominees to represent it as part of the state bureaucracy.⁵²

In spite of the fact that the labour movement, including the IWA, railed against Bill 28 and the effective disappearance of the LRB, in many ways the Labour Relations Act was consistent with the "new pattern" in industrial relations as outlined in the Morris-Winn blueprint for change. Like the new regime in the IWA, it centralized power over vital matters of collective bargaining and dispute settlement, removing them from public scrutiny and popular control, and further discouraged the use of strikes as a negotiating tool in the

name of industrial harmony. The convergence of a new labour relations act and a new business approach to trade unionism by the IWA was no coincidence. Ever since 1937, when the first ICA Act was passed, changes to labour legislation had been closely linked to developments in the province's largest industry. This case was no exception. The union's 1954 negotiations serve to illustrate the point.

Using the revised negotiations procedures, the District Policy Committee developed a programmatic resolution from convention proposals that would serve as the basis for the 1954 bargaining agenda. While convention resolutions had called definitely for a wage increase, the Policy Committee urged a different approach at the March Wages and Contract Conference. The main conference session was preceded by a four-day preparatory meeting of the Policy Committee, District staff members and the International Research Department's Director, Ed Kenney. The latter was a university economist, and consultant to both industry and unions, who had helped establish labour-management institutes at several American universities prior to coming to the IWA. During the pre-Conference sessions he presented to the Policy Committee statistical material relating to economic trends in the lumber industry, on export markets and general levels of business activity, upon which basis it was decided to forego any wage demand for 1954-55. The Wages and Contract Conference could do little but adopt this proposal from the experts.⁵³

In announcing the intentions of the union at a press conference broadcast over CKNW radio, Morris explained:

We are concerned that the employers should not find cause in any new wage demands for curtailment of production or reduction of the workforce. We have reasonably exact knowledge of the requirements which will be placed upon them throughout the coming year to maintain and stabilize their export sales on a sound competitive basis. We are therefore prepared to renew the contract, incorporating therein the present wage scale, that the employers may have the utmost scope in planning to meet all emergent contingencies in the export trade. We will expect the employers to reciprocate and take all possible measures to retain the present workforce in continuous employment....(and) by agreeing to a revision of the contract with respect to working conditions in such a manner as to remove injustices

and promote stable and efficient labour-management endeavour to expand the market for B.C. lumber.⁵⁴

In exchange for no wage increase, the union demanded six additional paid statutory holidays, full union security, day rates for piece workers, retention of seniority during lay-off, no exclusions to Sunday overtime, a job analysis programme, an employer-paid medical services plan and free transportation to the job.⁵⁵ Among other concerns, the industry balked at union shop, and in May talks proceeded to the conciliation officer stage. By the end of the month a "package" deal had been agreed upon providing three extra holidays, seniority retention, inclusion of fallers and buckers in the wage schedule, and a promise of further negotiations on shingle rates. The main reward for the union's reasonableness on wages was the granting of a compulsory check-off for all new employees after 30 days. In exchange for acknowledging the industry's need for economic security, the industry would acknowledge the union's, but not without its pound of flesh. Board rates in logging camps would be raised by 25 cents. The union had fought for years to have that issue brought onto the collective bargaining agenda, and now that it had been, the employers took the opportunity to exact an industry-wide hike, in one fell swoop; something they could never manage previously. Morris explained to his members in a "strictly confidential" memo on 28 May that the operators had disclosed the results of an "exhaustive cost accounting" on board and lodging "which established beyond any doubt that heavy losses have been incurred." The union's auditors had been invited to examine the companies' books.⁵⁶

Morris' memo,⁵⁷ in addition to explaining the content of the settlement to local officers, also took great pains to justify the new business approach to procedure followed in these negotiations. The Policy Committee found itself in a slightly embarrassing situation inasmuch as District One was officially opposed to the Labour Relations Act, and, in fact used its imminent proclamation as an excuse to settle quickly so as to avoid its onerous terms. At the same time, Morris noted that Conciliation Officer Reg Clements,

anticipating his new powers under the Act, at one point during negotiations refused a union recommendation for a conciliation board and forced discussions to continue. As it turned out, the union Negotiating Committee felt it benefitted by this new approach. Instead of acting as a mediator between the separated parties, Clements arbitrated at joint sessions. When the operators demanded from the union an "honest package proposal" instead of a discussion of single clauses, the union complied in order to gain any advantage that might possibly be secured from conferences with the Conciliation Officer present. The Committee was certain that it could get a better deal by working through Clements, given his determination to get a settlement, than it could at a full conciliation board hearing. That strategy, explained Morris, required the temporary cessation of publicity. The union had had two choices: "...either to discuss openly the trend of negotiations and thereby discard excellent chances of a settlement, or maintain the pressure on the operators through the Conciliation officer and do their work silently, confining discussion to executive circles."⁵⁸ During these confidential sessions it became possible to thrash out details of a package proposal with complete frankness: "Both parties could undertake more genuine bargaining, and actually the Committee engaged in some of the sharpest and most determined bargaining yet known." Although this stage of conciliation took more time than usual, the Committee "took advantage of the opportunity to do then what is usually done after the union bargains with the support of a solid strike vote." That was the message that union speakers were instructed to deliver to the rank-and-file.⁵⁹

In an editorial entitled "Forging Ahead," the Lumber Worker explained the new approach to the membership in simpler terms. It would have been easier at times to call a halt and take the issues to a strike vote. "It takes skill, patience and endurance to battle with the employers until a showdown can be reached at the bargaining table," the editor maintained. "The alternative course is not at first the easier course, the one of least resistance for the negotiators, but one which transfers the burden and possible sacrifices to the membership."⁶⁰

This statement of union collective bargaining policy was the exact antithesis of what Pritchett had set out to try to accomplish after the war, without much success. It explicitly drew a hard, fast line between workers and negotiators. It was the skill of the latter, sitting across the table from men with whom they shared a good understanding of conditions in the industry,⁶¹ that was the real weapon in the arsenal of the new business union. The membership would be spared any burden or sacrifice, but also any voice or involvement until the deal was done. If not everyone agreed with this procedure, in 1954 at least, 74 percent of those voting favoured acceptance of the proposed terms.⁶²

After 1954, the die was cast. In 1955, in exchange for a two-year agreement, the union received five cents an hour in each year, with an additional paid vacation, travel time and fare allowance for loggers, stand-by time payment for shingle workers, a joint job analysis in plywood plants, and some other minor amendments. These working condition improvements were heralded as a "revolutionary change in the attitude" of employers. The two-year agreement was needed, according to union spokesmen, so as to provide the industry with an opportunity to stabilize its prices and its marketing plans in relation to the increased costs of production entailed in the new contract benefits. The longer term enabled the union to bargain for a "bigger package" and get concessions that were firmly refused for a one-year term. At the same time, the union's economic analysis indicated it was an opportune moment to project wage gains two years ahead. Strike action might have provided a marginal increase in wages, but only at the expense of these other valuable features of the contract. These features were obtained only after "extended and deliberate discussion" with the employers as they presented many complications. It could only be concluded, District spokesmen were instructed to inform the membership, "that such subjects might easily be sidetracked in mediation proceedings conducted during a strike, or even while a strike deadline is pending."⁶³

Fringe benefits, which replaced wages as the main item on the union's agenda, could only be obtained through extended contract terms and by foregoing the strike

weapon. Once rank-and-file economic power was introduced into the bargaining process by way of a strike vote, the skills of the negotiator lost their value, the bargaining agenda returned to more familiar contract features like more money, shorter hours and longer vacations. The bargaining agenda and the bargaining process were intimately linked. Pritchett had endeavoured to enlarge the procedure, and involve the rank-and-file through on-the-job action, referendums and other tactics, designed to force items onto the agenda which the operators wanted to avoid discussing on an industry-wide basis. Such rank-and-file militancy around economic issues might then be transformed into political action of the working class to effect more fundamental social change. Morris, on the other hand, endeavoured to narrow the procedure, exclude the membership as far as possible, and focus talks on items that business-minded men with a mutual interest in the health of an industry could discuss in a civilized fashion. Fundamental social change was not part of the trade union agenda, in fact, was no longer necessary given the opportunities for progress within capitalism provided by the new pattern of industrial relations.

At the 1955 convention, having just fully launched the union on its new course with the revolutionary idea of no wage proposal, Morris gave an eloquent dissertation in answer to his critics, who were apparently not few in number, on the new business unionism. In this speech he encapsulated his, and his International mentors', conception of the inter-relationship between process and content in industrial relations, and how it differed from that of his predecessors:

I suggest that it is important that we should be wary, not to be trapped into a hidebound observance of the old ways that should now be scrapped. We are living in 1955, and we should not allow our minds to function with 1935 habits. We must at all costs remain loyal to Trade Union principles and ideals, but in bringing these principles and ideals into realization, we must pay the bill in today's currency.

Let me illustrate what I mean. One of our members at a weekend institute in the Interior raised this question: Why don't we use the same methods that were so successful for the I.W.W., away back when? Well, I would be the first one to give a full measure of praise to the I.W.W., because I worked in some camps that had been cleaned up by the I.W.W. in days gone by. Using their methods of direct action, they did a job that had to be done at

that time, but I suggest that it is obvious to all of us that to rely on such methods today would be as though we marched the Woodworkers armed with bows and arrows to meet a contending force equipped with tanks and atomic missiles. The I.W.W. did not survive as an effective force, because we moved into an age where such methods merely invited a form of brutal and ruthless oppression for which our opponents are only too well equipped...

We should quit being romanticists about these kind of things.... The only sane attitude with regard to our work is to set ourselves a reasonable target of achievement, outlining it exclusively in the realism of more bread and butter, with jam on it, for our people.... The final test of our effort must be the actual winning of our goal.

We may not get there over night, we may not get there this year, but if we harness our resources to our purposes, as rational men and women, we will get there much sooner if we do not waste our energies merely staging fireworks. We will be all the more firm in our purpose if we are not frightened to change our ways to get results. I remind you that in Trade Union progress, the end does not always justify the means, but rather, the means often determine the end.⁶⁴

We might ask then, in concluding, just what was the result, of the IWA's pure-and-simple cum business unionism, in terms of the real bread-and-butter issues (leaving aside the jam) of which Morris spoke. According to wage comparison data tabulated by the Alberni local, between 1948 and 1957, the IWA base labourer's rate had fallen from fourth to twelfth place in relation to that of other industrial and service employees in British Columbia. During the first post-war inflation, from 1945-48, the IWA had recorded the second highest wage increase in the province. During the second post-war inflation period, 1948-51, it recorded the eighth highest; and between 1951 and 1957 the tenth highest. Between 1948 and 1957, IWA labourers had fallen 30 cents behind similar workers at the American Can Company, 43 cents behind Burrard Shipyard labourers, 28 cents behind British Columbia Electric track labourers, and 15 cents behind pulp and paper workers.⁶⁵

These findings were supported in a 1959 study, "Industrial Relations in the Basic Industries of British Columbia" carried out by economists at the University of British Columbia.⁶⁶ These authors noted that rank-and-file dissatisfaction in the lumber industry was fuelled by wage comparisons with building construction workers with whom woodworkers shared similar skills and occupations. Between 1949 and 1956, average

weekly earnings in construction rose by 75 percent compared to 56 percent in logging and 48 percent in sawmilling. In the latter year, for the first time in many years, average earnings in construction surpassed logging. In explaining this phenomenon, these analysts pointed to the fact that during two unprecedented booms marked by high profits, heavy reinvestment and rapid expansion in the woodworking industry, the IWA was locked into extended-term agreements. During negotiations following each of these periods, lumber sales and prices were on the decline, and the industry intransigent.⁶⁷ The new path charted by Joe Morris, Carl Winn and Ed Kenney, fit nicely into the operators' business cycle and ensured that capital accumulation would not be threatened by an increasingly restless rank-and-file.

During coast bargaining in 1957 and 1958, rank-and-file militancy pushed the District leadership into conducting strike votes. Only the last-minute intervention of Premier Bennett helped avert a strike on a 90 percent vote in 1957. Ironically, as in the 1950 achievement of maintenance of membership, it was this near-strike situation, rather than the finesse and expertise of the professional negotiator, that finally produced a union shop clause for District One. In 1958, uneven support for a strike, depressed markets and a bad fire season prevented job action from occurring. The result was adoption of the Executive's recommendation to accept Sloan's award of no increase.⁶⁸

That outcome set the stage for a takeover of Lloyd Whalen's Vancouver local 1-217 by a leftist coalition led by Syd Thompson and including Tom Clark's LPP bloc.⁶⁹ While Whalen tried to turn the issue into a communist plot to infiltrate the District leadership once again, Thompson successfully steered the local election onto the subject of the no-wage agreement and deteriorating conditions.⁷⁰ In December 1958, his leftist slate captured control of 1-217, the largest local in the District, by a slim margin. Thompson quickly

announced his intention to back the local 1-71 loggers' call for a substantial wage increase in forthcoming negotiations.⁷¹

In 1959 industry-wide bargaining, Joe Morris and FIR's chief negotiator J.M. Billings, had the terms of a settlement arranged between them, but Morris was unable to sell it to an aroused and hungry membership under the influence of a dissident left-wing opposition.⁷² In the summer of 1959, the union called its first industry-wide strike on the coast in seven years. As the woodworkers groped their way into the 1960s, the spirit of the WIUC rested uneasily in their collective conscience alongside the new realism of the IWA.

Conclusion

In a chapter entitled "How the West Was Lost," "Boilermaker" Bill White, speaking through oral historian Howard White, says of the events of October 1948, "It's always been one of the big mysteries when guys sit down and talk about the things that happened, how the Party with all its experience and after all the years they'd controlled the I.W.A., could have misjudged things so bad as they did over that pullout."¹ Irving Abella offers this considered judgement on the disaffiliation move: "Instead of bracing itself for a last-ditch effort to fight off the incursions of the international and the Congress and calling for a referendum among its membership to gain a mandate for whatever action it took, the district leadership reacted rashly and irresponsibly. It cost them dearly."² In his illuminating chapter on the same subject, union lawyer John Stanton provides this assessment of the attempt to form a new woodworkers' union: "It was easy for those inclined to be bureaucratic to downplay, or even to be unaware of, the difference between their views and the concerns of the membership."³ Lembcke and Tattum in One Union in Wood conclude, "...we have found no evidence that, in the absence of intervention by the state and the international officers of the CIO and CCL, the rank-and-file would have rejected its Communist leaders."⁴

Behind these comments lies a series of related questions with respect to the split of 1948, none of which have been properly answered previously, at least not in print. Why was it done at all? Why was it done without more thought, consultation and preparation? What were the expectations of the leaders of the new union? Why did not the woodworkers follow them? Based on the evidence and arguments produced above, the following analysis will attempt some answers to these difficult questions.

Critics of the decision taken by District Council One on 3 October 1948 often base their argument on the theoretical notion that at all costs left-wing trade unionists should stay within the mainstream of the labour movement if they want to remain an effective force. Considering the enormous presence of the woodworkers in the British Columbia labour

movement of the 1940s, a decision to pull out, from this perspective, was a grave mistake—fraught with consequences for labour and left-wing politics in general. The analysis produced in this study suggests that if District leaders were guilty of an error in 1948, it was not one based superficially in human misperceptions nor Communist Party dominance, but one with deep roots in the history and structure of trade unionism in the British Columbia woodworking industry. If District One did make a very human but nevertheless crucial mistake which opened it to attacks from the white bloc, the International, the lumber operators and the state, it was in its handling of the 1946 strike; in particular its prolongation after the Sloan award of 1 June 1946. At that point District One had become too puffed up with ideas of being the spearhead of a national campaign against wage controls and wartime labour legislation. Its leadership viewed the woodworkers union as part of a world movement of popular democratic forces struggling to realize the fruits of victory over fascism against the new world threat of Anglo-American atomic diplomacy. This perception of the national and global relation of forces, fuelled by general approbation for the role of the Soviet allies in the war, and the acceptance of communists as a legitimate political element in wartime Canadian society, led District leaders, in 1946, to confuse massive rank-and-file support based largely on pent-up war demands for higher wages with support for their own political agenda. The initial very sweeping, spontaneous support for the strike led them to the belief that it was really about class struggle in the broader, more conscious sense, against the aims of monopoly capitalism. Given their strong belief that involvement in the labour movement should be aimed at transformation of the economic struggle into class struggle—by integrating economic and political issues—this was an honest miscalculation made in the midst of a massive industrial strike; not some bureaucratic illusion conjured up from behind a union desk. Now, true to Stanton's estimation of the growing bureaucratic confusion of a leadership cadre with the rank-and-file, the 1946 misjudgements were in part the product of an over-centralized organizational structure that had been built up around a strategy of signed agreements and industry-wide

bargaining. But after the 1946 strike, Pritchett led the District Council in an earnest endeavour to reintegrate the rank-and-file back into the collective bargaining process. Moreover, the problems with respect to union finances in 1946 and after grew out of an anti-bureaucratic disposition rooted in a militant, if not syndicalist past. It is true that this new effort of Pritchett and his comrades was only partially successful at best. But throughout the 1946-48 period, the District leadership was acutely aware of its relationship with the rank-and-file. This awareness accounts for much of its effort to reassert the fundamental principles of its trade union practice which had become submerged and deformed within the bureaucratic structures, not so much of the trade union itself, but of the industrial relations apparatus upon which the union had relied so heavily in its efforts to have those principles realized in some concrete form. But that industrial relations apparatus, too, was reorienting itself after the war, not just in British Columbia, but across North America. The IWA's 1946 strike served as a catalyst to that reorientation in British Columbia, and helped produce Bill 39.

From the analysis presented in the previous chapters it might be argued that had the District leaders maintained a proper distinction between the implications of the Taft-Hartley Act for American labour, and the significance of the ICA Act in British Columbia, they might have judged their situation within the labour movement differently. After all, under Canadian law, communists still held legitimate positions in trade unions and within the state industrial relations structure. But the International connection blurred that distinction. Taft-Hartley produced an opportunity for the International to get rid of its left-wing office holders. The impact on District One, through the Greenall affair and the influence of District Two, resulted in a somewhat ill-considered recall referendum opening the door to an all-out anti-communist campaign.

Even if District Council One had been able to maintain the distinction between the ICA Act and Taft-Hartley in terms of their direct impact on communist trade unionists, in order to survive within the mainstream trade union movement in Canada its leaders would

also have had to accept the consequences of their very intimate involvement with a state-directed industrial relations system which was now turning sharply against trade union rights and powers achieved during the New Deal-World War Two period. That acceptance would have meant the sacrifice of a militant programme at a time of perceived intensifying international and class contradictions, and of growing political pressure from within the North American communist movement to use trade union positions to oppose the new political and economic formation being constructed by American imperialism. To sacrifice a militant programme joining economic and political struggle would have meant renouncing all that many of these men, such as Pritchett, Bergren, Parkin and McCuish, had stood for since the inception of the IWA and before. In their own eyes, and in the eyes of much of the rank-and-file which had supported them through the years, it would have meant renouncing their right to lead the union as well.

Instead of succumbing to bureaucratization and pure-and-simple trade unionism, District Council One embarked on a bold programme during the 1946-48 period of resisting the narrowing industrial relations structure, and struggling against the institutionalization of the collective bargaining process by reintegrating the rank-and-file into that process. That reintegration would in turn enable them all the better to mobilize the working class in a broader reintegration of economic with political struggle, a mobilization subdued during the war period, and recommenced prematurely during the 1946 strike. When the District One leaders found themselves incapable of following that strategy within the confines of the mainstream trade union movement and the post-war industrial relations institutions, they departed rather than lose the leadership of the woodworkers either through decertification by the state, an imposed administration by the International, or a gradual defection and splintering away of locals, sub-locals, plants and production sectors under pressure from the forces of "Taft-Hartleyism" both within and outside of the union. Their departure in October 1948 was as much a repudiation of a strategy of working within state-directed

industrial relations structures as it was disaffiliation from the continental trade union movement within which they had pursued that strategy.

In addition to what might be termed the internal logic of disaffiliation, there were certain external factors which supported the move, if not always directly, then indirectly, by establishing a political context for it. The influence of Mine Mill and Harvey Murphy in the affairs of District One has already been mentioned. If Pritchett had a trade union "sidekick" in Harry Bridges during his days in the United States, so did he in Harvey Murphy in British Columbia. The two were associated not only in the trade union movement, through the BCFL, but also through the provincial LPP. Murphy's union in the United States was the only major union officially to support Henry Wallace for President. Murphy himself, was, within the Canadian trade union and communist movements, regarded as a bit of a "maverick."⁵ He had little use for the party's outright support of the CCF in 1948, as could be well understood. One former fellow party member, Lionel Edwards, has even referred to Murphy as a "volatile ultra-leftist" with a "tendency to syndicalism and anarchism."⁶ In the heat of its own battles with the broader labour movement, Murphy's and Mine Mill's own expulsion from the CCL acted as a strong sectarian influence on the District Council in its decision to form what amounted to a dual union of woodworkers in British Columbia.

Also a factor was the general direction of LPP policy since 1946, which was reinforced by the establishment of the Cominform and the two-camp policy of September 1947. By 1948, Canadian communists were fully embarked on an anti-American crusade expressed in the slogan "Keep Canada Independent." Initially, to implement this policy, the Party called for unity at the polls to elect a CCF government. By August 1948, after the national CCF convention repudiated its Manitoba, British Columbia and Saskatchewan wings, and fulsomely reendorsed the Marshall Plan, unconditional LPP electoral support for the social democrats began to wane.⁷ By the fall of 1948, the LPP draft programme for its 1949 convention called on every trade unionist to support the "democratic Canadian

trend in all sections of the trade union movement, as recently demonstrated by the TLC's support of the rights of the Canadian Seamen's Union."⁸

While Buck and Salsberg were not pushing for dual Canadian unionism as part of the overall party line, they did emphasize full Canadian trade union autonomy along with full labour unity. As the draft programme instructed: "There is a growing realization in the unions of the need to unify the trade union movement around policies based squarely upon the needs of Canadian workers—including the right of the Canadian trade union movement to govern itself."⁹ For LPP national leaders, unity and autonomy went hand in hand. A push for full independence was not thinkable without full unity having been established. Nevertheless, trade union independence was implicit in the party's overall line. Once electoral support for the CCF had been shelved, the party moved towards making it explicit. By 1952, as Norman Penner notes, in the LPP's draft programme "Canadian trade union independence was raised for the first time in party history to a demand on its own," with the ringing phrase: "The winning by the Canadian workers of the national independence of their trade unions is part of the struggle for the independence of Canada."¹⁰

In a sense, the leaders of the new WIUC were anticipating the national Party line, once again, as in 1946, serving as the "spearhead" for the Canadian labour movement, but this time against the destructive power of the right-wing leadership in the CIO and its affiliates. As Dalskog exuberantly exclaimed to the delegates at the 3 October disaffiliation meeting: "This event is charting a new course for the trade union movement in Canada, and make no mistake about it." Objective circumstance had helped push District leaders into taking a vanguard action. First would come independence, as a basis for later unifying the Canadian and even possibly the American labour movement around a new militant industrial programme in the tradition of the early CIO.¹¹

But to chart a new course for the Canadian trade union movement, the WIUC would at least have to carry along with it a substantial portion of the old IWA membership.

What were the strategies and objectives of the District One leaders in carrying out a "putsch"¹² without fuller consultation with, and preparation of, the rank-and-file. Instead of holding back, assessing the position of the membership, and consolidating their own position through education and a referendum vote on disaffiliation, the officers plunged headlong into an action that was precarious at best. Why did not the officers adopt a defensive strategy?

There appeared not to be a lot of time after the 18 July quarterly council meeting to develop a broad rank-and-file support for disaffiliation prior to a move by the International and the CCL. But, more importantly, the question of the referendum ignores the whole issue of industrial relations. It was not just a matter of selling the membership on a case of the "bad" International taking District funds, firing District organizers, meddling in District affairs for ulterior political reasons. The intervention of the International was linked to a programme of pure-and-simple trade unionism that had made great inroads in District One, thanks in large part to the very successes of the communist leadership up to 1946, working within conventional industrial relations structures, and keeping the trade union agenda to the fore. To win a referendum against the International would have been to win decisively a referendum against pure-and-simple trade unionism, against separating the political and economic struggles, against compliance with Taft-Hartley and the ICA Act. That referendum, in the minds of the District leaders, had already been taken in the 1947 strike vote, and the 1948 District elections and Fighting Fund campaign, the results of which had been reinforced by a lack of unity around the 40-hour logging week, shingle sawyer, trainmen and camp board struggles.

Many commentators take as a given that the District leaders assumed the rank-and-file would follow en masse, and thus mistakenly and foolishly ruled out a referendum approach. In fact, in large part the reason the District Council voted to split from the IWA was that the rank-and-file would no longer follow them in substantial enough numbers to ensure that they could defend themselves against a major challenge from Fadling, Mahoney

et al. It was not a case of the union "bureaucrats" being unaware of the difference between their own views and the concerns of the membership.¹³ It was that very awareness and a clear understanding of the impact this difference would have on their continued ability to lead the District that accounts for the "putsch" decision taken by the District officers.

On the coast there were serious sectoral divisions. The District's strength lay in the logging camps. In the two large mill locals, a majority of voting members opposed the leadership. The white bloc controlled New Westminster, were about to seize Mission and were making headway toward capturing Vancouver. There were serious weak spots in Alberni as well, especially in the BSW operations.

In the interior, Kamloops was under white bloc control, and the Kelowna/Okanagan area was, in the estimation of at least one District organizer, backward and reactionary. Workers in Prince George had been disaffected by the 1946 strike and settlement. Far from being a union stronghold, the northern interior was fairly evenly divided. On 26 October members voted 259 to 231 to stay in the IWA.¹⁴ As regards the interior, only in Cranbrook and the east Kootenay area could the District Council count on solid, unwavering support, and indeed 1-405 ultimately became the main base of the WIUC. So disinterested were the District officers in taking the interior en bloc with them into the WIUC, that the split was undertaken well before the three separate sets of negotiations and conciliation had been concluded. One advantage the WIUC would have in the interior would be the fact that the IWA was so poorly organized, providing less of an obstruction in terms of existing membership, certifications, collective agreements and check-offs.

The strategy of the District officers was not based on some deluded assumption that they could take the entire woodworker rank-and-file, and all the existing locals, sub-locals and certified operations into the WIUC holus-bolus. Indeed, part of the strategy was to shed itself of those disruptive elements, the adherents of "Taft-Hartleyism," the red-baiters and ultra-partisan social democrats. In greeting the delegates to the first organizational convention of the WIUC, the officers proclaimed:

This historical convention represents the best elements (emphasis mine) in the woodworking industry of this province; men and women rich in experience and who have struggled against highly organized reactionary employers to establish outstanding gains in wages and working conditions for the woodworkers in British Columbia.

History was repeating itself, the delegates were told. Just as 11 years before, the Federation of Woodworkers had been formed leaving behind the employers' collaborators led by Big Bill Hutchinson, so now the best elements of the IWA were doing the same to "Fadling and his cohorts."¹⁵

Pritchett, Bergren, Dalskog and others involved in the new union, understood from dint of long years slogging in and out of camps and mills just how hard a task it was to build up an organization like District One of the IWA. It was for that reason that these men were very hesitant to take the path on which they were now embarked. Certainly they hoped to build upon an already established base in Duncan, Courtenay, Lake Cowichan, Cranbrook, local 1-71 and other strongholds. But based on their understanding of their position with the rank-and-file in general, there was no expectation of some wholesale transferral of 27,000 IWA members into the WIUC.

For that reason, all of the very evident legal and institutional barriers to such an instant metamorphosis—the local charters, existing certifications, collective agreements—did not present a real problem to these seasoned veterans of the bureaucratic wars. They knew the WIUC would not ultimately be built through court battles over assets, charters and the like, nor by some automatic successor clause somewhere that would transfer all bargaining rights over to the new union. It would be built from the ground up, albeit ground already well tilled, but also well weeded. Nor was there any expectation that disaffiliation would instantly result in the recapturing of all the funds flowing south of the border. First, the WIUC would have to sign up members, start collecting dues through local shop stewards, obtain certifications and negotiate collective agreements with union security provisions.

It was even unclear under the certification provisions of the ICA Act (section 9.1 c) whether or not the WIUC could legally apply for certifications in existing IWA units until after 10 months from the starting date of the current collective agreement.¹⁶ It was February 1949, after an intervention and an appeal by the IWA, before the LRB ruled definitively in favour of an interpretation of the Act allowing WIUC certification applications to proceed prior to the expiry of 10 months.¹⁷ D

That delay did not stop the WIUC from trying in the interim. Where, in places like Cranbrook, it knew it could rally overwhelming support, it tried defiantly to force the hand of the LRB.¹⁸ While the WIUC attempted to use rank-and-file pressure to speed up the bureaucratic procedures of the industrial relations apparatus, the IWA, true to form, did its best to use all the legal and institutional vehicles at its disposal to foil the organizational attempts of the WIUC. The so-called "battle of Iron River" at Oyster Bay near Campbell River demonstrates in practice two different approaches to industrial relations embodied in the two rival unions as they struggled for control of the woodworkers. When the MacMillan-owned logging operation fired three WIUC fallers, the IWA accepted the company justification of dismissal with cause. WIUC sympathizers threw up pickets at the gate of the operation. The crew of 99 was about evenly divided in its loyalties. The IWA declared the strike illegal, but its members refused to cross the picket line. Alsbury informed the LRB that the WIUC was obstructing his members. But as the company made no move to evict the crew from company houses near Christmas time, the police had no pretext to interfere. Alsbury arranged for IWA local leaders to meet with the Vancouver Committee of the LRB regarding a planned attempt to cross the line in the presence of provincial police. With an action plan drawn up, the IWA and the company both asked the LRB to declare the strike illegal, which it did. On the basis of that ruling, and with the support of the Provincial Police, on 8 December 50 IWA workers crossed the illegal picket line, provoking a violent clash during which Alsbury sustained four broken ribs. Warrants and arrests ensued. The following day a 40-man WIUC picket line faced a beefed-up

delegation of 170 IWA workers, including reinforcements from nearby camps in Alberni, Campbell River and Ladysmith, and aided by 22 Provincial Police. Sporadic clashes continued, but the IWA called in more reinforcements until its forces numbered 300. On 15 December 1948, company representative Van Dusen advised the LRB that the camp was closing for Christmas, and expressed his appreciation for the way the Provincial Police handled their part.¹⁹

In its attempt to establish itself as a dual union of woodworkers in British Columbia, the WIUC did not hold back from engaging in militant and illegal actions reminiscent of the days at Blubber Bay, the early organizing drives on Vancouver Island and the 1946-47 strike and job actions. If it were going to win members it would do so on the basis of an aggressive, fighting programme of trade union action. The IWA, remaining true to the spirit of Taft-Hartley, chose to utilize the letter of the law, the industrial relations apparatus and the forces of state coercion to win over the hearts and minds of the rank-and-file woodworkers. Why the IWA succeeded in its approach, and the WIUC failed needs now to be explained.

First, the question needs to be reorganized according to the expectations of the WIUC. That union did not expect a quick mass exodus of IWA members into its ranks, so why should historians? But—why did not even the mainstay loggers locals turn to the WIUC en masse? There are no easily available overall data on WIUC membership during the period of intense rivalry to the end of 1949. What documentation is available, in the form of IWA organizers' reports, indicates that the WIUC did indeed have considerable initial success, considering the obstacles in its way. Not only in Cranbrook, but in several Queen Charlotte and Vancouver Island logging operations, the WIUC either held a majority of members or a solid basis for a certification drive. But even in operations where the IWA was weak, the organizers' reports indicate a high percentage of "fence-sitters"—workers waiting to see which way the fight was going to go before jumping to either union. By the

summer of 1949, it appears, the IWA had reached a point of having a critical mass in the logging camps sufficient to cause the fence sitters to go with it.²⁰

This phenomenon points up two problems for the WIUC. There was no real industrial relations structure for fence-sitters to follow the WIUC into—just a new dual union movement with a declaration of independence in hand, and a somewhat poorly explained set of ambitious objectives. There was no more reason (in fact less given the presence of another established union) that woodworkers should have joined the WIUC en masse than that they should have joined the IWA that way when it was originally formed in British Columbia in 1938-40. If there had been a general feeling amongst woodworkers that there was about to be a mass move to the WIUC, then probably more individual fence-sitters would have gone that way before the summer of 1949, secure in the knowledge that the WIUC would actually supplant the IWA as bargaining agent. But most workers shared the WIUC leaders' expectations that it would be a long struggle to build a new union. The very definition of the WIUC as a dual union of "the best elements" was a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Loyalty to WIUC leaders was not fundamentally a question of whether a worker was pro-communist, merely non-communist, or anti-communist. The communist connection of District One's leaders had not been the reason that woodworkers originally chose to follow them, nor was it now the main reason they chose not to. It was not now primarily a question of political loyalties, but rather a question of being for or against the kind of institutionalized, pure-and-simple trade unionism that was very much the legacy of previous years of militant struggle led by the communists. The large majority were for it, or at least resigned to its ascendancy in the trade union movement.

This legacy was reinforced by the Fadling-white bloc coalition, which took up the legalistic approach stridently, and as an end in itself, not as the communists had, as a strategy for consolidating positions in the trade union movement in order to further a broader class struggle. There can be little doubt that in the minds of woodworkers in

general, Fadling and the white bloc, with the power of the state and the employers behind them, represented a much better chance of realizing one very significant trade union objective—legitimacy—in the form of full union security. Had District One achieved a union security clause prior to 1948, it would have undercut much of the power of the white bloc, and much of the impact of the International's message. A decent union security clause would have given the District leadership a greater legitimacy in the eyes of the rank-and-file, as well as extra power to discipline and hold in check internal political opposition. The employers knew that, and so resisted in order to keep the union vulnerable to attack. That had been their project since the inception of the IWA in British Columbia. With the departure of the communist leadership, the likelihood of the IWA winning union security increased dramatically. Once that happened (as it did during the 1950s), the job of anyone not a member of the IWA would be in jeopardy. The power of that argument, given the industry-wide bargaining agency status of the union, would serve to discourage even loyal loggers, let alone fence sitters, from joining the WIUC. Union security would mean job security—but only for those within the IWA.

Finally, what was the attraction to the rank-and-file woodworkers of a new “all-Canadian” trade union, led by men who seemed to embrace fully the LPP line on Canadian “independence?” In his published reminiscences, Tim Buck offers some valuable insights into the attitudes of the working class on the Party's new national question:

I must confess that I received the shock of my life when I went on tour in 1948 and 1949, during that winter, and found that, in a great many places such as Windsor, Vancouver, Trail—places where our Party was strong and where we had for many years received massive support—the workers didn't like my position. Their attitude was: What difference does it make to me if the company that exploits me is a Canadian company or an American company? If I've got to be exploited, I don't care who it is. I just want to get the most I can for my labour....²¹

Buck's disappointment testified to the economic pragmatism of even those “best elements” of the British Columbia and Canadian working class, as well as a general acceptance amongst workers of Canada's integration with the United States, and all that implied for the

future of the trade union movement. As the WIUC set out to chart a new course for the Canadian trade union movement, it appeared hopelessly out of step with the political and economic forces that were structuring the lives of Canadian workers.

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20. *Ibid.*, p. 134.
21. Ian Angus, Canadian Bolsheviks: The Early Years of the Communist Party in Canada (Montreal: Vanguard Publications, 1981), p. 276.
22. Radforth, Bushworkers and Bosses, p. 137.
23. Myrtle Bergren, Tough Timber (Vancouver: Elgin Publications, 1979), p. 85.
24. Norman Penner, The Canadian Left: A Critical Analysis (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall of Canada Ltd., 1977), p. 142.
25. Lichtenstein, Labor's War at Home, p. 142.
26. The literature on the relationship between the Communist Party of Canada and the labour movement consulted for this study includes of most interest: Abella, Nationalism, Communism and Canadian Labour; Penner, The Canadian Left; Penner, Canadian Communism: The Stalin Years and Beyond (Toronto: Methuen, 1988); William Rodney, Soldiers of the International: A History of the Communist Party of Canada, 1919-1929 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968); Ivan Avakumovik, The Communist Party in Canada: A History (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1975); Reg Whitaker, "Official Repression of Communism During World War II," Labour/Le Travail, 17 (Spring 1986): 35-66; Donald Muldoon, "Capitalism Unchallenged: A Sketch of Canadian Communism, 1939-1949" (M.A. thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1977); as well as the works by Angus, Hak and Peterson already cited.

Useful American sources, in addition to Lichtenstein's Labor's War at Home include: Joseph Starobin, American Communism in Crisis, 1943-1957

Introduction Continued

(Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972); Harvey A. Levenstein, Communism, Anticommunism and the CIO (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1981); Bert Cochran, Labor and Communism: The Conflict that Shaped American Unions (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977).

Notes: Chapter One

1930s: Era of the Blacklist and the Open Shop

1. Bryan D. Palmer, Working Class Experience: The Rise and Reconstitution of Canadian Labour, 1800-1980 (Toronto: Butterworth and Co., 1983), pp. 236-37.
2. Al Parkin, "Labour and Timber: A Brief History of Trade Unionism in British Columbia's Lumber Industry," chapter 11, in B.C. Lumber Worker, 10 February 1947; Strike report, Records of The Department of Labour, (strike 79), RG 27, vol. 349, microfilm, reel T2760, National Archives of Canada (hereafter NAC); F.E. Harrison to H.H. Ward, Deputy Minister of Labour, 8 October 1931, (strike 85), RG 27, vol. 349, microfilm, reel T2760.
3. Minutes of British Columbia Loggers' Association (hereafter BCLA) Directors meetings, 19 July and 25 October 1932, Records of the Council of Forest Industries (hereafter COFI), box 1, file 2, University of British Columbia Library, Special Collections Division (hereafter UBC-SC).
4. Parkin, "Labour and Timber," chapter 11; minutes of BCLA Directors' meeting, 20 June 1933, COFI, box 1, file 2; minutes of BCLA Directors meeting, 23 January 1934, COFI, box 2, folder 2; Lembcke and Tattum, One Union in Wood; M. Jeanne Meyers Williams, "Ethnicity and Class Conflict at Maillardville/Fraser Mills: The Strike of 1931" (M.A. thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1982).
5. B.C. Lumber Worker, 8 June 1935.
6. Hak, "On the Fringes," pp. 54-6; E.G. Perrault, Wood and Water: The Story of Seaboard Lumber and Shipping (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1985), pp. 113-14; B.C. Lumber Worker, 25 May 1935; Parkin, "Labour and Timber," chapter 11.
7. Parkin, "Labour and Timber," chapter 12, in B.C. Lumber Worker, 26 February 1947.
8. Hak, "On the Fringes," pp. 213, 215-16; Parkin, "Labour and Timber," chapter 12.
9. Hak, "On the Fringes," pp. 218-20; Parkin, "Labour and Timber," chapter 13, in B.C. Lumber Worker, 10 March 1947.
10. Hak, "On the Fringes," p. 221.
11. John Ulinder to Pritchett, 26 February 1943, Harold Pritchett - IWA District Council No. 1 Papers (hereafter Pritchett Papers), box 8, file 15, UBC-SC.
12. Hak, "On the Fringes," pp. 183-84, 188 and 190. In his chapter 4, Hak gives excellent treatment of the dual strategy of lumber and logging operators to preserve the open shop using the blacklist on the one hand, and techniques of corporate welfarism on the other.

Chapter One Continued

13. Parkin, "Labour and Timber," chapter 13; Hak, "On the Fringes," p. 226.
14. Donald MacKay, Empire of Wood: The MacMillan Bloedel Story (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1982), p. 82.
15. Minutes of BCLA Directors meetings, 19 March and 21 May 1935, COFI. MacKay, Empire of Wood, p. 120; Perrault, Wood and Water, 92-93; RG 27, vol. 375, strike 19, reel T2984.
16. RG 27, vol. 375, strike 19, microfilm, reel T2984; B.C. Lumber Worker, 14 March 1936.
17. Strike Bulletin #12, 23 May 1936, Pritchett Papers, box 1, file 2.
18. B.C. Lumber Worker, 28 March 1936; Strike Bulletins #9 1 April 1936, #10 4 April 1936, #8 28 March 1936, #15 21 April 1936, #10 21 May 1936, Pritchett Papers, box 1, file 2. The numbering of these bulletins started at #1 again on 11 May after the B.C. Coast District Council became involved in their production.
19. Hugh Thornby to C.W. Bolton, Chief, Statistics Branch, Department of Labour, Ottawa, 25 April 1936, 27 April 1936 (two letters), and 30 March 1936, RG 27, vol. 375, strike 19, reel T2984; Perrault, p. 57.
20. Vancouver Daily Province, 8 May 1936; Strike Bulletins #21 5 May 1936, and #22 7 May 1936, Pritchett Papers, box 1, file 2; minutes of BCLA Directors meeting, 19 May 1936, COFI.
21. Vancouver Daily Province, 8 May 1936; Myrtle Bergren, Tough Timber: The Loggers of B.C.—Their Story (Vancouver: Elgin Publications, 1979), p. 96; Thornby to Bolton, 1 June 1936, RG 27, vol. 375, Department of Labour Strike Form re Camp 10, RG-27, vol. 375, strike 19; minutes of Local 2783 Lumber and Sawmill Workers' Union, 13 November 1936, Pritchett Papers, vol. 1, file 7; minutes of BCLA general meeting, 20 October 1936, COFI.
22. Minutes of Conference of Four Loggers' Locals, held in Nanaimo, 4 October 1936, Pritchett Papers, box 1, file 8.
23. Minutes of Annual Convention of B.C. Coast District Council of the Federation of Woodworkers, 10-11 July 1937, Pritchett Papers, box 1, file 8.
24. Ibid.
25. Vernon H. Jensen, Lumber and Labor (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, Inc., 1945), pp. 203-05.
26. Lembcke and Tattum, One Union in Wood, pp. 54-58.
27. Tomlins, The State and the Unions, pp. 118-19, 143, 188, 149. By the 1930s, it would seem, Canadian industrial unions had become equally infatuated with American industrial unions' adoption of state intervention.
28. Lembcke and Tattum, One Union in Wood, pp. 35-43.

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29. Jensen, Lumber and Labour, pp. 204-05, 207; Lembcke and Tattum, One Union in Wood, pp. 54-55; "Notes on History of IWA," Pritchett Papers, box 3, file 12.
30. Interview with John Stanton, Vancouver, 10 February 1987.
31. Ibid.
32. B.C. Lumber Worker, 27 June 1938.
33. Coates, "Organized Labour and Politics," p. 27; Jeremy Webber, "The Malaise of Compulsory Conciliation," pp. 57-88.
34. Laurel Sefton MacDowell, "The Formation of the Canadian Industrial Relations System," p. 177.
35. Irving Abella, Nationalism, Communism, and Canadian Labour, p. 28.
36. Coates, "Organized Labour and Politics," pp. 35-36.
37. Minutes of B.C. District Council conference in Nanaimo, 17 January 1937, Pritchett Papers, box 1, file 8.
38. Paul Phillips, No Power Greater, p. 114.
39. Vancouver Sun, 8 December 1937; Phillips, No Power Greater, p. 114; B.C. Lumber Worker, 1 December 1937 and 27 October 1937. Cameron had filed assault charges against the supervisor of Elk River Timber when he had been forcibly stopped from entering camp to solicit signatures on a petition in support of the Victoria Conference draft bill.
40. Phillips, No Power Greater, p. 115; Martin Robin, Pillars of Profit: The Company Province, 1934-1972 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1973), pp. 35-36; Dorothy G. Steeves, The Compassionate Rebel: Ernest Winch and the Growth of Socialism in Western Canada (Vancouver: J.J. Douglas Ltd., 1960), pp. 107-13.
41. B.C., Statutes, 1937, 1 Geo. 6, c. 31.
42. Vancouver Sun, 4 December and 8 December 1937.
43. B.C., Statutes, 1937, 1 Geo. 6, c. 31.
44. MacKay, Empire of Wood, pp. 132-34, 82-83, 85.
45. B.C. Lumber Worker, 27 June, 5 July 1939, 24 January 1939.
46. B.C. Lumber Worker, 15 December 1937, 4 October 1938, 28 July, 4 August, 8 September 1937, 27 June 1938; Stanton Interview, 10 February 1987. In both the 1937 and 1938 disputes at Rubber Bay, the IWA attempted to exert leverage on the Federation through a general Pacific Coast longshoremen's boycott of Kingsley's ships and Pacific Lime Products.

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47. Stanton Interview, 10 February 1987; B.C. Lumber Worker, 4 October 1938; "Report of the Deputy Minister of Labour (1937)," B.C., Sessional Papers, 1938, p. S 80.
48. Stanton Interview, 10 February 1987; B.C. Lumber Worker, 26 January 1938, 2 February 1938, 23 February 1938, 4 October 1938; Vancouver Sun, 24 February 1938; "Report of the Deputy Minister of Labour (1938)," B.C., Sessional Papers, 1939, pp. P 82 - P 84.
49. "Report of the Deputy Minister of Labour (1939)," B.C., Sessional Papers, 1939, pp. P 82, P 89 - P 90; B.C. Lumber Worker, 2 March, 15 March, 13 September 1938.
50. "Report of the Deputy Minister of Labour (1938)," B.C., Sessional Papers, 1939, p. P 83; B.C. Lumber Worker, 19 April 1938.
51. B.C. Lumber Worker, 4 October 1938; John Stanton, Papers, box 6, file 14, UBC-SC. In at least one instance, C. Stubbs from Gibson's Landing was taken off road work he had been doing for several months for refusal to cooperate with police efforts.
52. B.C. Lumber Worker, 26 April, 4 October, 10 May 1938; "Report of the Deputy Minister of Labour (1938)," B.C., Sessional Papers, 1939, p. P 83.
53. Award of the Board of Arbitration, 11 May 1938; "Report of the Deputy Minister of Labour (1938)," B.C., Sessional Papers, 1939, pp. P 88 - P 89; B.C. Lumber Worker, 4 October 1938.
54. B.C. Lumber Worker, 4 October 1938; Vancouver Sun, 17 September, and 20 September 1938.
55. Stanton Papers, box 6, file 14; B.C. Lumber Worker, 21 June, 12 July, 27 June 1938; The IWA in British Columbia (pamphlet), (Vancouver: Western Canadian Regional Council No. 1, IWA, 1971), p. 24.
56. B.C. Lumber Worker, 5 July, 17 July, 9 August 1938; Stanton, Never Say Die!, p. 21.
57. B.C. Lumber Worker, 20 September, 27 September, 20 December 1938, 17 January 1939; The IWA in British Columbia, p. 25; Stanton, Never Say Die!, pp. 24-27.
58. Vancouver Sun, 17 September 1938.
59. B.C. Lumber Worker, 20 September, 27 September, 4 October 1938; Stanton Papers, box 6, file 14.
60. The IWA in British Columbia, p. 24; Vancouver Sun, 11 October 1938; B.C. Lumber Worker, 18 October 1938, 7 February 1939. The strike dragged on into February 1939.
61. B.C. Lumber Worker, 18 October 1938.

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62. B.C. Lumber Worker, 30 August, 20 September, 25 October 1938.
63. Vancouver Sun, 25 November and 28 November 1938.
64. Vancouver Sun, 7 December and 8 December 1938.
65. Abella, Nationalism, Communism and Canadian Labour, p. 35; Vancouver Sun, 8 December 1938.
66. The IWA in British Columbia, p. 25; Coates, "Organized Labour and Politics," pp. 36-39, 56-60; MacDowell, "The Formation of the Canadian Industrial Relations System," p. 179.
67. Minutes of BCLA Annual General meeting, 15 January 1941, COFI.

Notes: Chapter Two

The War Years: Labour Market, Capital Formation, and Union Strategy

1. Hak, "On the Fringes," pp. 116-17, 119-20, 122, 185-89. Hak estimates that in a good year a coastal logger worked over 250 days.
2. Laurel Sefton MacDowell, "Remember Kirkland Lake," p. 17.
3. "The Timber Control, 1940-1946," Records of the Wartime Prices and Trade Board, 30 September 1946, RG 64, vol. 90, file - November 1946, NAC. Under the authority of the Timber Controller, west coast lumber prices were stabilized at the June 1940 level. In December 1941, with the establishment of the Wartime Prices and Trade Board, the Timber Controller became a member of that body. During the 1942-43 period, lumber prices were adjusted upwards in response to increasing costs of production caused largely by shortages of labour, especially skilled labour.
4. Minutes of BCLA Directors meeting, 25 June 1940, COFI; minutes of BCLA general meetings, 2 December 1940, 25 March 1941; minutes of BCLA Directors meeting, 21 April 1942, COFI. The National Selective Service was created in March 1942.
5. R.G. Clements to George Pearson, 1 May 1942, Records of the British Columbia Department of Labour (files of conciliation commissioners appointed to investigate disputes under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act), GR 1073, box 3, file 37, Public Archives of British Columbia (hereafter PABC); memo of meeting between Frank Hall of the Timber Controller's office, and Phil Wilson of the BCLA, and representatives from the Unemployment Insurance Commission, 26 April 1943, RG 27, vol. 137, file 601.3-10 volume 2.
6. Minutes of BCLA general meeting, 20 May 1942, COFI.
7. British Columbia Lumberman, September 1942; MacDowell, "Remember Kirkland Lake," p. 246, note 61; Industrial Canada, October 1942.
8. British Columbia Lumberman, October 1942.
9. BCLA Board of Directors Annual Report, 1942, box 39, COFI; BCLA memo to Timber Controller, 23 February 1943, RG 27, vol. 137, file 601.3-10 volume 2.
10. BCLA memo to Timber Controller, 23 February 1943.
11. C.D. Howe to Humphrey Mitchell, 27 February 1943, RG 27, vol. 137, file 601.3-10 volume 2.
12. Humphrey Mitchell to Austin Taylor, 5 March 1943, RG 27, vol. 137, file 601.3-10 volume 2.
13. Mitchell to Howe, 1 April 1943, RG 27, vol. 137, file 601.3-10 volume 2.

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14. Allan Mitchell, Commissioner, UIC, to A. MacNamara, Deputy Minister of Labour, 27 April 1943; MacNamara to Mitchell, 28 April 1943; Mitchell to William McKinstry, Acting Regional Superintendent, UIC, 28 April 1943; McKinstry to Mitchell, n.d.; A.H. Williamson, Timber Controller to A.M. Manson, Chairman of Mobilization Board, 1 May 1943, RG 27, vol. 137, file 601.3-10 volume 2.
15. Minutes of BCLA general meeting, 25 May 1943, COFI.
16. Allan Mitchell to MacNamara, 20 April 1943, RG 27, vol. 137, file 601.3-10 volume 2.
17. Perrault, Wood and Water, pp. 87-112; MacKay, Empire of Wood, pp. 126-33; Hak, "On the Fringes," pp. 54-62.
18. Hak, "On the Fringes," p. 64.
19. Stephen Gray, "Forest Policy and Administration in British Columbia, 1912-1928," (M.A. thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1982), pp. 18-22; J.J. Deutsch et al., "Economics of Primary Production in British Columbia," vol. 1, "The Forest Product Industries" (Unpublished Manuscript, University of British Columbia, 1959), p. 36.
20. MacKay, Empire of Wood, p. 136; proceedings of the Royal Commission on the Forest Resources of British Columbia, 1944-1945, vol. 3, testimony of H.R. MacMillan, pp. 1263-270 (hereafter Sloan Proceedings) UBC-SC; "Report of the Commissioner the Honourable Gordon M.G. Sloan, Chief Justice of British Columbia, relating to the Forest Resources of British Columbia," B.C., Sessional Papers, 1946, pp. Q 55 - Q 57 (hereafter "Sloan Report"); Sloan Proceedings, vol. 2, testimony of R.W. Hibberson, p. 999.
21. BCLA Board of Directors Annual Report, 1942, box 39, COFI; Sloan Proceedings, vol. 3, testimony of H.R. MacMillan, pp. 1272-273, and vol. 2, testimony of R.W. Hibberson, p. 991.
22. Richard Rajala, "The Rude Science: Technology and Management in the West Coast Logging Industry, 1890-1930," paper presented to Fourth B.C. Studies Conference, Victoria, 7 November 1986; Safety Branch of British Columbia Department of Labour, Safety Newsletter #14, n.d., Records of the Trade Union Research Bureau (hereafter TURB) box 12, file 15, UBC-SC. A rival claim, according to Ed Gould, as the first user of the chainsaw in British Columbia came from "Gunny" and Al Brown at Great Central Lake. Power-sawing with chainsaws was particularly wide-spread during the war when a shortage of woods labour forced operators to innovate to keep up with the production needs of the mills. Early saws were often heavy to carry and unreliable. Universal acceptance in the industry took some time. In 1946, several operators would claim in testimony to Chief Justice Sloan that power sawing made it easier to "break in" new men, but did not necessarily increase production. Loss of time due to equipment failure may have offset gains in productivity. That there was some truth in this claim is evidenced by the move after the war to force fallers to own and maintain their own chainsaws, a move the union would forcefully resist. Ed Gould, Logging: British Columbia's Logging History (Saanichton: Hancock House Publishers Ltd., 1975), pp. 147-53; Ian Radforth, Bushworkers and Bosses, pp.

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- 202-06; testimony of various employers at IWA "Arbitration," 29 May 1946, Files and notebooks regarding industrial arbitrations undertaken by Gordon Sloan as arbitrator, 1943-58, Add. Mss. 1057, box 1, file 5, PABC.
23. BCLA submission to Sloan Proceedings, Exhibit 248, vol. 6, pp. 2933-934; TURB file on Monopoly Concentration of Production, box 13, file 31; Sloan Proceedings, vol. 3, testimony of H.R. MacMillan, pp. 1269-270. The open log market did not disappear but it shrank, and its structure changed inasmuch as fewer full-scale independent logging outfits were involved. The market continued to be supplied by smaller transient operations or by the surplus production of the large integrated firms. See also Deutsch *et al.*, "Economics of Primary Production," vol. 1, pp. 42-43, and "Sloan Report," pp. Q 80 - Q 81.
 24. "Sloan Report," p. Q 59.
 25. British Columbia Lumberman, February 1943; BCLA Board of Directors Annual Report, 1942.
 26. TURB, box 13, file. 31.
 27. Proceedings of public hearing, 28 August 1945, on appeal to National War Labour Board from ruling of the Regional War Labour Board of British Columbia, by Pacific Mills, North Coast Timber, J.R. Morgan, and Kelley Logging companies, Records of the National War Labour Board, RG 36, series 4, vol. 126, file 483, p. 14, NAC.
 28. Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, Vancouver, 2-3 January 1941, Report on Organization by Nigel Morgan; Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 10.
 29. A.H. Williamson to A. MacNamara, 15 March 1943, and Williamson to Austin Taylor, 23 March 1943, RG 27, vol. 137, file 601.3-10 volume 2; "Sloan Report," pp. Q 65 - Q 66; Deutsch *et al.*, "Economics of Primary Production," vol. 1, p. 42.
 30. Hak, "On the Fringes," pp. 122-23, 169-70, and chapter 4, *passim*; Rajala, "The Rude Science," pp. 13-15; Richard Rajala, "Technological and Managerial Control in the West Coast Logging Industry," unpublished preliminary report, pp. 12-13.
 31. R.A.J. McDonald, "Working Class Vancouver, 1886-1914: Urbanism and Class in British Columbia," B.C. Studies, 69-70 (Spring-Summer 1986): 67. For a description of the worker community at Fraser Mills, see Williams, "Ethnicity and Class Conflict at Maillardville," chapter 1.
 32. James Robert Conley, "Class Conflict and Collective Action in the Working Class of Vancouver (Ph.D. thesis, Carleton University, 1986), pp. 199-247.
 33. Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, Report on Organization by Nigel Morgan.
 34. Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, Vancouver, 3-4 January 1942, report of organizer Don Barbour, TURB box 62, file 26.

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35. Ibid., Resolution #4, Camp Fluctuation.
36. Ibid., Secretary Morgan's remarks on Resolution #4.
37. Bergren, Tough Timber, pp. 126-28.
38. Stanton Interview, 10 February 1987.
39. Parkin, "Labour and Timber," chapter 16, B.C. Lumber Worker, 21 April 1947; Bergren, Tough Timber, pp. 135 and 139; B.C. Lumber Worker, 31 January 1939.
40. Bergren, "Tough Timber," pp. 148-49; Avakumovic, The Communist Party in Canada, p. 148; Penner, Canadian Communism, p. 178; Stanton Interview, 10 February 1987; interview with Charlie Caron, 4 September 1987; interview with Lionel Edwards, 3 December 1987; interview with Les McDonald, 10 April 1987.
41. Bergren, "Tough Timber," pp. 138 and 148.
42. At this time there were eight locals and two sub-locals: loggers 1-71 Vancouver; millworkers 1-74 Vancouver; loggers 1-80 Lake Cowichan; loggers and millworkers sub-local (1-80) Ladysmith; logger and millworkers sub-local (1-80) Courtenay; loggers and millworkers local 1-85 Port Alberni; shingle weavers local 1-118 Victoria; millworkers local 1-122 Victoria; plywood and veneer workers local 1-217 Vancouver; bushmen and millworkers local 1-186 Kelowna.
43. Courtenay, a major logging and milling area itself, likely was chosen because of its central geographical position with respect to the Queen Charlotte Islands, Lake Cowichan, Port Alberni, and proximity to the Party-led UMW local.
44. The first had been defeated at the International level, though it passed in British Columbia.
45. Proceedings of the Third Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, Vancouver, 3-4 January 1940, Report of President Hjalmar Bergren, TURB box 62, file 18.
46. Minutes of B.C. District Council Semi-Annual Conference of Camp Delegates and Shop Stewards, 6 July 1941, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 5.
47. Ibid.; proceedings of the Fifth Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, Officers' Report, and Resolution #4, Camp Fluctuation.
48. Proceedings of Fourth Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, p. 14; proceedings of Annual meeting of Local 1-71, IWA, 30 December 1940, Pritchett Papers, box 8, file 8.
49. Proceedings of Annual meeting of Local 1-71, 30 December 1940.
50. Ibid.

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51. Minutes of Fourth Annual meeting of Local 1-80, IWA, 10 November 1940, Pritchett Papers, box 8, file 10.
52. Proceedings of Annual meeting of Local 1-71, 30 December 1940.
53. Lichtenstein, Labor's War at Home, p. 12.
54. MacDowell, "Remember Kirkland Lake," pp. 5 and 11.
55. Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, address to Convention by Pritchett on union organizing strategy.
56. Ibid., Resolution #4, Amendments to the ICA Act.
57. Proceedings of the Third Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, Resolution to secure services of PCLB for 1940. The PCLB's Vancouver branch had been set up as a branch of the San Francisco-based company in 1940. In 1941, it came under the direction of Bert Marcuse, a left-wing activist and trade union organizer from Montreal, who, soon after engaged the services of a young communist economist, Emil Bjarnason. The PCLB's business was to do public relations and education work, research, and to conduct negotiations for any bone fide trade-union. Bert Marcuse interview by Ian McDonald, 17 June 1983.
58. Minutes of Fourth Annual meeting of Local 1-80, IWA, 10 November 1940, report by Nigel Morgan, International Board member.

Notes: Chapter Three

The Quest for Legitimacy: The IWA Versus the ICA Act

1. Throughout this period prior to the implementation of federal wartime labour regulations, PC 1003, almost the entire British Columbia industry was under the jurisdiction of the provincial Department of Labour. A significant exception was the spruce airplane production on the Queen Charlotte Islands.
2. Penner, Canadian Communism, pp. 161-69.
3. Whitaker, "Official Repression of Communism During World War II," pp. 152-53.
4. Penner, Canadian Communism, pp. 169-75.
5. Whitaker, "Official Repression of Communism During World War II," pp. 150-53; Penner, Canadian Communism, pp. 188-90.
6. Norman Penner, ed., They Fought For Labour - Now Interned! (Committee for the Release of Labour Prisoners, Winnipeg, 1941).
7. Whitaker, "Official Repression of Communism During World War II," pp. 156-59.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 150, 152-53.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 149-52; Penner, Canadian Communism, pp. 185-89.
10. Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, Resolution #1—Labour and the National Emergency; Vancouver Province, 9 April 1943; Lichtenstein, Labor's War at Home, pp. 62-63.
11. Nevertheless, an extremely complex situation produced equally interesting strains in the labour movement. For example, Canadian IWA-Party leader Pritchett, for one, was critical of the more emphatically anti-war policies followed in the International Office during 1940. See chapter four below, note 64.
12. Lichtenstein, Labor's War at Home, p. 79.
13. Stanton interview, 22 October 1987.
14. Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, Officers' Report; B.C. Lumber Worker, 3 January 1942 and 17 January 1942; Lichtenstein, Labor's War at Home, pp. 83-9.
15. Local 1-80 and Lake Logging Co. Ltd. Arbitration, TURB, box 12, file 25.
16. Vancouver Province, 28 August 1941; Perrault, Wood and Water, p. 176.
17. "The Camp Guide," 23 June 1941, GR 1073, box 3, file 33; "Historical Notes: Hjalmar Bergren," recorded 16 August 1971, Pritchett Papers, box 7, file 8; James Thomson to George Pearson, 4 August 1941, GR 1073, box 3, file 32; Stanton

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- interview, 10 February 1987; TURB, box 12, file 25. One such member, A.A. MacNeil, had been blacklisted by the Loggers Agency since 1933.
18. Vancouver Sun, 16 September 1941; Vancouver Province, 28 August 1941; TURB, box 12, file 25.
 19. "The Camp Guide," 23 June 1941; "Report of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Branch (1941)," B.C., Sessional Papers, 1942, pp. I 95 - I 96; Vancouver Province 28 August and 29 August 1941; submission of IWA Local 1-80 to Board of Arbitration in dispute with Lake Logging, TURB, box 12, file 25.
 20. B.C. Lumber Worker, 28 June and 20 August 1941; IWA District One Bulletins, 16 July and 2 August 1941, TURB, box 12, file 25; Vancouver Province, 28 August and 30 August 1941; Vancouver Sun, 16 September 1941; "The Camp Guide," 6 June 1941, GR 1073, box 3, file 33.
 21. "Report of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Branch (1941)," p. I 79.
 22. Thomson to Parsley, n.d., and Thomson to Parsley, 23 July 1941, GR 1073, box 3, file 32.
 23. Submission of IWA Local 1-80 to Board of Arbitration in dispute with Lake Logging, TURB, box 12, file 25.
 24. Thomson to Pearson, 4 August 1941, GR 1073, box 3, file 32.
 25. Ibid.
 26. Pearson to Percy Richards, secretary to Premier Hart (April 1942), Records of the Premier's Office, GR 1222, box 41, file 6, PABC.
 27. B.C. Lumber Worker, 20 August 1941.
 28. Thomson to Pearson, 4 August 1941.
 29. Proceedings of Fifth Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, Report of John Wigdor of PCLB.
 30. Vancouver Province, 28 August 1941. See also Stanton, Never Say Die!, pp. 57-58.
 31. Vancouver Province, 28 August 1941.
 32. Submission of IWA Local 1-80, TURB, box 12, file 25.
 33. "Report of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Branch (1941)," pp. I 95 - I 96.
 34. Vancouver Province, 17 September 1941.
 35. Vancouver Province, 16 September 1943.

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36. B.C. Lumber Worker, 25 October 1941.
37. "Historical Notes: Hjalmar Bergren," 16 August 1971; Stanton, Never Say Die!, p. 59.
38. Proceedings of the B.C. District Council Semi-Annual Midsummer Conference, 5 July 1942, TURB, box 62, file 24; Parkin, "Labour and Timber," chapter 17.
39. MacKay, Empire of Wood, p. 129 and 142; Sloan Proceedings, testimony of H.R. MacMillan, vol. 3, p. 1261 and vol. 8, pp. 3591 and 3588; Industrial Canada, January 1945; L.R. Andrews, "Post War Forestry Problems of the Lumber Industry on the West Coast," British Columbia Lumberman, May 1944; Western Business and Industry, June 1945.
40. Harold Pritchett, "Plywood Workers Denied Rights by Company Continue to Fight for Recognition," B.C. Lumber Worker, 8 March 1943.
41. Thomson to Pearson, 12 May 1942, GR 1073, box 1, file 24.
42. Nigel Morgan to Adam Bell, Deputy Minister of Labour, 7 March 1940, and Bell to Morgan, 1 February 1940, TURB, box 9-1, file 30d (original classification number).
43. Pritchett, "Plywood Workers Denied Rights."
44. Vancouver News Herald, 13 May 1942, Pritchett, "Plywood Workers Denied Rights;" Thomson to Pearson, 12 May 1942, GR 1073, box 1, file 2.
45. Pritchett, "Plywood Workers Denied Rights;" Melsness and Bennett to Pearson, 12 May 1942, GR 1073, box 1, file 25.
46. Memo for files re B.C. Plywoods Ltd., by James Thomson, 28 May 1942, GR 1073, box 1, file 24; J. Thomson, memo, 8 May 1942, GR 1073, box 1, file 24.
47. E.B. Ballentine to Thomson, 21 May 1942, and "Special Notice Issued by Employees Conference Committee," 29 May 1942, and Campney, Owen and Murphy to Pearson, 8 June 1942, GR 1073, box 1, file 25; James Thomson memo for file, 30 June 1942, GR 1073, box 1, file 24.
48. Campney, Owen and Murphy to Thomson, 8 June 1942, and Melsness to Thomson, 19 June 1942, GR 1073, box 1, file 25.
49. Thomson to Pearson, 4 July 1942, GR 1073, box 1, file 24.
50. "Majority Award of the Board of Arbitration in the matter of a dispute between MacMillan Industries Ltd. (Plywood Division) and its employees," 2 September 1942, GR 1073, box 1, file 25; "Report of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Branch (1942)," B.C., Sessional Papers, 1943, pp. F 95 - F 96.
51. Vancouver News Herald, 18 September 1942.
52. Vancouver Province, 19 September 1942.

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53. Pritchett to Thomson, 19 October 1942, GR 1073, box 1, file 24; Union Bulletin re Local 1-217, to B.C. Plywood employees, TURB, box 13, file 13; Vancouver News Herald, 21 September 1942.
54. B.C., Statutes, 1937, 1 Geo. 6, c. 31, s. 44.
55. Pritchett to Pearson, 24 September 1942, GR 1073, box 1, file 24.
56. Pearson to Thomson, 2 October 1942, GR 1073, box 1, file 24.
57. Thomson to Pearson, 22 October 1942, GR 1073, box 1, file 24.
58. Vancouver Province, 22 February 1943.
59. Sloan Proceedings, Brief of Bloedel, Stewart and Welch Ltd., Exhibit 305, vol. 11, pp. 5137-139; MacKay, Empire of Wood, pp. 82-83.
60. Thomson to Pearson, memo re Bloedel, Stewart and Welch Camp #4, Menzies Bay, GR 1073, box 1, file 31; see also Bergren, Tough Timber, pp. 198-205.
61. Thomson to Pearson, 13 March 1942, GR 1073, box 1, file 31.
62. Thomson to Pearson, 7 May 1942, GR 1073, box 1, file 31; Nigel Morgan to Thomson, Conciliation Officer, re Menzies Bay, encloses copy of John Mulroney to Morgan, 30 April 1942, GR 1073, box 1, file 32.
63. Thomson to Pearson, 7 May 1942; Mulroney to Morgan, 30 April 1942; Statement made by John Mulroney on 18 May 1942, at General Safety Meetings, GR 1073, box 1, file 32.
64. T.J. Noble, Personnel Manager, to Thomson, 30 April 1942, GR 1073, box 1, file 31.
65. Mulroney to Morgan, 30 April 1942; Noble to Thomson, 30 April 1942; Thomson to Pearson, 7 May 1942.
66. Mulroney to Morgan, 30 April 1942.
67. Thomson to Pearson, 7 May 1942.
68. B.H.E. Goult, Secretary-Registrar, Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, to F.E. Harrison, Western Representative, Federal Department of Labour, 27 June 1942, enclosing copy of report re Labour Dispute at Menzies Bay camp of Bloedel, Stewart and Welch Ltd., RG 27, vol. 417, strike 131.
69. Statement made by J. Mulroney on 18 May 1942 at General Safety Meeting.
70. Pearson to Mulroney, 2 June 1942, GR 1073, box 1, file 32; Goult to Harrison, 27 June 1942; B.C., Statutes, 1937, 1 Geo. 6, c. 31, s. 8.

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71. Nigel Morgan statement to Federal Department of Labour re Menzies Bay dispute, 23 June 1942, RG 27, vol. 417, strike 131; Goult to Harrison, 27 June 1942; B.C. Lumber Worker, 27 June 1942.
72. Goult to Harrison, 27 June 1942; Nigel Morgan statement to Federal Department of Labour, 23 June 1942; Vancouver Sun, 10 June 1942.
73. "Report of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Branch (1942)," p. F 89.
74. Resolution re dispute Bloedel, Stewart and Welch, Menzies Bay, 3 July 1942, GR 1222, box 51, file 5; Hart to Dalskog, and Hart to Morgan, 18 July 1942, Ibid.; Pearson to Hart, 22 July 1942, Ibid.
75. MacKay, Empire of Wood, p. 36; TURB, box 13, file 31, "Monopoly Concentration of Production;" PCLB to IWA re Directors of CWL, 10 May 1944, TURB, box 14, file 3.
76. Jerry Lembcke, "The International Woodworkers of America in British Columbia, 1942-1951," Labour/Le Travail, 6 (Autumn 1980): pp. 116-17.
77. Local 1-217 and Canadian Western Lumber Co. Ltd. (Fraser Mills), subject file, newspaper clipping, 11 August 1942, TURB, box 14, file 3.
78. Vancouver Province, 24 August 1942; B.C. Lumber Worker, 29 August 1942.
79. Vancouver Sun, 18 September 1942; B.C. Lumber Worker, 19 September 1942.
80. F.J. Mead, Assistant Commissioner, Director, Criminal Investigation, to Deputy Minister of Labour, Ottawa, 14 October 1942, RG 27, vol. 423, strike 357.
81. "Circle 'F' Bulletin" (Fraser Mills), 23 October 1942, re prosecution of CWL under ICA Act for refusing to bargain, TURB, box 14, file 3; Vancouver Province, 29 October 1942.
82. Confidential memo on Canadian Western Lumber Ltd., n.d., GR 1073, box 2, file 14.
83. MacKay, Empire of Wood, p. 84; Sloan Proceedings, Brief of Bloedel, Stewart and Welch Ltd., Exhibit 305, vol. 11, p. 5137-38; "Sloan Report," p. Q 59.
84. "Sloan Report," p. Q 59; minutes of Organizers Conferences, 24 March 1944 and 22 May 1944, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 4.
85. "Report of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Branch (1942)," p. 99.
86. "Report of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Branch (1942)," Hon. Mr. Justice Coady's "Reasons for Judgement," 27 October 1942, pp. F 100 - F-101.
87. "Report of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Branch (1942)," Schedule A.—"Judgement of the Hon. Chief Justice of British Columbia," 20 November 1942, pp. F 103 - F 104.

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88. Ibid., Schedule B.—“Judgement of the Hon. Mr. Justice McQuarrie,” 20 November 1942, p. F 104.
89. Ibid., Schedule C.—“Judgement of the Hon. Mr. Justice Sloan,” 20 November 1942, p. F 105 - F 106.
90. Ibid., Schedule D.—“Judgement of the Hon. Mr. Justice O’Halloran,” 20 November 1942, pp. F 106 - F 108.
91. Industrial Canada, March 1943.
92. “Report of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Branch (1942),” p. F 110.
93. Ibid., pp. F 102 - F 103, and F 110 - F 111; Award of the Board of Arbitration, Harold B. Robertson and R.V. Stuart, 11 December 1943, RG 27, vol. 417, strike 131, Bloedel, Stewart and Welch Ltd., and Employees at Red Band Shingle Mill.
94. MacDowell, “The Formation of the Canadian Industrial Relations System,” pp. 179-80; Webber, “The Malaise of Compulsory Conciliation,” p. 84.
95. B.C. Lumber Worker, 15 August, 10 October, 2 November 1942.
96. Joint Officers Report to the Sixth Annual Convention of the IWA-CIO, District Council No. 1, Vancouver, 2 January 1943, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 12.

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The Battle of the Charlottes: The End of the Open Shop

1. See for example the work of Coates, MacDowell and Harold Logan.
2. Summary of IWA Case in the matter of a dispute between IWA Local 1-71 and J.R. Morgan, Kelley Logging Co. Ltd., Pacific Mills Ltd., and A.P. Allison Logging Co. Ltd., Queen Charlotte Islands, British Columbia, 19 May 1943, Stanton Papers, box 6.
3. National War Labour Board, Proceedings of public hearing, 28 August 1945, on appeal of Pacific Mills., North Coast Timber Co. Ltd., J.R. Morgan Ltd., Kelley Logging Co. Ltd., and the International Woodworkers of America from the decision of the Regional War Labour Board of British Columbia refusing adjustment of wages, RG 36, series 4, vol. 126, file 483 (hereafter NWLB Proceedings 28 August 1945), pp. 37-38, 135, 17-18; "Sloan Report," p. Q 74.
4. Charles Pearse and A.M. Whisker to Pearson, 5 May 1942, GR 1073, box 3, file 37; Summary of IWA Case, 19 May 1943, p. 4.
5. "The Timber Control, 1940-1946," RG 64, vol. 90, file - November 1946; British Columbia Lumberman, June 1942.
6. Queen Charlotte Islands Spruce Production, TURB, box 12, file 17.
7. Minutes of BCLA general meeting, 23 June 1942, COFI.
8. Pearse and Whisker to Pearson, 5 May 1942; NWLB Proceedings, 28 August 1945, pp. 137-40.
9. R.G. Clements, Inspector, "Report on Loggers Seeking Employment in Other War Industries," 28 April 1942, GR 1073, box 3, file 37.
10. NWLB Proceedings, 28 August 1945, pp. 25-26, 55, 136.
11. Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Convention IWA District Council No. 1, Nigel Morgan speaking on Resolution #4—Camp Fluctuation; Summary of IWA case, 19 May 1943, p. 6.
12. Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, Nigel Morgan speaking on Resolution #4—Camp Fluctuation.
13. National War Labour Board, Proceedings. No. 11. Labour Relations and Wage Conditions in Canada, 10-11 June 1943 (Ottawa: Edmond Cloutier, 1943), pp. 1003 and 1009; Summary of IWA Case, 19 May 1943.
14. Hart to Morgan, 8 April 1942; Pearson to Percy Richards (Secretary to Premier), n.d.; Morgan to Hart, 16 April 1942; Pritchett to Hart, 17 April 1942, GR 1222, box 41, file 6.

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15. B.C. Lumber Worker, 23 May and 6 June 1942; Summary of IWA Case, 19 May 1943.
16. H.A. Logan, Trade Unions in Canada: Their Development and Functioning (Toronto: MacMillan Company of Canada, 1948), pp. 119-21; Industrial Canada, July 1942.
17. J.J. Deutsch, et al., "Economics of Primary Production in British Columbia," volume IV, "Industrial Relations in the Basic Industries of British Columbia," (unpublished manuscript, University of British Columbia, 1959), pp. 42-43.
18. Elliott M. Little, "Commonsense in Labour Relations," Industrial Canada, July 1942.
19. Speech by D.R. Chant, Industrial Relations Division of National Selective Service, to International Wartime Advertising Conference, 11 November 1942, Industrial Canada, December 1942.
20. B.C. Lumber Worker, 6 June 1942; Majority Report of A.M. Harper and Arthur J. Turner, in the matter of a dispute between Allison Logging Company, Ltd., Kelley Logging Company, Ltd., J.R. Morgan, members of Local 1-71, International Woodworkers of America, 1 June 1943, Stanton Papers, box 6 (henceforth Harper Report); NWLB Proceedings, No. 11, 10-11 June 1943, p. 1013; Vancouver Province, 27 February 1943.
21. NWLB Proceedings, 28 August 1945, pp. 7-8.
22. Ibid., pp. 9-10.
23. Memo of Alan Mitchell, Commissioner UIC, re phone call with William McKinstry, 14 April 1943, RG 27, vol. 137, file 601.3-10 volume 2.
24. Coates, "Organized Labour and Politics," pp. 87-88.
25. MacDowell, "Remember Kirkland Lake," pp. 108-09, 206.
26. Ibid., pp. 224-30, 220.
27. Ibid., pp. 231-33.
28. MacDowell, "The 1943 Steel Strike," p. 70; MacDowell, "The Formation of the Canadian Industrial Relations System," p. 190.
29. Coates, "Organized Labour and Politics," pp. 133-34, 138.
30. MacDowell, "Remember Kirkland Lake," p. 225.
31. Coates, "Organized Labour and Politics," p. 107; Industrial Canada, January 1943.
32. Canadian Unionist, November 1942; B.C. Lumber Worker, 7 December 1942.
33. Coates, "Organized Labour and Politics," pp. 107, 104-05.

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34. King's Typescript Diary, 14 January 1942, cited in MacDowell, "The 1943 Steel Strike," p. 74.
35. MacDowell, "The 1943 Steel Strike," pp. 74, 80-81.
36. Coates, "Organized Labour and Politics," p. 146. In a private meeting with the new NWLB members in February, the government gave the board the job of recommending changes to its wage control policy and of drafting a new industrial relations order.
37. MacDowell, "The 1943 Steel Strike," pp. 64-5; Coates, "Organized Labour and Politics," pp. 128, 158-59.
38. Robin, Pillars of Profit, p. 44; Robin Fisher, "The Decline of Reform: British Columbia Politics in the 1930s," paper presented to the Fourth B.C. Studies Conference, Victoria, 7 November 1986, p. 2.
39. Phillips, No Power Greater, pp. 124-27.
40. Robin, Pillars of Profit, pp. 39 and 52.
41. Fisher, "The Decline of Reform," p. 11.
42. Robin, Pillars of Profit, p. 51.
43. Fisher, "The Decline of Reform," p. 23-4; Robin, Pillars of Profit, pp. 52-62.
44. Robin, Pillars of Profit, p. 74.
45. Phillips, No Power Greater, p. 127.
46. "Report of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Branch (1943)," B.C., Sessional Papers, 1944, p. K 82, Table—"Number of Disputes, Number of Employees Affected, and Time Lost in Working-Days, 1933-43."
47. "Report of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Branch (1942)," Summary of Disputes Commencing in 1942 (Provincial).
48. "Legislative Brief Submitted to the Honourable Prime Minister of British Columbia and Members of the Cabinet re ICA Act," 12 January 1943, Pritchett Papers, box 7, file 5. This brief was presented by the B.C. Executive of the TLC, Vancouver and New Westminster District Trades and Labour Council, Victoria and District Trades and Labour Council, Vancouver Labour Council, Victoria Labour Council, the Island Labour Council, and the Vancouver Island Joint Labour Conference.
49. Robin, Pillars of Profit, pp. 62 and 78.
50. Industrial Canada, May 1943; B.C. Lumber Worker, 2 March 1943.
51. Minutes of Mid-Summer Conference of District Council No. 1, 4 July 1943, Pritchett Papers, box 5; file 3.

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52. B.C., Statutes, 1943, 7 Geo. 6, c. 28 (An Act to amend the "Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act"); B.C., Statutes, 1937, 1 Geo. 6, c. 31.
53. B.C. Lumber Worker, 22 March 1943; Industrial Canada, May 1943.
54. Nigel Morgan, "New Labor Bill Great Triumph for B.C. Unions," B.C. Lumber Worker, 22 March 1943.
55. B.C. Lumber Worker, 3 May 1943.
56. Chapter three, above; minutes of BCLA Directors meeting, 21 April 1942, COFI.
57. Minutes of BCLA Directors meetings, 24 March 1942, 21 April 1942, 24 November 1942, 25 April 1944.
58. NWLB Proceedings, 28 August 1945, pp. 50-52.
59. Harper Report, p. 2.
60. NWLB Proceedings, No. 11, 10-11 June 1943, p. 1008.
61. Summary of IWA Case, 19 May 1943, p. 2.
62. Vancouver Province, 19 May 1943; Vancouver Sun, 19 May 1943; Abella, Nationalism, Communism and Canadian Labour, p. 115. IWA District Council One had been suspended from the CCL in January 1943 for supporting the Boilermakers union in its dispute with the Congress over the election of a communist slate to the executive of the Boilermakers.
63. Stanton interview, 10 February 1987; Vancouver Province, 27 February 1943.
64. Summary of IWA Case, 19 May 1943; Vancouver Province, 9 April 1943.
65. Harper Report, 8 June 1943.
66. Vancouver Province, 8 June 1943.
67. Nigel Morgan to all secretaries of Queen Charlotte Islands sub-locals, 9 June 1943; Pritchett Papers, box 8, file 9.
68. Minutes of Mid-Summer Conference of District Council No. 1, 4 July 1943.
69. Vancouver Province, 10 August 1943.
70. Vancouver Province, 10 June 1943.
71. Morgan to all secretaries of Queen Charlotte Islands sub-locals, 9 June 1943.
72. NWLB Proceedings, No. 11, 10-11 June 1943, pp. 1012, 1007-010.
73. Vancouver Province, 17 June 1943. Further to establishing its legitimacy as bargaining agent for British Columbia woodworkers, the IWA, in June and July,

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- filed applications with the RWLB, and was granted time and one-half for all time worked over eight hours per day and 48 hours per week for most employees in sawmills, logging camps and other woodworking plants. Vancouver Sun, 14 June and 15 July 1943; B.C. Lumber Worker, 12 July 1943.
74. "Chunking Out!" Local 1-71 Bi-weekly Newsletters, Pritchett Papers, box 8, file 9; Vancouver Sun, 3 July 1943.
 75. Vancouver Province, 15 July 1943; Stanton interview, 10 February 1943; Vancouver Province, 8 July 1943.
 76. Minutes of Mid-Summer Conference of District Council No. 1, 4 July 1943; Vancouver Province, 15 July 1943. The officers reported that the addition of 2000 new members since the last International convention, three new locals, bringing the total to eight; five new ladies' auxiliaries, and a stepped-up organization programme assisted by three new International organizers, had greatly added to the prestige and authority of the District Council over the previous few months. Other achievements included an alleged doubling of the circulation of the Lumber Worker to 14,400, the establishment of labour-management production committees, the beginning of joint government-union hiring to replace the "shark" hiring hall, a complete survey of the industry for future assistance in negotiations, arbitrations and government briefs.
 77. Lichtenstein, Labor's War at Home, pp. 145, 154-55.
 78. This case was made in both the Summary of IWA Case, 19 May 1943, and in NWLB Proceedings, No. 11, 10-11 June 1943.
 79. Vancouver Sun, 24 July 1943.
 80. Vancouver Province, 21 July 1943. The operators involved were: Alaska Pine, Alberta Lumber, Alberni Pacific Lumber, Alberni Plywood, B.C. Pulp and Paper, B & K Logging, Bloedel Stewart and Welch, Canadian Forest Products, Canadian Western Lumber, Canadian White Pine, Cameron Lumber, Comox Logging and Railway, Early and Brown Timber, Elk River Timber, Hammond Cedar, Hillcrest Lumber, International Timber Mills, Hemmingren-Cameron, Malahat Logging, MacMillan Industries (Plywood Division), Robert McNair Shingle, O'Brien Logging, Pioneer Timber, Salmon River Logging, Sitka Spruce Lumber, Straits Lumber, Thurston-Flavelle, Timberland Lumber, Veddar Logging, Victoria Lumber and Manufacturing, Mohawk Lumber, Canadian Puget Sound, Jones Lake Logging, Northwest Bay Logging, Royal City Sawmills, Timber Preservers, M.B. King Lumber, Glaspie Lumber, B.C. Manufacturing, Westminster Shook Mills, Eburne Sawmills. At the end of the month, disputes with Lake Logging and Comox Logging and Railway were referred to the provincial Department of Labour for arbitration over the companies' refusal to sign union agreements. Pritchett announced on 31 July that during the ensuing month the union planned to go into 30 to 35 of the large lumbering operations in the province seeking collective bargaining and union agreements. Vancouver Sun, 27 July and 31 July 1943.
 81. Vancouver Sun, 9 August 1943.
 82. Queen Charlotte Islands Spruce Production, TURB, box 12, file 13.

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83. Vancouver Sun, 24 August and 26 August 1943.
84. Vancouver Sun, 3 September, 21 August, 23 August, 30 August 1943.
85. Vancouver Province, 31 August 1943; Vancouver Sun, 3 September, 4 September, 11 September 1943.
86. Vancouver Province, 23 September 1943.
87. Vancouver Province, 22 September 1943; Vancouver Sun, 28 September 1943.
88. Vancouver Sun, 30 September 1943; Vancouver Province, 4 October 1943; B.C. Lumber Worker, 4 October 1943.
89. Vancouver Province, 1 November 1943.
90. Vancouver Province, 16 September 1943; Vancouver Sun, 17 September 1943; Vancouver News Herald, 21 September 1943.
91. "Submission of IWA Local 1-80 to Board of Arbitration in the Matter of a Dispute with the Lake Logging Company Ltd.," 20 September 1943, Pritchett Papers, box 7, file 4; "Report of the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Branch (1943)," pp. K 88 - K 89; "Local 1-80 and Lake Logging Co. Ltd.: Wage Rates, 1942," TURB, box 12, file 23 (newspaper clippings, 1943, Lake Log arbitration). The company nominee's minority award called for an agreement between the employer and an employees committee, without the intervention of an outside agency.
92. Vancouver Sun, 7 October 1943.
93. Vancouver News Herald, 7 October 1943.
94. Vancouver Sun, 5 October 1943.
95. Vancouver Sun, 12 October 1943.
96. Vancouver Sun, 13 October and 16 October 1943.
97. Vancouver Province, 13 October 1943. Government supervision under PC 7307 was strictly at the discretion of the minister who had failed to order a vote in the two months following the union's request. See Webber, "The Malaise of Compulsory Conciliation," p. 68.
98. Vancouver Province, 18 October 1943.
99. Vancouver Sun, 16 October 1943.
100. B.C. Lumber Worker, 18 October 1943.
101. No doubt the Department of Munitions and Supply wanted to avoid an extension of the strike to the Aero Timber operation proper, and there was no guarantee the IWA would allow the government to stall conciliation procedures beyond the issuance of a board report now that the iron was in the fire at the three other operations.

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102. Vancouver Sun, 26 October 1943; NWLB Proceedings, 28 August 1945, p. 17.
103. NWLB Proceedings, 28 August 1945, pp. 2-22.
104. Webber, "The Malaise of Compulsory Conciliation," pp. 69-75, 87-88.
105. Stanton Interview, 10 February 1987; Stanton, Never Say Die!, pp. 66-67.
106. Vancouver Province, 23 October 1943; B.C. Lumber Worker, 18 October 1943.
107. Federal Department of Labour News Release, 3 November 1943, RG 27, vol. 433, strike 387.
108. Vancouver Sun, 23 October 1943.
109. Vancouver Sun, 25 October 1943.
110. Vancouver Province, 25 October 1943.
111. Vancouver Sun, 3 November 1943; Agreement Between Aero Timber Products Ltd. and IWA Local 1-71, 29 November 1943, Add. Mss. 1057, box 1, file 1.
112. Vancouver Province, 1 November 1943.
113. Vancouver Sun, 26 November 1943; Vancouver Province, 20 December 1943.
114. B.C. Lumber Worker, 10 January 1943.
115. Lichtenstein, Labor's War at Home, p. 26.
116. Ibid., pp. 207-13.
117. Canadian Unionist, July/August 1944.

Notes: Chapter Five

Consolidation

1. For a critical view of P.C. 1003 see Peter Warrian, "Labour is not a Commodity": A Study of the Rights of Labour in the Canadian Postwar Economy, 1944-48," (Ph.D. thesis, University of Waterloo, 1986).
2. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 4 April 1945, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 4; Avakumovic, The Communist Party in Canada, pp. 162-64; Muldoon, "Capitalism Unchallenged," pp. 106-08; B.C. Lumber Worker, 24 September 1945.
3. B.C. Lumber Worker, 6 March 1944.
4. "The Shop Steward," Local 1-85, 20 March 1944, Pritchett Papers, box 8, file 18.
5. Minutes of District Organizing Conference, 24 April 1944, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 4.
6. Minutes of District Organizing Conference, 22 May 1944, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 4. Under the Tyee system a company would contract with a labour contractor to supply a certain amount of immigrant Chinese labour for a specified price. These workers would then be at the mercy of the contractor with regards to wages and working conditions.
7. Minutes of Quarterly District Council Meeting, 2 April 1944, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 24.
8. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 8 May 1944, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 2.
9. Minutes of District Organizing Conference, 24 May 1944, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 4.
10. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 8 May 1944, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 2.
11. *Ibid.*; Minutes of Quarterly District Council meeting, 16 July 1944, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 24.
12. Lembcke and Tattum, One Union in Wood, p. 110; minutes of District Executive meeting, 22 May 1944, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 2; Proceedings of the Eighth Annual Convention of the IWA (International), 24-27 October 1944, pp. 89-91.
13. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 5 July 1944, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 2. In June, Secretary-Treasurer E.E. Benedict, in collusion with a small opposition bloc at Fraser Mills, attacked Pritchett for accepting a political nomination.
14. *Ibid.*
15. Minutes of Quarterly District Council meeting, 16 July 1944, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 24.

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16. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 2 August 1944, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 2.
17. Minutes of Quarterly District Council meeting, 16 July 1944, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 24.
18. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 13 September 1944, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 3.
19. See Trade Union Research Bureau files for several of these cases involving the IWA during the 1941-43 period.
20. Proceedings of NWLB hearing re Hammond Cedar Company, Limited and IWA, Local 1-367, RG 36/4, vol. 123, file 208, pp. 20 and 29; B.C. Lumber Worker, 20 December 1943; Vancouver Sun, 17 January 1945.
21. NWLB hearing re Hammond, RG 36/4, vol. 123, file 208, p. 29.
22. Ibid., pp. 11 and 87.
23. Ibid., p. 16. As this award was retroactive to 4 December 1943 and was handed down only in January 1945, the maximum applied to most women employees, though in fact, it was a reduction from the 65 to 70 cent range awarded by the RWLB.
24. Ibid., pp. 83-86. In fact, the IWA's key argument had more to do with preserving job category rates for men fighting for democracy in Europe than it did with compensating women fairly. This was particularly so as the IWA brief was delivered for the union by CCL Executive Secretary Norman Dowd who, in his extemporaneous remarks to the board, let it be known that he thought there was "some room for equivocation in the phrase 'equal pay for equal work,' but I think the job is the factor." Dowd, who filled in at the last minute for Nigel Morgan, also told the board he was rather uncomfortable with the language of the brief "which I would not use myself if I were doing it." As evidence of the continuing friction between District One and the CCL, Dowd wrote Morgan that "You are aware that the tone of the company's statements and rebuttal was on a fairly high level...but my own feeling was that in a few cases our own material made a rather bad impression by its tone." (NWLB hearing re Hammond, pp. 87-88 and 61; Dowd to Morgan, 13 September 1944, TURB, box 13, file 29).
25. Vancouver Sun, 17 January 1945.
26. B.C. Lumber Worker, 2 July 1945.
27. Stuart Research response to IWA Brief of 25 October 1945, 29 June 1946, TURB, box 12, file 12; IWA memo to Stuart Research re Trainmen, 25 October 1945, TURB, box 12, file 12; Records of IWA Western Canadian Regional Council, No. 1, (hereafter IWA Records), roll #1, file - District Contract - Research, 1943-46, UBC-SC.
28. Minutes of Informal Conference on Trainmen's Problems, 30 January 1945, TURB, box 12, file 12.

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29. A. Dewhurst, secretary, local 1-85, to N. Morgan, 22 November 1944, IWA Records, roll #1, file - District Contract - Research, 1943-46.
30. Ibid.
31. Minutes of Quarterly District Council meeting, 2 April 1944, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 24.
32. Minutes of Quarterly District Council meeting, 16 July 1944, box 4, file 24.
33. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 7 February 1945, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 3.
34. Minutes of Quarterly District Council meeting, 16 July 1944, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 24; RG 27, vol. 3454, file 4-2-5-2, part 1. At the 5 July 1944 District Executive meeting, a motion carried that all donations to the LPP be left up to individual members (Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 2). At the end of 1944 the CCL's Political Action Committee endorsed the CCF despite Millard's earlier assurances of its political independence. After that move, Nigel Morgan resigned from the CCL committee. In January 1945, District One severed its links with the CCL-Political Action Committee (Abella, Nationalism, Communism and Canadian Labour, p. 78; minutes of District Executive meeting, 10 January 1945, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 3).
35. Deutsch, et al., vol. 1, p. 17.
36. "Report of the Forest Branch (1941)," B.C., Sessional Papers, 1942, p. G 21; "Report of the Forest Branch (1942)," B.C., Sessional Papers, 1943, p. FF 27; "Report of the Forest Branch (1943)," B.C., Sessional Papers, 1944, p. BB 22; "Report of the Forest Branch (1944)," B.C., Sessional Papers, 1945, p. DD 28.
37. Allen Seager, "Socialists and Workers: The Western Canadian Coal Miners, 1900-21," Labour/Le Travail, 16 (Fall 1985): 23-59; Deutsch, et al., vol. 1, p. 16b.
38. Steeves, The Compassionate Rebel, p. 56.
39. Allen Seager, "The History of the Mine Workers' Union of Canada, 1925-1936," (M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1977), pp. 199-213.
40. Parkin, "Labour and Timber," chapter eighteen, p. 6.
41. Hak, "On the Fringes," pp. 139-42; Parkin, "Labour and Timber," chapter eighteen; Pacific Coast Labour Bureau, Interior Woodworking and Logging Industry Survey, July-October 1945, TURB, box 15, file 3.
42. Parkin, "Labour and Timber," chapter eighteen, p. 6.
43. Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Convention of the IWA (International), supplement 9.
44. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 4 April 1945, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 4.

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45. Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Convention of the IWA (International), p. 185.
46. Ibid., pp. 185-86.
47. RCLB, Interior Woodworking and Logging Industry Survey.
48. Proceedings of the Eighth Annual Convention of the IWA (International), Report of Credentials Committee, supplement 18. District Five had 11,901 to District One's 10,599.
49. Lembcke and Tattum, One Union in Wood, p. 111.
50. Ibid., chapter four.
51. Ibid., chapter four.
52. Minutes of Special District Council meeting, 20 May 1945, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 21.
53. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 4 July 1945, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 5.
54. PCLB Interior Woodworking and Logging Survey; minutes of District Executive meeting, 4 July 1945, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 5.
55. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 4 July 1945.
56. Hak, "On the Fringes," pp. 246-74.
57. Ibid., pp. 284-301.
58. Ibid., p. 306.
59. Ibid., p. 284.
60. Ibid., pp. 97 and 99.
61. Ken Bernsohn, Cutting Up the North: The History of the Forest Industry in the Northern Interior (North Vancouver: Hancock House, n.d.), pp. 50-52.
62. Ibid., p. 52.
63. Ibid.
64. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 4 July 1945.
65. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 1 August 1945, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 3.
66. Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Convention of the IWA (International), supplement 9.
67. PCLB, Interior Woodworking and Logging Industry Survey.

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68. Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Convention of the IWA (International), supplement 9; Parkin, "Labour and Timber," chapter eighteen.
69. PCLB, Interior Woodworking and Logging Industry Survey.
70. Ibid.
71. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 1 August 1945, box 4, file 5.
72. Ibid.; minutes of District Executive meeting, 5 September 1945, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 6; B.C. Lumber Worker, 8 October 1945.
73. The District Council also fought through the RWLB against appeals from the operators to have the principle of equal pay for equal work adopted in the interior. Minutes of Quarterly District Council meeting, 7 October 1945, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 25.
74. C.J. Simpson, National Labour Bureau, to Claude Ballard, 26 June 1945, TURB, box 15, file 3.
75. Minutes of Quarterly District Council meeting, 7 October 1945, box 4, file 25.
76. Minutes of Interior Wage and Policy Conference, 23-24 September 1945, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 5.
77. Minutes of Quarterly District Council meeting, 7 October 1945.
78. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 28 November 1945, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 6.
79. Minutes of District Executive meetings, 7 and 28 November 1945, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 6.
80. B.C. Lumber Worker, 8 and 22 October 1945.
81. "Sloan Report," p. Q32; FIR Brief presented at conciliation hearing, 8 August 1949, Pritchett Papers, box 7, file 1.
82. FIR Brief, 8 August 1949.
83. British Columbia Lumberman, February 1943. 45 percent of coastal production was to be reserved for the UK and dominions, 43 percent for Canada, and 12 percent was allocated to the U.S.
84. See Gray, "Forest Policy and Administration in British Columbia," chapter four.
85. British Columbia Lumberman, June 1943; "The Timber Control, 1940-1946," RG 64, vol. 90, File November 1946, pp. 9-10.
86. Ibid., p. 11. In 1942 the movement of the less profitable hemlock logs to U.S. pulp mills was restricted, sending export figures plummeting for the next four years (see B.C. Forest Branch reports for 1942-45).

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87. British Columbia Lumberman, February 1943.
88. British Columbia Lumberman, August 1943.
89. "Report of the Forest Branch (1943)," B.C.; Sessional Papers, 1944, pp. BB 20 and BB 21; British Columbia Lumberman, April 1944.
90. British Columbia Lumberman, April 1944.
91. Minutes of special meeting of BCLA Directors, 24 March 1944, COFI.
92. British Columbia Lumberman, May 1944.
93. IWA B.C. District Council #1, "Statement in Support of Wage Increase, 1946 Industry Wide Negotiations," 22 May 1946, prepared by TURB, Add. Mss. 1057, box 1, file 7.
94. Ibid., p. 22.
95. Norman Lee testimony to Sloan Commission, cited in British Columbia Lumberman, March 1945.
96. Ibid.
97. British Columbia Lumberman, March 1945.
98. Testimony of Albert Foster at 1946 Sloan IWA Arbitration, Add. Mss. 1057, box 1, file 5, pp. 174-75.
99. Norman Lee testimony to Sloan Commission; British Columbia Lumberman, May 1944 and June 1944; Deutsch, et al., "Economics of Primary Production," vol. 1, pp. 59-61 and 46; McKay, Empire of Wood, p. 152; Foster testimony to Sloan Arbitration, p. 174.
100. British Columbia Lumberman, March 1943.
101. Smelts to A. MacNamara, 29 March 1945, RG 36/4, vol. 36, file 7100-7199. Quote is Smelts paraphrasing information from his regional representative.
102. Unrevised transcript of meeting with officials of IWA re Shortage of Labour in Logging Industry in B.C., 27 March 1945, RG 36/4, vol. 36, file 7100-7199.
103. British Columbia Lumberman, April 1944; minutes of meeting of BCLA Directors, 14 April 1944, COFI.
104. British Columbia Lumberman, June 1944.
105. Ibid.; minutes of BCLA general meeting, COFI.
106. Minutes of BCLA general meeting, 30 May 1944, COFI.
107. Minutes of meeting of BCLÁ Directors, 20 June 1944, COFI.

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108. Minutes of BCLA general meeting, 19 September 1944, COFI. It is of interest to note that considerable opposition was raised within the BCLA by MacMillan's representative, Van Dusen, over the contents and wording of the brief. In particular this company opposed raising the issues of taxation and capital gains with the dominion government. The company's chartered accountant, Price Waterhouse and Co., warned that the issue was a "two-way street" and raising it might direct further attention of the taxation authorities to such capital gains in a way that would ultimately prove detrimental. Similarly, the pulp and paper association brief had omitted mention of capital gains. On those grounds Van Dusen moved to have adoption of the brief postponed for further study but he was defeated (minutes of special general meeting of BCLA, 8 November 1944, COFI).
109. Annual Report of BCLA Directors, 1945, presented to 15 January 1946 general meeting, COFI.
110. Stuart testimony at IWA Sloan Arbitration, 29 May 1946, pp. 8-10.
111. Ibid., p. 9.
112. Ibid., pp. 70 and 77. But the union argued that the long-term tendency was for production to increase.
113. Unrevised transcript of meeting with officials of IWA re shortage of Labour in Logging Industry, 27 March 1945, RG 36/4, vol. 36, file 7100-7199.
114. See testimony of Robert Filberg, J.R. Mills and Albert Foster at 1946 Sloan IWA Arbitration, Add. Mss. 1057, box 1, file 5, pp. 23-29 (29 May) and pp. 187-89 (28 May).
115. Interview with J.M. Billings, 29 September 1987.
116. Ibid.
117. Minutes of meeting of District Executive, 2 May 1945, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 4.
118. Annual Report of BCLA Directors, 1944, presented to 15 January 1945 general meeting, COFI, box 39.
119. Ibid.
120. Morgan wrote International President Lowery for financial assistance in negotiations indicating that since the key demands had to be authorized by the war labour boards, "unless we do a thorough job we will not get far." (Morgan to Lowery, 5 October 1944, IWA Records, roll #1, file - District Contract Research 1943-46.)
121. Survey #1 - Vacations with Pay, 1944, 11 October 1944, TURB, box 12, file 3.
122. Marcuse to Morgan, 9 January 1945, IWA Records, roll 31, file - District Contract - Research 1943-46. This procedure was based on a precedent set by the NWLB in

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- the case of Lever Brothers Ltd. and International Chemical Workers, Local 23623 (AFL), approved 18 December 1944.
123. Ibid. Blowing his own horn somewhat, Marcuse opined that, "Facts, objective scientifically-based realities, are the best weapons of the worker and they must learn to use these weapons. In the post-war world particularly organized labour will find that its claims for a shorter work week and other economic and social advances, will have to be scientifically validated."
 124. IWA District Council #1, Industry Wide Negotiations Data re 44 hour week, 19 January 1945, TURB, box 44, file 11.
 125. Proceedings of District Negotiations Conference, 24 September 1944, TURB, box 12, file 13.
 126. Proceedings of the Eighth Annual Convention, IWA District Council No. 1, 6 and 7 January 1945.
 127. Minutes of meeting of District Executive, 24 January 1945, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 3.
 128. Ibid.; minutes of meeting of District Executive, 7 February 1945, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 3.
 129. Minutes of meeting of District Executive, 7 February 1945, box 4, file 3.
 130. Minutes of quarterly District Council meeting, 4 March 1945, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 24.
 131. Bert Marcuse to Claude Ballard, International President, 9 March 1945, IWA Records, roll #1, file - District Contract - Research 1943-46.
 132. Minutes of meeting of quarterly District Council meeting, 4 March 1945, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 24.
 133. Minutes of meeting of District Executive meeting, 4 April 1945, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 4.
 134. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 2 May 1945, box 4, file 4.
 135. British Columbia, Department of Trade and Industry, Bureau of Economics and Statistics, Forest Industries of B.C., Part II, Section 1, "Statistical Record of the Logging Industry and Summary of the Forest Industries in British Columbia," August 1954, Table II, Principal Statistics of Woods Operations in British Columbia, p. 33, and "Statistical Record of the Lumber Industry in British Columbia," February 1955, Table IV, Principal Statistics of the Lumber Industry in British Columbia, p. 13 and 15; proceedings of IWA 1946 Sloan Arbitration, 29 May 1946, p. 9, Add. Mss. 1057, box 1, file 5.
 136. Interview with Emil Bjarnason, 6 October 1987; Billings interview.

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137. NWLB, Reasons for Decision re Forest Products Industries - Coast Region British Columbia and IWA District Council No. 1, 12 July 1945, RG 36/4, vol. 126, file 452. It is of interest to note that of 4756 employees of 9 major lumber firms (CFP, CWL, BSW, APL, Canadian White Pine, MacMillan Industries Plywood Division, Alberni Plywoods, Victoria Lumber, and ITM) fully 33 percent were five year employees, 40 percent were one year employees and 27 percent not eligible for vacation in 1945.
138. Ibid.
139. Proceedings of Negotiations Conference, IWA District Council #1, Nanaimo, 24 September 1944, TURB, box 12, file 13.
140. NWLB, Proceedings of public hearing re joint application of Stuart Research Service and IWA District Council No. 1, 10 July 1945, RG 36/4, vol. 126, file 452, p. 13.
141. Master Agreement - 1945, IWA District Council No. 1 and Stuart Research Service Ltd.
142. See Warrian, "Labour is not a Commodity," pp. 236-43 for full discussion of this issue.
143. Stanton, Never Say Die!, p. 198; Howard White, A Hard Man to Beat: The Story of Bill White. Labour Leader, Historian, Shipyard Worker, Raconteur (Vancouver: Pulp Press Book Publishers, 1983), p. 171; interview; Archie Greenwell interview with Allen Seager, 7 July 1976.
144. Minutes of Right of Reference Committee meeting, 2 June 1945, IWA Records, roll #43, file - 1958 Correspondence - Forest Industrial Relations.
145. Stanton, Never Say Die!, p. 198.
146. Master Agreement - 1945, Article IX sec. 2a.
147. Minutes of Right of Reference Committee meeting, 20 August 1945, IWA Records, roll #43, file - 1958 Correspondence - Forest Industrial Relations.
148. Minutes of Right of Reference Committee meeting, 2 June 1945, IWA Records, roll #43, file - 1958 Correspondence - Forest Industrial Relations.
149. NWLB, Proceedings of public hearing, 10 July 1945, RG 36/4, vol. 126, file 452, pp. 5-6, and pp. 15-16.
150. Minutes of Right of Reference Committee meeting, 20 August 1945, IWA Records, roll #43, file - 1958 Correspondence - Forest Industrial Relations.
151. "Employees on the second and third shift shall be paid an additional five-cents (5¢) per hour night shift differential."
152. Minutes of negotiating meeting between IWA and Stuart Research, 5 May 1947, TURB, box 13, file 34.

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153. Caron interview.

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1946: Negotiations

1. Larry Peterson, "Revolutionary Socialism and Industrial Unrest in the Era of the Winnipeg General Strike," pp. 115-31; interview with Les McDonald, 10 April 1987.
2. Starobin, American Communism in Crisis, pp. 145-46.
3. Lichtenstein, Labor's War at Home, pp. 207-12.
4. Starobin, American Communism in Crisis, pp. 145-46.
5. Martin J. Sherwin, A World Destroyed: The Atomic Bomb and the Grand Alliance (New York: Random House, 1977), pp. 220-22.
6. R.D. Cuff and J.L. Granatstein, American Dollars—Canadian Prosperity: Canadian-American Economic Relations, 1945-1950 (Toronto: Samuel Stevens and Co., 1978), p. 192.
7. Penner, Canadian Communism, pp. 219-20.
8. Cuff and Granatstein, American Dollars, pp. 192-93.
9. Penner, Canadian Communism, p. 221.
10. Starobin, American Communism in Crisis, pp. 81-82; Levenstein, Communism, Anticommunism and the CIO, pp. 6-9.
11. Starobin, American Communism in Crisis, pp. 122-25.
12. Penner, Canadian Communism, p. 218.
13. Tim Buck, "Atomic Diplomacy"—A Threat to World Peace (Toronto: Labour Progressive Party, 1945).
14. Draft text of main resolution on policy from 1946 LPP Convention, Pacific Tribune, 26 April 1946.
15. G.S. Pearson to M.M. MacLean, 23 May 1945 and Pritchett to MacLean, 15 October 1945, RG 27, vol. 1764, file 55-15.
16. The CCL stalled in providing funds for the effort as did the IWA International. Minutes of District Executive meetings, 7 and 28 November 1945, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 6; minutes of District Executive meeting, 19 February 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 8.
17. F. Harrison to M.M. MacLean, 23 December 1945, RG 27, vol. 1770, file 755.82.

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18. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 28 November 1945, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 6; minutes of District Executive meeting, 19 March 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 9; Keystone Shingles and Lumber Co. Ltd., New Westminster, and IWA Local 1-357, RG 27, vol. 1771, file 755.82.
19. Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, Vancouver, 4-6 January 1946, Resolution #46, TURB, box 73, file 10b.
20. Western Business and Industry, August 1945, December 1945, February 1946, March 1946.
21. Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, supplement No. 4, Wages and Contract Committee Report, TURB, box 12, file 22c.
22. Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, pp. 91-93; David Moulton, "Ford Windsor 1945," in Irving Abella, ed., On Strike: Six Key Labour Struggles in Canada, 1919-1949 (Toronto: James Lorimer & Co., 1975), p. 143.
23. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 28 November 1945, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 6.
24. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 3 January 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 7.
25. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 4 February 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 7.
26. Lichtenstein, Labor's War at Home, pp. 221-232.
27. B.C. Lumber Worker, 8 July 1946.
28. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 4 February 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 7.
29. Robert H. Storey, "Workers, Unions and Steel: The Shaping of the Hamilton Working Class, 1935-1948," (Ph.D. thesis, University of Toronto, 1981), p. 415, note #213, from Memorandum of Wage Policy Meeting held in Toronto, 24 January 1946, in UE Archives.
30. Pacific Tribune, 15 February 1946.
31. Canadian Unionist, March 1946; Jackson cited in Moulton, "Ford Windsor 1945," p. 143.
32. Canadian Unionist, March 1946.
33. Canadian Unionist, April 1946.
34. Canadian Unionist, June 1946.

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35. Minutes of quarterly District Council meeting, 14 April 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 25.
36. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 19 March 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 9.
37. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 19 February 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 8.
38. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 5 March 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 8.
39. Minutes of quarterly District Council meeting, ~~14 April 1946~~, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 25.
40. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 5 March 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 8.
41. Interior of B.C. Survey, 1945, TURB, box 13, file 33; Interior Woodworking and Logging Industry Survey for B.C. District Council #1, July-October 1945, TURB, box 15, file 3. Minutes of Interior Wage and Policy Conference, 23-24 September 1945, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 5.
42. British Columbia, Department of Trade and Industry, Bureau of Economics and Statistics, Forest Industries of B.C., Part II, Section I, "Statistical Record of the Lumber Industry in British Columbia," February 1955, Table V, Principal Statistics of the Lumber Industry in British Columbia, Coast and Interior Operations, 1944 to 1952, p. 17.
43. Ibid; Interior of B.C. Survey, 1945.
44. Minutes of quarterly District Council meeting, 14 April 1946; Report on Organizers' Conference, 13 April 1946, supplement #5, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 25.
45. Minutes of quarterly District Council meeting, 14 April 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 25. District Secretary Melsness' version of the 1945 interior negotiations held that originally the tentative agreement reached for Prince George was supposed to have been applied to the south until negotiator Ruddock met with CMA representatives who, under advice from Walter Owen, decided differently. Minutes of Interior Negotiating Conference, 12 March 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 6. The southern association (ILMA) became a subsidiary of CMA in 1941, the northern in 1944. British Columbia Lumberman, August 1947.
46. Minutes of Interior Negotiating Conference, 12 March 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 6.
47. British Columbia Lumberman, February 1946.
48. Records of Forest Industrial Relations Ltd., Circulars to member companies (hereafter FIR Circular Files), #113, 26 February 1946.

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49. Parkin, "Labour and Timber," chapter 18, in B.C. Lumber Worker, 29 March 1947; Lembcke and Tatum, One Union in Wood, pp. 115-16. Lembcke appears to get the chronology wrong, seeing the election outcome in part as a result of the "successful" 1946 District One strike. Karly Larsen from Northern Washington replaced Claude Ballard as First Vice-President. E.E. Benedict lost his secretary-treasure position to Ed Laux of Oregon. District One's Jack Greenall replaced George Mitchell as Trustee.
50. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 19 March 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 9; Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Convention of the IWA (International), Portland, 10-13 September 1946, pp. 166-74, 304.
51. International Woodworkers of America, B.C. District, Submission to Stuart Research Ltd. re 1946 Industry-wide Negotiations, 26 March 1946, University of British Columbia Library; Pacific Tribune, 26 September 1946 for LPP draft programme, 15 February 1946 for Nigel Morgan statement on LPP policy.
52. Reply to Memo submitted by IWA District Council #1 relative to Lumber Industry (1946) Wage and Hour proposals, 8 April 1946, Add. Mss. 1057, box 1, file 7.
53. Minutes of quarterly District Council meeting, 14 April 1946.
54. Ibid.
55. Vancouver Sun, 11 April 1946.
56. Industrial Canada, July 1946, article by C.B. Scott on Wage and Salary Control. Under the same order, jurisdiction over vacations with pay and hours of work was handed back to the provinces as of 1 July 1946.
57. FIR Circular Files, #120, 16 April 1946. This act was the result of a concerted labour lobby earlier in the year. See Paul Knox, "The Passage of Bill 39: Reform and Repression in British Columbia's Labour Policy," (M.A. thesis, University of British Columbia, 1974), pp. 77-84.
58. Final Negotiation Bulletin, 7 May 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 6; FIR Circular Files, #120, 16 April 1946, #121, 25 April 1946, #123, 29 April 1946.
59. Vancouver Sun, 6 May 1946.
60. Final Negotiation Bulletin, 7 May 1946.
61. B.C. Lumber Worker, 6 May 1946 (incorrectly dated 29 April 1946). The throng was estimated to be 3000.
62. FIR Circular Files, #146, 3 May 1946.
63. FIR Circular Files, #124, 30 April 1946; Vancouver Sun, 2 May and 6 May 1946.
64. Final Negotiation Bulletin, 7 May 1946; FIR Circular File, #127, 6 May 1946; B.C. Lumber Worker, 6 May 1946.

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65. Pacific Tribune, 3 May 1946.
66. Pacific Tribune, 10 May 1946.
67. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 7 May 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 10; B.C. Lumber Worker, 29 April 1946.
68. Vancouver Sun, 8 May 1946.
69. Vancouver Sun, 10 May 1946.
70. Stuart Jamieson, Times of Trouble: Labour Unrest and Industrial Conflict in Canada, 1900-66, Task Force on Labour Relations under the Privy Council Office, Study No. 22, Ottawa, October 1968, pp. 297-302; minutes of quarterly District Council meeting, 16 April 1946; Vancouver Sun, 10 May and 11 May 1946.
71. Vancouver Sun, 10 May and 11 May 1946; "The 1946 Strike in the Lumber Industry of British Columbia," FIR Circular File No. 1.
72. Minutes of District Strike Committee, 13 May 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 3; Pacific Tribune, 17 May, 31 May and 7 June 1946. Disputes still existed at Bralorne, Copper Mountain and Pioneer in British Columbia, affecting approximately 2500 mine mill workers.
73. Vancouver Sun, 13 May 1946.
74. Vancouver Sun, 14 May 1946. The statement was endorsed by locals of the Plumbers and Steamfitters, Hotel and Restaurant Employees, CSU, United Fishermen, Painters Union, Street Railwaymen, Carpenters, Shingle Weavers—all AFL affiliates; and by CCL unions—Amalgamated Building Workers, ILWU, Operating Engineers, United Oil Workers, Marine Workers and Boilermakers, Mine Mill, Blacksmiths, Steelworkers, and the B.C. Federation of Labour, as well as by the Civic Employees, Machinists, and Marine Engineers.
75. Vancouver Sun, 13 May 1946.
76. Minutes of District Strike Committee, 13 May 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 3; Vancouver Sun, 13 May 1946.
77. Vancouver Sun, 14 May 1946.
78. Vancouver Sun, 15 May 1946; News Release, Federal Department of Labour, 10 May 1946, RG 27, vol. 445, strike 79.
79. Negotiations, 1946, TURB, box 12, file 22c, newspaper clipping, no date.

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1946: Strike

1. Parkin, "Labour and Timber," Conclusion, in B.C. Lumber Worker, 2 June 1947; FIR Circular Files, #133, 15 May 1946.
2. Vancouver Province, 16 May 1946; Vancouver Sun, 18 May 1946; minutes of District Executive meeting, 27 May 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 3.
3. Vancouver Sun, 17 and 18 May 1946.
4. Vancouver Sun, 25 May 1946; List of Companies in British Columbia reported to be involved in the strike of loggers and woodworkers, commencing May 15, 1946, RG 27, vol. 445, strike 79.
5. F.E. Harrison to M.M. MacLean, 5 June 1946, RG 27, vol. 445, strike 79.
6. Minutes of meeting of District Strike Committee, 27 May 1946, Pritchett papers, box 5, file 3; Vancouver Sun, 27 May 1946.
7. Newspaper clippings, RG 27, vol. 445, strike 79.
8. Ibid.
9. Vancouver Sun, 17 May 1946.
10. B.C. Lumber Worker, 28 May 1946.
11. Parkin, "Labour and Timber," Conclusion.
12. Vancouver Province, 16 May 1946.
13. Resolution sent to Humphrey Mitchell, 23 May 1946, RG 27, vol. 3526, file 3-26-10-5, part 1.
14. R.V. Stuart to R.D. Young, Silver-Skagit Logging Co., 21 May 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 8, file 2; FIR Circular Files, #135, 15 May 1946.
15. Radio broadcast scripts, "The Voice of the B.C. Lumber Industry," 28 and 29 May 1946, RG 27, vol. 3526, file 3-26-10-5, part 1.
16. Vancouver Province, 16 May 1946.
17. Vancouver Sun, 16 May 1946.
18. Vancouver Province, 18 May 1946; minutes of the District Strike Committee meetings 20 and 27 May 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 3.
19. Minutes of District Strike Committee meeting, 27 May 1946.

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20. Union demands followed along the same lines as the IWA's, though the strike dragged on long past the woodworkers' settlement. The Mine Mill strike, also branded illegal by the employers, was complicated by split jurisdiction in the metal shops where both the USW and the International Moulders and Foundry Workers also held certifications. Mine Mill, an industrial union, in fact represented only the pattern workers. See Knox, "The Passage of Bill 39," pp. 98-101; Vancouver Sun, 17 May 1946.
21. Victoria Times, 20 May 1946, in RG 27, vol. 445, file 79.
22. Dominion Department of Labour News Release, 18 May 1946, RG 27, vol. 445, strike 79; Vancouver Sun, 18 May 1946.
23. Dominion Department of Labour News Release, 21 May 1946, RG 27, vol. 44, strike 79. Disruptions included impending shortages of newsprint, sawdust and lumber, containers for apples and other fruit, barrels for perishable goods and a sudden surplus of milk and other perishable supplies normally sent to lumber camps. Vancouver Province, 23 May 1946; M.L. Sweeney of Sweeney Cooperage to John Wainscott, secretary local 1-118 Victoria Times, 27 May 1946, RG 27, vol. 445, strike 79.
24. Memo presented to Hon. Humphrey Mitchell, Minister of Labour, by the Wage Coordinating Committee, Canadian Congress of Labour, 21 May 1946, reprinted in Canadian Unionist, June 1946.
25. FIR Circular Files, #139, 20 May 1946; Dominion Department of Labour News Release, 21 May 1946, RG 27, vol. 445, strike 79; Vancouver Sun, 21 May and 22 May 1946.
26. Vancouver Sun, 22 May 1946; B.C. Lumber Worker, 28 May 1946. The night before, at a Vancouver Trades and Labour Council meeting, after loudly applauding speeches by Pritchett, Dalskog and Melsness, delegates endorsed the IWA demands which were aiding fishermen negotiations.
27. Minutes of District Strike Committee meeting, 27 May 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 3.
28. Ibid. Sloan's claim appears to be substantiated by the fact that at two separate meetings of Stuart's clientele, on 13 May and 3 June, the same resolution was carried that no client would directly or indirectly discuss or agree with the union. All approaches to the union were to be referred to Stuart. See FIR Circular Files, #149, 3 June 1946.
29. FIR Circular Files, #141, 25 May 1946; minutes of District Strike Committee meeting, 27 May 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 3; press release issued by Gordon Sloan, 5 June 1946, Add. Mss. 1057, box 1, file 4.
30. FIR Circular Files, #141, 25 May 1946.
31. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 3 June 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 10.

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32. B.C. Lumber Worker, 28 May 1946.
33. Minutes of District Strike Committee meeting, 27 May 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 3.
34. Ibid.
35. B.C. Lumber Worker, 28 May 1946.
36. Vancouver Sun, 27 May 1946.
37. Knox, "The Passage of Bill 39," pp. 80-82.
38. Vancouver Province, 28 May 1946.
39. Hugh Dalton to Pearson, 30 May 1946, GR 1222, vol. 61, file 1.
40. H.A. Renwick, Chairman, British Columbia Division, CMA, to John Hart, 28 May 1946, GR 1222, vol. 61, file 1; Vancouver Province, 30 May 1946.
41. Vancouver Province, 30 May 1946.
42. Vancouver Province, 31 May 1946.
43. Proceedings of IWA Arbitration, 27-28 May 1946, Add. Mss. 1057, box 1, files 5 and 6, pp. 23-78.
44. Ibid., pp. 47-60.
45. IWA, B.C. District Council #1, Statement in Support of Wage Increase, 1946 Industry Wide Negotiations, 22 May 1946 (marked Exhibit #1), Add. Mss. 1057, box 1, file 7, pp. 22-26.
46. Proceedings of IWA Arbitration, 29 May 1946, Add. Mss. 1057, box 1, file 5, pp. 8-9.
47. Proceedings of IWA Arbitration, 28 May 1946, Add. Mss. 1057, box 1, file 5, pp. 164-94; proceedings of IWA Arbitration, 29 May 1946, Add. Mss. 1057, box 1, file 5, p. 11.
48. These were J.H. Bloedel, R.J. Filberg, Aird Flavelle, and James Russel (forestry engineer). Proceedings of IWA Arbitration, 29 May 1946, pp. 1-44.
49. Ibid., pp. 12-14.
50. Proceedings of IWA Arbitration, 30 May 1946, Add. Mss. 1057, box 1, file 5, pp. 59 and 94-5.
51. Concomitant with compulsory financial contribution was the right of all employees, whether union or not, to participate in a government-supervised secret ballot on the question of a strike. In exchange for financial security, the UAW was expected to police its membership with respect to illegal strikes, and temporarily forfeit dues in

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the event of an illegal strike. The union also became subject to a review of its certification on application of only 25 percent of its membership. Canadian Unionist, February 1944.

52. Press release issued by Gordon Sloan, 5 June 1946, Add. Mss. 1057, box 1, file 4; Sloan to Pritchett, 1 June 1946, cited in minutes of special District Council meeting, 5 June 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 22.
53. Vancouver Province, 1 June 1946.
54. Ibid.
55. Minutes of special District Council meeting, 5 June 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 22.
56. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 3 June 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 10.
57. Ibid; Vancouver Province, 4 June 1946.
58. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 3 June 1946; Vancouver Province, 28 May 1946.
59. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 3 June 1946.
60. Minutes of special District Council meeting, 5 June 1946; minutes of District Executive meeting, 3 June 1946; report of staff correspondent Leslie Fox, Vancouver Sun, 7 June 1946; minutes of quarterly District Council meeting, 7 October 1945, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 25.
61. Vancouver Province, 1 June 1946; Parkin, "Labour and Timber," "Conclusion," B.C. Lumber Worker, 2 June 1947.
62. Vancouver Province, 4 June 1946.
63. FIR Circular Files, #149, 3 June 1946, and #150, 4 June 1946.
64. B.C. Lumber Worker, 8 June 1946.
65. Vancouver Sun, 4 June 1946.
66. Ibid.
67. Press release issued by Gordon Sloan, 5 June 1946.
68. Vancouver Sun, 6 June 1946.
69. J.R.J. Stirling, President, B.C. Fruit Growers' Association, to Humphrey Mitchell, 6 June 1946, RG 27, vol. 3526, file 3-26-10-5, part 1.
70. Vancouver Sun, 7, 10 and 11 June 1946.

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71. Vancouver Sun, 7 June 1946.
72. Chairman, Pulp and Paper Association of Canada, Western Branch, to Mitchell, 6 June 1946, RG 27, vol. 3526, file 3-26-10-5, part 1.
73. Fred Elworthy to Deputy Minister of Labour, 8 June 1946, RG 27, vol. 3526, file 3-26-10-5, part 1.
74. Vancouver Sun (editorial), 6 June 1946.
75. Press release by R. V. Stuart, 5 June 1946, and radio broadcast script, 6 June 1946, RG 27, vol. 3526, file 3-26-10-5, part 1.
76. FIR Circular Files, #156, 13 June 1946.
77. Vancouver Sun, 6 June 1946.
78. Minutes of special District Council meeting, 16 June 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 23.
79. Pearson to A. MacNamara, Dominion Deputy Minister of Labour, 7 June 1946, enclosing copies of telegrams received as samples; also see numerous telegrams sent to Ottawa following the IWA rejection of Sloan's award, RG 27, vol. 3526, file 3-26-10-5, part 1.
80. B.C. Lumber Worker, 8 June 1946. Although the Mine Mill Foundry workers in Vancouver, and brass workers in Toronto, as well as the CSU on the Great Lakes and printers in four cities were on strike simultaneously with the IWA, the main strike "wave" of the large industrial unions in central Canada did not materialize until July through September. See Knox, "The Passage of Bill 39," p. 91, figure 5-2; Jamieson, Times of Trouble, p. 298.
81. Minutes of special District Council meeting, 16 June 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 23.
82. Vancouver Sun, 7 June 1946.
83. A.E. Rintoul, Assistant Regional Director (Rehabilitation) to F.W. Smelts, 6 June 1946, RG 27, vol. 3526, file 3-26-10-5, part 1.
84. Ellen Haglund, South Burnaby, B.C., to Stewart Alsbury, 11 June 1952, IWA Records, roll 10, file - J. Stewart Alsbury, President, General. On 31 May 1946, the union Fighting Fund had a balance of \$43,678. Strike relief disbursements for May were reported for only two locals and totalled \$1870. Most of the fund was being utilized for travel, publicity, the union hiring hall and for organizational purposes. Minutes of special District Council meeting, 5 June 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 22.
85. Minutes of special District Council meeting, 16 June 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 23.
86. Vancouver Sun, 11 and 12 June 1946.

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87. Minutes of special District Council meeting, 16 June 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 23.
88. Vancouver Sun, 13 June 1946; FIR Circular Files, #153, 12 June 1946.
89. Stuart to Sloan, 13 June 1946, Add. Mss. 1057, box 1, file 4; Vancouver Sun, 13 June 1946.
90. Vancouver Sun, 10 and 11 June 1946.
91. Hugh Dalton, Manager, British Columbia Division, CMA, to J.L. Isley, Acting Prime Minister, 12 June 1946, RG 27, vol. 3526, file 3-26-10-5, part 1.
92. Melsness to Isley, 13 June 1946, RG 27, vol. 3526, file 3-26-10-5, part 1.
93. Vancouver Sun, 12 and 13 June 1946.
94. Minutes of special District Council meeting, 16 June 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 23.
95. Vancouver Sun, 12 June 1946.
96. B.C. Lumber Worker, 22 June 1946; Western Business and Industry, June 1946. Mass meetings were apparently held in Nanaimo, Duncan, and Ladysmith on the eve of the trek with a dance following at Ladysmith.
97. IWA local 1-80, Duncan, British Columbia, report on "The Trek," 17 June 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 8, file 12.
98. Vancouver Sun, 15 June 1946.
99. FIR Circular Files, #158, 14 June 1946. The Fishermen's offer of boats to transport mainland trekkers did not materialize. There is no indication if this change in plans was either cause or effect of the low turnout from Vancouver.
100. Vancouver Sun, 15 June 1946.
101. Minutes of special District Council meeting, 16 June 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 23. The IWA International had no strike fund per se at this point. A system apparently existed in theory whereby striking districts or locals could solicit funds among other locals. See Proceedings of Tenth Annual Convention of the IWA (International), p. 304.
102. Minutes of special District Council meeting, 16 June 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 23.
103. Minutes of special District Council meeting, 17 June 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 23.
104. Ibid. Evidence to this effect is contained in a subsequent motion which provided that where operators had already signed the 1946 agreement, the union would

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- consider an adjustment of wages and hours in line with the final settlement, but would make no alteration of the clauses dealing with union shop and check-off.
105. Vancouver Sun, 18 June 1946.
 106. Labour Gazette, July 1946, p. 918, clipping in RG 27, vol. 445, strike 79.
 107. Minutes of special District Council meeting, 19 June 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 23; B.C. Lumber Worker, 27 June 1946.
 108. Radio broadcast scripts, Stuart Research Service, 20, 21 and 25 June 1946, RG 27, vol. 3526, file 3-26-10-5, part 1; Vancouver Sun, 21 June 1946. Under a true voluntary irrevocable check-off, if a worker withdrew from the union, his dues had still to be collected by the employer. In the case of the IWA waiver clause, Stuart's broadcast explained, the check-off arrangement was binding only between the employee and the union. -
 109. FIR Circular Files, #183, 16 August 1946.
 110. Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, 3-4 January 1947, pp. 56-58; minutes of quarterly District Council meeting, 7 July 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 26.
 111. Minutes of quarterly District Council meeting, 7 July 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 26.
 112. Ibid.
 113. Hugh Dalton, Manager, British Columbia Division, CMA, to Gordon Sloan, 8 July 1946, Add. Mss. 1057, box 1, file 4.
 114. Dalton to Sloan, 11 July 1946, Add. Mss. 1057, box 1, file 4.
 115. Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, pp. 59-60.
 116. The main source of the criticism was Prince George local 1-424, Ibid., pp. 56-64.
 117. Logan, Trade Unions in Canada, p. 285.
 118. Knox, "The Passage of Bill 39," p. 105.
 119. Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, p. 56.
 120. Ibid., Officers' Report, supplement #1, p. 2.
 121. Bjarnason interview.
 122. Harold Pritchett, "A Frank Analysis of the Victory, the Lessons, the Mistakes, and a Positive Course for Future Action," B.C. Lumber Worker, 8 July 1946.
 123. Stanton, Never Say Die!, p. 198.

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124. Lembcke and Tattum, One Union in Wood, p. 114.
125. Pritchett, "A Frank Analysis."
126. Lembcke and Tattum, One Union in Wood, p. 114; Bergren, Tough Timber, p. 234; Parkin, "Labour and Timber," "Conclusion;" Pritchett, "A Frank Analysis."
127. Pritchett, "A Frank Analysis."
128. Western Business and Industry, July 1946.
129. Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Convention of the IWA (International), pp. 169-71.
130. Bjarnason interview.
131. Pritchett, "A Frank Analysis."

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1947: Restructuring the Industrial Relationship

1. Howell John Harris, The Right to Manage: Industrial Relations Policies of American Business in the 1940s (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1982), pp. 92-93.
2. Ibid., pp. 94-95.
3. 1946 IWA Arbitration Proceedings, 29 May 1946, p. 8, Add. Mss. 1057, box 1, file 5.
4. The BCLA in August and September 1947 was recruiting men from New Brunswick. In October 1947 a shortage of good skilled men like high riggers and engineers persisted, though the labour situation over all was improving. Minutes of BCLA General Meeting, 26 August 1947 and 23 September 1947, COFI.
5. FIR Brief to Conciliation Board Hearing, 8 August 1949, Pritchett Papers, box 17, file 1.
6. Survey of Production by Trade Union Research Bureau, Pritchett Papers, box 6, file 21.
7. Deutsch, et al., "Economics of Primary Production," vol. 1, Table 13, p. 105, "Logging: Employment and Output in the Coast and Interior Regions of British Columbia, 1945-56." This decline would have been offset somewhat by the increasing market value of lumber, but the trend was nevertheless worrisome to employers.
8. Ibid., Table 14, p. 109, "Sawmilling in British Columbia—Indices of Employment Earnings and Output: 1946-1955."
9. Ibid., Table 12, p. 98, "Trends in Major Cost Components in British Columbia Logging, Expressed in Ratios (in percent) of Total Value of Output, 1946 to 1955 inclusive."
10. Pritchett, Vancouver Sun article from February 1947 in TURB 13-35.
11. B.C. Lumberman, July 1946 and June 1948.
12. Keith Reid and Don Weaver, "Aspects of the Political Economy of the British Columbia Forest Industry," in Paul Knox and Philip Resnick, eds., Essays in B.C. Political Economy (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1974), pp. 13-24. Peter Ayles, "Sustained Yield Forestry in B.C. to 1956: A Deterministic Analysis of Development," (M.A. thesis, University of Victoria, 1984).
13. Gray, "Forest Policy and Administration in British Columbia."
14. British Columbia Lumberman, January 1948, February 1948.

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15. Ibid., September 1947.
16. British Columbia Lumberman, September 1946, September 1947, June 1948.
17. British Columbia Lumberman, December 1947, August 1948. Filberg was also elected president of the Western Forestry and Conservation Association, headquartered in Portland.
18. British Columbia Lumberman, September 1948. A more sophisticated approach to waste management was advocated by W.D. Hewlett of Heaps Engineering who encouraged the curtailment of waste, rather than its use afterwards, through the incorporating of the small log gang-saw into a company's operation (British Columbia Lumberman, April 1948).
19. MacKay, Empire of Wood, pp. 156-57.
20. British Columbia Lumberman, September 1948.
21. Hugh Weatherby, "Wood Waste and Sustained Yield," British Columbia Lumberman, August 1948.
22. Knox, "The Passage of Bill 39," chapters five and six.
23. Industrial Canada, August 1946 and February 1947.
24. Industrial Canada, May 1947.
25. Industrial Canada, July 1947, p. 212.
26. Ibid., pp. 210-11.
27. British Columbia Lumberman, March 1948.
28. Knox claims CMA exclusion was a reward for LPP support, as part of a Coalition government campaign to undermine the CCF. LPP-linked unions tended to dominate the BCFL and its lobby (Knox, "The Passage of Bill 39," pp. 63-69).
29. Ibid., pp. 77-82.
30. Ibid., p. 82.
31. Ibid., p. 120.
32. H.A. Renwick, Chairman, British Columbia Division, CMA, to John Hart re strike situation, 28 May 1946, GR 1222, box 61, file 1.
33. Michael McGeough to Pearson, Memo on ICA Act of British Columbia, 13 December 1946, GR 1222, box 188, file 2.
34. FIR Circular File, #207, 28 February 1947; Industrial Canada, April 1947.
35. Ibid.

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36. Harris, The Right to Manage, pp. 120-25.
37. Levenstein, Communism, Anticommunism and the CIO, p. 216; Harris, The Right to Manage, p. 175.
38. Harris, The Right to Manage, p. 125.
39. Tomlins, The State and the Unions, pp. 300-03, 315-16.
40. Pacific Tribune, 21 March 1947.
41. Vancouver Sun, 23 January 1948.
42. Where PC 1003 provided for a range of fines between \$100 and \$500, Bill 39's range was between \$25 and \$125. B.C., Statutes 1947, 11 Geo. 6, c. 44, SS. 33-37; Wartime Labour Relations Regulations (PC 1003), ss. 38-46, cited in Coates, "Organized Labour and Politics in Canada," pp. 236-56. In addition, Bill 39 went further than the federal regulations in providing explicitly for penalties for attempting to sign up members during working hours or participating in any activity designed to limit production. On the other hand, it provided for daily fines of up to \$125 for each day a party refused or failed to bargain collectively.
43. "Analysis of Bill 39," John Stanton memo to G.S. Pearson, Minister of Labour, 10 March 1947, GR 1222, box 188, file 3.
44. Knox, "The Passage of Bill 39," p. 126.
45. Stanton to Pearson, 10 March 1947, GR 1222, box 188, file 3.
46. Ibid.
47. Ibid.
48. FIR Circular Files, #185, 28 August 1946.
49. FIR Circular Files, #188, 3 September 1946.
50. Minutes of District Council Quarterly Meeting, 13 October 1946, Pritchett Papers, vol. 4, file 26.
51. Stuart to Pritchett, 12 October 1946, quoted in Proceedings 10th Annual Convention IWA District Council One, 3-4 January 1947, p. 123.
52. FIR Circular Files, #193, 24 September 1946.
53. Minutes of BCLA General Meeting, 20 August 1946, COFL.
54. FIR Circular Files, #193, 24 September 1946.
55. FIR Circular Files, #195, 7 October 1946.
56. FIR Circular Files, #206, 26 October 1946.

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57. FIR Circular Files, #207, 1 November 1946.
58. FIR Brief presented at Conciliation Board hearing, 7 August 1949, Pritchett Papers, box 7, file 1.
59. S. Pederson to Dalskog, 31 December 1946, and Dalskog to Pederson, 10 January 1947, IWA Records, roll 1, file 1947-48—E. Dalskog—Miscellaneous Letters.
60. Ibid., Pritchett to Stuart, 28 December 1946, quoted in Proceedings 10th Annual Convention IWA District Council One, 3-4 January 1947, pp. 125-26.
61. Quoted in A.C. Kennedy, Personal Relations Department, H.R. MacMillan Export Co., to R.V. Stuart, 1 April 1947, Records of Forest Industrial Relations, Old Arbitration Files (hereafter FIR Old Arbitration Files) Arbitration Week - 48 Hours - 1947.
62. Ibid.
63. Heffernan to Stuart, 11 March 1947, FIR Old Arbitration File, Arbitration Week - 48 Hours - 1947.
64. FIR Circular Files, #211, 22 March 1947.
65. Notes of Right of Reference Meeting, 29 March 1947, FIR Old Arbitration Files, Arbitration Week - 48 Hours - 1947.
66. Proceedings Wages and Contract Conference, IWA District Council One, 29-30 March 1947, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 7.
67. Ibid., B.C. Lumber Worker, 31 March 1947.
68. B.C. Lumber Worker, 31 March 1947.
69. Comox Logging and Railway Co. reported all 950 loggers at Ladysmith and Comox were out. The business agent for 1-85 said 1500 men did not report to work in his area. (Vancouver Sun, 5 April 1947); the B.C. Lumber Worker reported all camps closed (BCLW, 7 April 1947); Stuart reported some camps working (FIR Circular File, #215, 5 April 1947).
70. Vancouver Sun, 11 April 1947.
71. Vancouver Sun, 19 April 1947.
72. Majority Decision of Arbitration Board (Chair H.I. Bird and Arbitrator Alfred Bull), FIR Circular Files #217, 16 April 1947.
73. Minority Decision of Arbitration Board (Arbitrator Harvey Murphy), FIR Old Arbitration Files, Arbitration Week - 48 Hours - 1947.
74. Ibid.
75. B.C. Lumber Worker, 21 April 1947.

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76. Minutes of District Executive Meeting, 22 April 1947, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 14.
77. FIR Circular Files, #221, 1 May 1947; Vancouver Sun, 25 April 1947; B.C. Lumber Worker, 5 May 1947.
78. FIR Circular Files, #219, 28 April 1947.
79. Vancouver Sun, 30 April 1947.
80. B.C. Lumber Worker, 5 May 1947.

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1947 Negotiations: Compliance

1. Minutes of 15 May 1947 negotiation meeting, TURB, box 13, file 34; Negotiations Bulletin No. 6, IWA Records, roll 1, file - 1947, Policy Committee.
2. If the strike had been only partially successful in extracting concessions, it had served as a very effective tool in consolidating union membership, at least in terms of numbers.
3. Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, pp. 56-64.
4. Ibid., p. 118.
5. Ibid., pp. 73-75.
6. Ibid., pp. 127-28.
8. Ibid., p. 126.
7. B.J. Melsness and E. Dalskog, to the membership of IWA local 1-357, 18 November 1947, IWA Records, roll 3, file - J. Stewart Alsbury, District President, 1948-49.
8. Ibid.
9. Bjarnason interview. See below, this chapter, for further discussion of this matter.
10. Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Convention of the IWA (International), p. 170.
11. Proceedings of Tenth Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, supplement #1, District Officers' Report, p. 6.
12. Ibid., supplement #5, Wages and Contract Committee Report, p. 50.
13. Ibid., supplement #5, Wages and Contract Committee Report, p. 49.
14. Ibid., p. 22.
15. Ibid., supplement #1, District Officers' Report, p. 7.
16. Montgomery, "American Workers and the New Deal Formula," p. 171.
17. Jack Atkinson, Business Agent, local 1-80, to Dalskog, 8 February 1947, IWA Records, roll 1, file - 1947, Political Action.
18. B.C. Federation of Labour analysis of some of the objectionable features of Bill 39, IWA Records, roll 3, file - 1946-47, Bill 39.

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19. B.C. Lumber Worker, 10 March 1947; Knox, "The Passage of Bill 39," p. 121.
20. Pearson to Mitchell, 24 January 1947, Records of the British Columbia Labour Relations Board (Correspondence, reports, briefs, memos regarding the establishment and operation of the LRB) GR 1086, box 1, file 18, PABC.
21. B.C. Lumber Worker, 10 March 1947.
22. Knox, "The Passage of Bill 39," p. 129.
23. Vancouver Sun, 1 April 1947.
24. Knox, "The Passage of Bill 39," pp. 161-62.
25. Ibid., p. 131.
26. Minutes of Wages and Contract Conference, 29-30 March 1947, Pritchett, box 5, file 7.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid.
29. Wages Committee report to Wages and Contract Conference, 29-30 March 1947, TURB, box 13, file 35; B.C. Lumber Worker, 31 March 1947.
30. B.C. Lumber Worker, 21 April 1947.
31. Vancouver Labour Council Resolution on Bill 39, IWA Records, roll 3, file - 1946-47, Bill 39.
32. B.C. Lumber Worker, 21 April 1947.
33. Cited in Knox, "The Passage of Bill 39," p. 140.
34. Al Parkin, "Here's How the Labour-Spy Racket Works," and excerpts from sworn affidavit by Don McAllister, B.C. Lumber Worker, 21 April 1947.
35. IWA Records, roll 1, file - 1947, Don McAllister; B.C. Lumber Worker, 21 April 1947.
36. Prentice Bloedel to the employees of Bloedel Stewart and Welch Ltd., 30 April 1947, IWA Records, roll 1, file - 1947, Don McAllister.
37. Vancouver Sun, 17 September 1948.
38. B.C. Lumber Worker, 27 January 1947.
39. Quoted in Parkin, "Labour-Spy Racket," B.C. Lumber Worker, 21 April 1947.
40. Speakers' notes, IWA Records, roll 1, file - 1947, Speakers Committee, IWA-

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41. Minutes of 6 May 1947 negotiating meeting, TURB, box 13, file 34.
42. FIR Circular Files, #224, 20 May 1947; Vancouver News Herald, 2 June 1947; Vancouver Sun, 5 May 1947; IWA pamphlet, "High Profits Equals High Prices," TURB, box 13, file 35.
43. Minutes of negotiating meeting, 20 May 1947, TURB, box 13, file 35.
44. Vancouver Sun, 20 May 1947.
45. Minutes of District Policy Committee, 23 May 1947, IWA Records, roll 1, file - 1947, Policy Committee, Negotiations Bulletin.
46. FIR Circular Files, #213, 28 March 1947.
47. In January 1949, faced with the need to raise a strike fund quickly, as the existing fund was tied up in a court battle, George Mitchell spoke against another dues increase: "So I saw that if we went out to our membership now, you know how long it took us to get everybody on the \$2.00, then I say to you we would be doing this instead of laying down our program of wages, hours and working conditions. I am in agreement with taking a voluntary assessment if possible, but going out at the present time to try to get everybody to assign 50 cents—I say brothers, that is suicide." Proceedings of the Twelfth Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, 15-16 January 1949, p. 168.
48. The union issued a "Day's Pay Button" to all contributors, B.C. Lumber Worker, 5 May 1947.
49. Vancouver Sun, 26 May 1947.
50. Press Release, 28 May 1947, from IWA District Policy Committee, IWA Records, roll 1, file - 1947, Policy Committee, Negotiations Bulletin.
51. B.C. Lumber Worker, 16 June 1947; minutes of negotiating meeting, 26 May 1947, IWA Records, roll 1, file - 1947, Policy Committee, Negotiations Bulletin.
52. Ibid.
53. Negotiations Bulletin No. 9, IWA Records, roll 1, file - 1947, Policy Committee, Negotiations Bulletin.
54. Minutes of Northern Interior negotiations meeting, 30 May 1947, IWA Records, roll 1, file - 1947, Policy Committee, Negotiations Bulletin.
55. B.C. Lumber Worker, 30 June 1947.
56. Thomas MacDonald to Dalskog, 1 May 1947, IWA Records, roll 1, file - 1947, Thomas MacDonald.
57. Mel Fulton to various locals, 14 May 1947, Higgins (1-363) to Fulton, 27 May 1947, Fulton to McCuish (1-71), 27 May 1947, Lang Mackie (1-85 business agent) to Fulton, 20 May 1947, J. Wainscott (1-118) to Fulton, 30 May 1947, Fred

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- Wilson (1-80) to Fulton, 2 June 1947, IWA Records, roll 1, file - 1947, Speakers Committee, IWA-CIO District Council #1.
58. Neil McAuley to Fulton, n.d., Ibid.
59. IWA Records, roll 1, file - 1947, Speakers Committee, IWA-CIO, District Council #1.
60. Minutes of local 1-357 Special Executive meeting, 30 May 1947, Pritchett Papers, box 8, file 26.
61. Proceedings of Special Committee hearings with regard to the affairs of local 1-357, 17-20 December 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 4; report to local 1-357 from International Investigating Committee re local finances, 20 December 1946, Pritchett Papers, box 10, file 1; Bjarnason interview.
62. McAuslane speech quoted in Harold Pritchett, "Labour rallies the people to defeat the Coalition," Pacific Tribune, 20 June 1947; Pacific Tribune, 13 June 1947; Knox, "The Passage of Bill 39," p. 143.
63. B.C. Lumber Worker, 16 June 1947.
64. Pacific Tribune, 13 June 1947.
65. Minutes of local 1-357, Special Executive meeting, 9 June 1947, Pritchett Papers, box 8, file 26.
66. This account is based on a report by Don Carlson of the Vancouver Sun, 14 June 1947.
67. FIR Circular Files, #228, 4 June 1947.
68. Newspaper clipping, 2 June 1947, TURB, box 13, file 34.
69. FIR Circular Files, #227, 5 June 1947.
70. FIR Circular Files, #230, 11 June 1947.
71. Knox, "The Passage of Bill 39," p. 142.
72. Pacific Tribune, 20 June 1947; Knox, "The Passage of Bill 39," p. 143. Minister of Labour Pearson was in hospital at the time.
73. Vancouver Sun, 23 June 1947.
74. Pacific Tribune, 27 June 1947.
75. Ibid., 20 June 1947.
76. Harris, The Right to Manage, pp. 123-25; Levenstein, Communism, Anticommunism and the CIO, p. 217.

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77. Canadian Unionist, July 1947.
78. Pacific Tribune, 27 June 1947.
79. Bert Melsness, "Lumberworkers Gain Outstanding Victory," B.C. Lumber Worker, 14 July 1947.
80. For 1948 results see B.C. Lumber Worker, 24 March 1948. Total votes cast in the coast locals were 14,261 in 1947, and 12,918 in 1948. In 1947 the strike ballot passed by 67.8 percent, and in 1948 Dalskog was elected president with only 66 percent of the total vote.
81. FIR Circular Files, #231, 19 June 1947.
82. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 22 June 1947, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 14.
83. B.C. Lumber Worker, 30 June 1947.
84. FIR Circular Files, #233, 30 June 1947.
85. FIR Circular Files, #234, 3 July 1947; Melsness, "Lumberworkers Gain Outstanding Victory;" Master Agreement - 1947.
86. FIR Circular Files, #328, 1 December 1948.
87. Billings interview.
88. Vancouver Sun, 12 July 1947; Vancouver Province, 6 August, 9 August and 12 August 1947; B.C. Lumber Worker, 14 July, 28 July and 11 August 1947; proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Convention on IWA District Council No. 1, 3-5 January 1948, supplement #1, District Officers' Report, p. 17.
89. Melsness, "Lumberworkers Gain Outstanding Victory."
90. Export fir prices were up 88 percent over 1945. Return on capital for the major conglomerates for 1946 was in the 40 to 60 percent range. B.C. Lumber Profits and the IWA Wage Demands—A Preliminary Survey, 6 May 1947, TURB, box 44, file 4.
91. British Columbia, Department of Trade and Industry, Bureau of Economics and Statistics, Forest Industries of B.C., Part II, Section 1, "Statistical Record of the Logging Industry and Summary of the Forest Industries in British Columbia," August 1954, Table II, Principal Statistics of Woods Operations in British Columbia, p. 33, and "Statistical Record of the Lumber Industry in British Columbia," February 1955, Table IV, Principal Statistics of the Lumber Industry in British Columbia, pp. 13 and 15; Deutsch et al., "Economics of Primary Production," vol. 1, Table 13, Logging: Employment and Output in the Coast and Interior Regions of British Columbia, 1946-56, p. 105, and Table 14, Sawmilling in British Columbia: Indices of Employment Earnings and Output: 1946-1955, p. 109.

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92. Vancouver Sun (editorial), 5 July 1947.
93. Melsness, "Lumberworkers Gain Outstanding Victory."
94. Pacific Tribune, 25 July 1947.
95. Vancouver Sun, 2 September and 11 October 1947; Pacific Tribune, 19 September 1947; Knox, "The Passage of Bill 39," chapter seven.
96. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 8 September 1947, box 4, file 15. International Board Member Dalskog was appointed interim president apparently since none of the three vice-presidents were able to assume Pritchett's duties. Pacific Tribune, 12 September 1947.
97. Pacific Tribune, 19 September 1947.
98. Pacific Tribune, 3 October 1947.
99. See Knox, "The Passage of Bill 39," chapter seven.
100. Ibid., p. 148.
101. Ibid., p. 150; Vancouver Sun, 4 October 1947.
102. B.C. Lumber Worker, 20 October 1947.
103. B.C. Lumber Worker, 3 November 1947; Knox, "The Passage of Bill 39," p. 151.
104. B.C. Lumber Worker, 3 November 1947; Knox, "The Passage of Bill 39," p. 152.

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1947-48: Confrontation

1. Rebecca B. Gruver, An American History (New York: Meredith Corporation, 1972), pp. 1000-001.
2. Penner, Canadian Communism, p. 221; J.L. Black, "The Stalinist Image of Canada: ~~The Cominform~~ and Soviet Press, 1947-1955," Labour/Le Travail, 21 (Spring 1988): 153-71.
3. Ibid., p. 154; Penner, Canadian Communism, p. 217.
4. Henry Pelling, The British Communist Party: A Historical Profile (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1958), p. 143.
5. Starobin, American Communism in Crisis, p. 171.
6. Ibid., also Levenstein, Communism, Anticommunism, and the CIO, pp. 208-32.
7. Pacific Tribune, 3 October 1947.
8. The following analysis of Canadian economic policy is based on Cuff and Granatstein, American Dollars, pp. 21-63.
9. National Affairs Monthly, December 1947; Pacific Tribune, 14 November 1947.
10. Pacific Tribune, 21 November 1947.
11. Ibid.
12. Tim Buck, Keep Canada Independent, Summary of Report to Meeting of Labor-Progressive Party, National Committee, Toronto, 6-9 January 1948 (Toronto: Progress Books, n.d.).
13. Penner, Canadian Communism, p. 230.
14. Starobin, American Communism in Crisis, pp. 289-90.
15. Wallace, without an established party organization, was ultimately more dependent on it than the Canadian social democrats.
16. Levenstein, Communism, Anticommunism, and the CIO, pp. 224-25.
17. Ibid., p. 265. Starobin agrees with this assessment: "To refuse compliance was possible only where the rank-and-file was sufficiently behind its leaders and sufficiently in control of local plant situations to by-pass the Labour Board." Starobin, American Communism in Crisis, p. 169.

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18. Levenstein, Communism, Anticommunism, and the CIO, p. 217; proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, p. 21, speech of President Fadling.
19. Proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, p. 21, speech of President Fadling.
20. B.C. Lumber Worker, 8 September 1947.
21. Proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, pp. 126-28; Jack Greenall, The I.W.A. Fiasco: A Political Analysis of a Strange Event (Vancouver: Progressive Workers Movement, 1965). A copy of this pamphlet was generously provided to me by John Stanton.
22. Lembcke and Tattum, One Union in Wood, pp. 144-45. In 1952 at the Seattle Smith Act Trials, he claimed he left the party in 1946.
23. One ex-party member from Canada, Lionel Edwards, has gone so far as to raise the possibility that Larsen was an FBI agent. Interview with Lionel Edwards, Vancouver, 7 December 1987. Greenall calls him one of the "betrayers" of District One who later (in 1952) appeared on television before one of the Un-American Activities Committees "and with fact and figures denounced communism and all its works." Greenall, The I.W.A. Fiasco.
24. B.C. Lumber Worker, 22 September 1947.
25. Starobin, American Communism in Crisis, p. 169.
26. Greenall to Fadling, 20 October 1947, cited in proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, p. 127.
27. Fadling to Greenall, 25 October 1947, and Greenall to Fadling, 29 October 1947, cited in *Ibid.*, pp. 117-19.
28. Proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, District Officers' Report, Supplement #1, p. 20.
29. B.C. Lumber Worker, 8 September and 3 November 1947. Union support for Dalskog was still fairly high. He polled 17,876 to 27,787 for Hartung.
30. B.C. Lumber Worker, 20 October, 17 November and 15 December 1947; Abella, Nationalism, Communism, and Canadian Labour, pp. 117-18.
31. Proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, District Officers' Report, Supplement #1, p. 7.
32. *Ibid.*, pp. 66-68.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 60.
34. Proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, p. 34.

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35. Lembcke and Tattum, One Union in Wood, p. 138.
36. Proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, p. 64.
37. Greenall, The I.W.A. Fiasco.
38. Proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, p. 97.
39. Ibid., pp. 105-06.
40. Ibid., p. 106.
41. Ibid., p. 106.
42. Pritchett expressed fear regarding this latter point at the 19 October 1947 quarterly District Council meeting. See Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 27.
43. Vancouver Sun, 5 January 1948.
44. Vancouver Sun, 7 January 1948.
45. Vancouver Sun, 13 January 1948.
46. Vancouver Province, 12 January 1948. Fadling was roundly condemned in the Lumber Worker for, in his haste to attack the British Columbia District programme, placing an ad in a scab-produced daily. B.C. Lumber Worker, 28 January 1948.
47. The Voice of the IWA, 26 January 1948, radio broadcast by A.F. Hartung, First Vice-President of IWA International, Pritchett Papers, box 3, file 11. In addition to Alsbury and Mitchell, the white bloc slate was comprised of Lloyd Whalen (1-217) nominated for First Vice-President against Pritchett; Bill Lynch from Kamloops, running against Bergren for Second Vice-President; and Andy Smith, First Vice-President of 1-357, running against Mark Mosher for Third Vice-President. B.C. Lumber Worker, 12 January 1948.
48. "Along the Skidroad: A Review of Labour Developments During the Past Week," prepared and delivered by Bob Morrison for Stuart Research Service Ltd., for broadcast on radio stations CKMO, CKNW, and CJOR, 8 January 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 8, file 2.
49. Text of Pritchett's "Green Gold" broadcast over CKWX on 11 February 1948, in Pacific Tribune, 20 February 1948; Vancouver Province, 9 January, 2 February and 3 February 1948.
50. B.C. Lumber Worker, 28 January 1948.
51. Text of 11 February 1948 "Green Gold" in Pacific Tribune, 20 February 1948.

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52. B.C. Lumber Worker, 28 January 1948; Levenstein, Communism, Anticommunism, and the CIO, pp. 265-66; Lembcke and Tattum, One Union in Wood, pp. 9, 121 and 123.
53. Ibid., pp. 121-22; Abella, Nationalism, Communism, and Canadian Labour, p. 128; B.C. Lumber Worker, 30 June 1948.
54. Lembcke and Tattum, One Union in Wood, pp. 121-22; Abella, Nationalism, Communism and Canadian Labour; pp. 128-30.
55. B.C. Lumber Worker, 24 March 1948.
56. B.C. Lumber Worker, 17 January and 11 February 1948.
57. Levenstein, Communism, Anticommunism and the CIO, p. 226; according to Starobin, Bridges was close to anarcho-syndicalism and "never a Communist" though he "enjoyed intimate ties with the Party, usually on his own terms." Starobin, American Communism in Crisis, p. 258.
58. Gruver, An American History, p. 1001.
59. Lembcke and Tattum, One Union in Wood, p. 67.
60. Len de Caux, Labor Radical: From the Wobblies to CIO (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970), p. 298.
61. Ibid., p. 348.
62. Lembcke and Tattum, One Union in Wood, p. 78.
63. Starobin, American Communism in Crisis, pp. 258 and 286. Starobin claims the ex-wobbly, Bridges, derived his intense syndicalism from his Australian heritage.
64. Ibid., p. 286.
65. Levenstein, Communism, Anticommunism, and the CIO, p. 248.
66. Abella, Nationalism, Communism, and Canadian Labour, pp. 94-99; Canadian Unionist, March 1948.
67. B.C. Lumber Worker, 24 March 1948.
68. White, A Hard Man to Beat, p. 168.
69. Abella, Nationalism, Communism, and Canadian Labour, p. 121.
70. Knox, "The Passage of Bill 39," p. 157.
71. Ibid., p. 157 and 168.
72. Vancouver Sun, 25 November 1947.

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73. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 26 January 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 17.
74. Knox, "The Passage of Bill 39," p. 152.
75. Ibid., p. 156.
76. Vancouver Sun, 23 January 1948.
77. Industrial Canada, June 1948.
78. Vancouver Sun, 7 April 1948.
79. B.C. Lumber Worker, 5 May 1948.
80. Knox, "The Passage of Bill 39," pp. 156-61; B.C., Statutes, 1948, 12 Geo. 6, c. 31, ss. 50, 62 and 72.

Notes: Chapter Eleven

1947-48: Regrouping

1. Vancouver Sun, 11 October 1947.
2. Minutes of quarterly District Council meeting, 19 October 1947, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 27.
3. B.C. Lumber Worker, 14 July 1947.
4. Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, pp. 126-29; Statement in Support of Wage Increases for Shingle Workers, February 1947, TURB, box 44, file 5.
5. Stuart to Dalskog, 11 March 1947, FIR Old Arbitration Files, Arbitration, 1947, Shingle Mill Operators vs. IWA District Council #1 (hereafter 1947-shingles).
6. Stuart to Pritchett, 17 July 1947, FIR Old Arbitration Files, 1947-Shingles.
7. Pritchett and Dalskog to Membership of IWA District Council #1, 9 July 1947, FIR Old Arbitration Files, 1947-Shingles.
8. Carlyle to Chief Shop Stewards in all Shingle Mills, 10 July 1947, FIR Old Arbitration Files, 1947-Shingles.
9. Stuart to Pritchett, 17 July 1947, FIR Old Arbitration Files, 1947-Shingles.
10. FIR Circular Files, #247, 27 August 1947; Statement of Counsel for Shingle Operators to Arbitration Board, 22 October 1947, and W.H. Heffernan, FIR legal counsel, to all shingle operators, 29 August 1947, FIR Old Arbitration Files, 1947-Shingles.
11. FIR Circular Files, #247, 27 August 1947.
12. Knox, "The Passage of Bill 39," p. 146.
13. Statement of Counsel for Shingle Operators to Arbitration Board, 22 October 1947.
14. Pritchett memo to locals, 3 September 1947, FIR Old Arbitration Files, 1947-Shingles; minutes of District Executive meeting, 8 September 1947, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 15.
15. Vancouver Sun, 2 September 1947. The largest prosecution was said to have been against 600 Doukhobors in 1932.
16. Statement submitted by District One IWA-CIO, to second session of Arbitration Board, 23 October 1947, FIR Old Arbitration Files, 1947-Shingles.
17. Minutes of meeting of large committee, 21 October 1947, minutes of meeting of Stuart Research Service with Shingle Operators, 22 October 1947, minutes of

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- Shingle Operators policy meeting, 24 October 1947, FIR Old Arbitration Files, 1947-Shingles.
18. Statement of Counsel for Shingle Operators to Arbitration Board, 22 October 1947.
 19. BSW took particular exception. This was one in a series of disagreements with Stuart which would result in BSW breaking away from the Stuart group of companies in 1949, temporarily. Billings interview.
 20. Statement submitted by District One IWA-CIO, to second session of Arbitration Board, 23 October 1947.
 21. FIR Circular Files, #260, 7 November 1947.
 22. Minutes of Informal Conference on Trainmen's Problems, 30 January 1945, Nanaimo, TURB, box 12, file 12.
 23. Memo to Stuart Research Service re Trainmen in Coast Logging Camps, 25 October 1945, TURB, box 12, file 12.
 24. Stuart Research Service response to IWA Brief of 25 October 1945 on Trainmen, 29 January 1946, TURB, box 12, file 12.
 25. George F. Gregory, Chairman, Reasons for Decision in Bloedel, Stewart and Welch vs. IWA local 1-363 and R. Callander and G. McEntee, FIR Old Arbitration Files, Bloedel, Stewart and Welch vs. IWA local 1-363 and R. Callander and G. McEntee (hereafter BSW vs. 1-363). Not all logging operations employed train crews, depending on location and scale of operation. Still, in 1947, trucks were not widely in use and logging trains were employed by many of the most important firms such as BSW, APL, CFP, Comox Logging, Elk River, ITM, Hillcrest, Lake Log, Malahat, Victoria Lumber and Manufacturing. IWA District Council #1 submission to Regional War Labour Board of British Columbia re Trainmen's Wages in Coast Logging Camps, 23 September 1946, FIR Old Arbitration Files, BSW vs. 1-363.
 26. Minutes of District Executive meeting 6 November 1947, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 15.
 27. George F. Gregory, Chairman, Reasons for Decision, FIR Old Arbitration Files, BSW vs. 1-363.
 28. FIR Circular Files, #258, 18 October 1947.
 29. B.C. Lumber Worker, 3 November 1947.
 30. Decision of T.A. Mitchell, union representative, and memo from J.W. Challenger, superintendent, to all employees, 26 November 1947, FIR Old Arbitration Files, BSW vs. 1-363.
 31. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 15 December 1947, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 16.

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32. FIR Circular Files, #261, 6 December 1947.
33. Dalskog to Stuart, 9 December 1947, and Stuart to Dalskog, 11 December 1947, cited in FIR Circular Files, #262, 12 December 1947.
34. FIR Circular Files, #268, 28 January 1948.
35. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 20 January 1948, box 4, file 17.
36. Decision of T.A. Mitchell, union representative, FIR Old Arbitration Files, BSW vs. 1-363.
37. Minutes of Coast Negotiation meeting, 24 January 1948, IWA Records, roll 1, file - 1948, Meeting Minutes of District Policy Committee.
38. Minutes of BCLA general meeting, 25 November 1947, COFI.
39. Minutes of BCLA special general meeting, 2 December 1947, COFI.
40. B.C. Lumber Worker, 23 February 1948.
41. Minutes of District Executive meetings, 15 March and 17 May 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 18; B.C. Lumber Worker, 25 February 1948.
42. IWA Statement to R.V. Stuart and Forest Industry Employers, 22 January 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 6, file 18; FIR Circular Files, #269, 29 January 1948; minutes of District Policy Committee meeting, 21 January 1948, IWA Records, roll 1, file - 1948, Meeting Minutes of District Policy Committee.
43. Statement submitted by District One IWA-CIO, to second session of Arbitration Board, 23 October 1947.
44. Stuart to Dalskog, 11 March 1947, FIR Old Arbitration Files, 1947 - Shingles.
45. Stuart to Dalskog, 29 January 1948, cited in FIR Circular Files, #269, 29 January 1948; minutes of negotiating meeting, 24 January 1948, IWA Records, roll 1, file - 1948, Meeting Minutes of District Policy Committee.
46. B.C. Lumber Worker, 11 February 1948.
47. Minutes of District Executive meetings, 15 March and 17 May 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 18; minutes of District Executive meeting, 23 February 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 17.
48. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 15 March 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 18; B.C. Lumber Worker, 7 April 1948.
49. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 17 May 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 18; B.C. Lumber Worker, 7 April 1948.
50. FIR Circular Files, #279, 12 April 1948.

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51. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 17 May 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 18.

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1948 Negotiations: Legalism Triumphant

1. Minutes of District Policy Committee meeting, 2 July 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 2; minutes of negotiation meeting, 22 April 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 8.
2. Knox, "The Passage of Bill 39," p. 158.
3. B.C. Lumber Worker, 7 April 1948.
4. Minutes of District Negotiating Committee Meeting, 28 April 1948, box 5, file 9; B.C., Statutes, 1948, 12 Geo. 6, c. 31, s. 44.
5. FIR Circular Files, #267, 20 January 1948 and #268, 28 January 1948.
6. FIR Circular Files, #268.
7. FIR Circular Files, #268, and #279, 12 April 1948.
8. Minutes of negotiation meetings, 3 May, 11 May, 17 May, 18 May, 25 May, 26 May 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 8; Employers' Statement, 26 May 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 6, file 18.
9. FIR Circular Files, #285, 12 May 1948.
10. FIR Circular Files, #285, #286, 17 May 1948, #287, 18 May 1948.
11. Minutes of District Policy Committee meetings, 12 April and 9 May 1948, IWA Records, roll 1, file - 1948, Meeting Minutes of District Policy Committee.
12. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 17 May 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 18.
13. Minutes of District Negotiating Committee meetings, 11 May and 21 May 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 9; minutes of District Executive meetings, 17 May 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 18, and 21 June 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 19.
14. Minutes of District Negotiating Committee meeting, 11 May 1948.
15. Minutes of Local 1-357 Executive meeting, 14 May 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 8, file 26.
16. B.C. Lumber Worker, 5 May 1948.
17. Vancouver Sun, 18 May 1948.
18. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 17 May 1948.

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19. Employers' Statement, 26 May 1948, Pritchett papers, box 6, file 18.
20. Pacific Tribune, 14 May 1948.
21. Minutes of District Negotiating Committee meeting, 26 May 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 9.
22. Minutes of District Negotiating Committee meeting, 27 May 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 9.
23. FIR Circular Files, #291, 3 June 1948.
24. Minutes of District Negotiating Committee meeting, 27 May 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 9.
25. Minutes of Local 1-357 Executive meeting, 28 May 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 8, file 26.
26. Minutes of District Policy Committee meeting, 2 June 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 2.
27. Minutes of District Negotiating Committee meeting, 3 June 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 9.
28. Minutes of Local 1-357 Executive meeting, 11 June 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 8, file 26.
29. FIR Circular Files, #293, 11 June 1948.
30. Minutes of District Executive meeting, 21 June 1948, Pritchett papers, box 4, file 19. In fact, the committee had received results from only four locals indicating 95 percent rejection.
31. FIR Circular Files, #295, 23 June 1948; Records of Forest Industrial Relations Ltd., Master Agreement, Negotiation Files, File on IWA Fighting Fund, June 1948 - August 1948 (hereafter FIR File - Fighting Fund).
32. P.G. Frewer to Stuart, 30 June 1948, re: Contributions to the "Fighting Fund," reports up to June 28th, FIR File - Fighting Fund.
33. J.E. Beed, Personnel Manager, to Stuart Research Service, 26 July 1948, FIR File - Fighting Fund.
34. FIR File - Fighting Fund.
35. Transcript of questions to Stuart Alsbury, 4 October 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 10, file 1; minutes of quarterly District Council meeting, 3 October 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 1.
36. B.C. Lumber Worker, 23 September 1948. At the October quarterly council meeting, 1-217 contributions as of 15 August were reported to be \$1683. The

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Lumber Worker claimed they were \$4526 by 29 September. Either figure fell short of the \$24,000 quota set, on the basis of total membership in the local.

37. Stanton, Never Say Die!, p. 200.
38. B.C. Lumber Worker, 30 June 1948.
39. B.C. Lumber Worker, 16 June 1948.
40. FIR Circular File, #289, 26 May 1948.
41. Minutes of negotiation meeting, 25 June 1948 (11:25 A.M.), Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 8.
42. Minutes of negotiation meetings, 24 June and 25 June 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 8.
43. Minutes of District Negotiating Committee meeting, 24 June 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 9.
44. Minutes of Local 1-357 Executive meeting, 11 June 1948.
45. Minutes of Local 1-357 Executive meeting, 25 June 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 8, file 26.
46. Leaflet: "The Union is in Danger! Some Plain Talk About Finances," n.d., Pritchett Papers, box 6, file 7. Fadling, who had been present at negotiation sessions up to 25 June, was suddenly absent on 25 June, probably accompanying Mitchell to Portland. The Board quickly complied with Mitchell's request, setting up a committee including three IWA members from outside the District, and Harry Chappell as CCL representative. Vancouver Sun, 3 July 1948; Abella, Nationalism, Communism, and Canadian Labour, p. 130; Lembcke and Tattum, One Union in Wood, p. 122.
47. Minutes of negotiation meeting, 29 June 1948 (1:20 P.M.), Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 9.
48. Lembcke and Tattum, One Union in Wood, p. 123.
49. Minutes of Negotiating Committee meeting, 29 June 1948 (3:45 P.M.), Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 9.
50. Minutes of District Policy Committee meeting, 2 July 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 2; B.C., Statutes, 1948, c. 155, s. 75. The account of this LRB proposal of 3 June is based on Dalskog's report to a 2 July Policy Committee meeting. That it was an authentic proposal, however, is corroborated by further discussions on the matter in July and August reported in LRB correspondence. See Records of the British Columbia Labour Relations Board (correspondence, reports, briefs, memos regarding activities of members of LRB, 1948-52) GR 1087, box 1, file 3, PABC.

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51. Minutes of quarterly District Council meeting, 18 July 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 28; H.W. Maisey, Secretary to LRB, to Smelts and Strange, 3 August 1948, GR 1087, box 1, file 3.
52. Maisey to Smelts and Strange, 3 August 1948, GR 1087, box 1, file 3.
53. B.C. Lumber Worker, 30 June 1948.
54. Minutes of District Policy Committee, 2 July 1948, Pritchett papers, box 5, file 9.
55. Minutes of negotiation meeting, 2 July 1948, Pritchett papers, box 5, file 8.
56. According to Emil Bjarnason, Webster was engaged by the International to help edit its "Voice of the IWA" transcripts. Bjarnason interview.
57. Vancouver Sun, 3 July 1948.
58. Minutes of negotiation meeting, 5 July 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 8.
59. Minutes of District Negotiating Committee meeting, 5 July 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 9.
60. Minutes of negotiation meetings, 6, 7, 8 and 9 July 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 8.
61. Minutes of negotiation meeting, 9 July 1948.
62. Ibid.
63. Ibid.; minutes of Local 1-357 Executive meeting, 9 July 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 8, file 26.
64. Minutes of negotiation meeting, 13 July 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 8.
65. Vancouver Sun, 14 June 1947.
66. Minutes of District Policy Committee, 13 July 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 2.
67. Minutes of District Negotiating Committee meeting, 14 July 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 9.
68. Vancouver Sun, 15 July 1948; Abella, Nationalism, Communism, and Canadian Labour, p. 130.
69. B.C. Lumber Worker, 30 June 1948.
70. Minutes of quarterly District Council meeting, 18 July 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 4, file 28.
71. B.C. Lumber Worker, 21 July 1948.

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1948: The Split

1. Abella, Nationalism, Communism, and Canadian Labour, chapter seven.
2. Lembcke and Tattum, One Union in Wood, chapter five.
3. Transcript of "Voice of the IWA" broadcast, CJOR radio, 19 July 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 3, file 11.
4. B.C. Lumber Worker, 28 July 1948.
5. Transcript of "Voice of the IWA" broadcast, CJOR radio, 9 August 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 3, file 11.
6. B.C. Lumber Worker, 18 August 1948.
7. Minutes of District Policy Committee meeting, 4 August 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 2; Abella, Nationalism, Communism, and Canadian Labour, chapter seven. Murphy joined a panel with employer representative J.A. MacDonald, and chaired by Mr. Justice H.I. Bird with whom he had sat on the IWA's 40 hour week arbitration the previous year.
8. F.W. Smelts, Member, LRB, to H.W. Maisey, Secretary, LRB, 23 July 1948, GR 1087, box 1, file 3.
9. B.C., Statutes, 1948, 12 Geo. 6, c. 31, s. 78(2).
10. F.W. Smelts and H. Strange, to H.W. Maisey, 3 August 1948, memo re IWA Strike Vote, GR 1087, box 1, file 3.
11. Minutes of LRB meeting, 9 August 1948, Records of the British Columbia Labour Relations Board (minutes of meetings), GR 1038, PABC; minutes of Vancouver Committee of LRB meeting, 10 August 1948, GR 1038; Smelts and Strange to Maisey, 10 August 1948, memo re Strike Vote, GR 1087, box 1, file 3.
12. Minutes of LRB meeting, 18 August 1948, minutes of Vancouver Committee of LRB meetings, 20 August, 25 August, and 27 August 1948, GR 1038.
13. Vancouver Sun, 17 August 1948.
14. Vancouver Sun, 14 September 1948; B.C. Lumber Worker, 15 September 1948.
15. Minutes of quarterly District Council meeting, 3 October 1948, G. Hilland speaking in support of disaffiliation, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 1.
16. Interview with John Stanton, 8 July 1988.
17. Bjarnason interview.

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18. Stanton interview, 22 October 1987.
19. Caron interview; Stanton interview, 22 October 1987; Edwards interview.
20. Proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, p. 38. Murphy told the convention: "I am opposed to just endorsing and not having anything to say about who the candidates are or what the program is going to be, and having no control as a trade unionist of the money my organization would vote in support of the program."
21. Abella, Nationalism, Communism, and Canadian Labour, pp. 102-05; Levenstein, Communism, Anticommunism, and the CIO, pp. 272-75.
22. Proceedings of the Eleventh Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, p. 39.
23. Stuart Research Service Ltd., Brief to Board of Conciliation, 23 August 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 6, file 23.
24. B.C. Lumber Worker, 1 September 1948.
25. Stuart Research Service Ltd., Brief to Board of Conciliation, 23 August 1948.
26. "Along the Skidroad," radio broadcast transcript, Stuart Research Service, 27 August 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 8, file 2.
27. Vancouver Sun, 28, 30 and 31 August 1948; B.C. Lumber Worker, 1 September 1948.
28. B.C. Lumber Worker, 1 September 1948.
29. B.C. Lumber Worker, 8 September 1948.
30. Abella, Nationalism, Communism, and Canadian Labour, pp. 123-27.
31. Ibid., pp. 125 and 133.
32. Stanton interview, 8 July 1988.
33. Vancouver Sun, 16, 17, 20 and 29 September 1948. In describing the graveyard scene, Noble said he saw what he thought was "some poor old drunk who had been sleeping out all night trying to climb a fence. The man was Ernie Dalskog. He had his hands on the top rung and apparently he could not get up or down. I was on my way to help him when he tumbled headfirst to the ground." Dalskog then allegedly came running towards him, hat pulled down over his eyes, "holding his pants up with one hand and trying to take pictures with the other."
34. Minutes of District Policy Committee meeting, 19 September 1948, IWA Records, roll 1, file - 1948, Meeting Minutes of District Policy Committee.
35. Ibid.

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36. Minutes of District Policy Committee meeting, 20 September 1948, IWA Records, roll 1, file - 1948, Meeting Minutes of District Policy Committee. Bird had wanted to exclude the white bloc leaflet as evidence but Murphy had joined with the employer representative in over-ruling the chair. Vancouver Sun, 28 August 1948.
37. B.C. Lumber Worker, 29 September 1948.
38. Vancouver Sun, 2 October 1948; B.C. Lumber Worker, 6 October 1948.
39. Minutes of quarterly District Council meeting, 3 October 1948, Pritchett Papers, box 5, file 1.

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Epilogue: The New IWA

1. Greenall, The I.W.A. Fiasco: White, A Hard Man to Beat, p. 171; Caron interview; Archie Greenwell interview with Allen Seager, 7 July 1976.
2. British Columbia Federation of Labour Legislative Proposals (ICA Act) to the Premier and Members of the Cabinet, 25 February 1949, GR 1087, box 1, file 2; Comparison of Recommendations made by the British Columbia Federation of Labour to the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Board, GR 1222, box 91, file 1; B.C., Statutes, 1954, 3 Eliz. 2, c. 17, s. 2(1).
3. Minutes of quarterly District Council meeting, 15 October 1949, IWA Records, roll 5, file - 1949, District Quarterly Council Minutes; B.C. Lumber Worker, 11 August, 25 August, 8 September 1949; Vancouver Sun, 15 August and 25 August 1949.
4. Vancouver Sun, 10, 19, 27, 29 May 1950, and 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 14, 15 June 1950; Vancouver Province, 7 June and 9 June 1950.
5. Master Agreement, 1950, Article III, Section 1.
6. Those worked out to be 11 cents in January and 14 cents in July.
7. Memorandum of Agreement Dated the 15th Day of February 1951, between District Council #1, International Woodworkers of America, CIO, Representing Local Numbers 1-71, 1-80, 1-85, 1-118, 1-217, 1-357, 1-363 and Forest Industrial Relations Limited Representing the Companies as per list attached, IWA Records, roll 10, file - 1951, Negotiations, Forest Industrial Relations; B.C. Lumber Worker, 1 May 1951 and 3 January 1952, Vancouver Sun, 3 March 1951.
8. Minutes of quarterly District Council meeting, 14 July 1951, IWA Records, roll 14, file - 1951-52, Executive Board and Quarterly Council Minutes; proceedings of the Fifteenth Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, Vancouver, 29-31 January 1952, pp. 287-88.
9. IWA Demands in Current B.C. Lumber Dispute—1952, Add. Mss. 1057, box 2, file 3; B.C. Lumber Worker clipping, 17 July 1952, RG 27, vol. 494, strike 112.
10. Proceedings of the Sixteenth Annual Convention of IWA District Council no. 1, Vancouver, 17-21 February 1953, pp. 100-01.
11. Minority Report of Lawrence Vandale, 7 June 1952, Add. Mss. 1057, box 2, file 4.
12. Alsbury to Mrs. E. Haglund, 27 June 1952, IWA Records, roll 10, file - 1952, J.S. Alsbury, President, General; minutes of District Policy Committee meeting, 13 June 1952, IWA Records, roll 17, file - 1952, District Policy Committee Meeting Minutes; minutes of Negotiating Committee meeting, 6 June 1952, IWA Records,

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- roll 23, file - 1952, Minutes, Negotiating Committee; B.C. Lumber Worker, 19 June 1952.
13. Minutes of quarterly District Council meeting, 31 May - 1 June 1952, IWA Records, roll 17, file - 1952, Quarterly Council Minutes.
 14. B.C. Lumber Worker, 17 July 1952, "A 'Blow by Blow' Strike Record."
 15. Ibid., B.C. Lumber Worker, 19 June 1952; Vancouver Province, 21 June 1952, minutes of District Policy Committee meeting, 13 June 1952.
 16. Vancouver Sun, 17 June 1952.
 17. Edward Jamieson, Secretary of LRB, to J.M. Billings, 26 June 1952, and Billings to Jamieson, 27 June 1952, Records of Forest Industrial Relations Ltd., Master Agreement, Negotiations Files, General Correspondence, Forest Industrial Relations Ltd., Vancouver, B.C.
 18. Vancouver Sun, 12 July 1952; B.C. Lumber Worker, 17 July 1952.
 19. RG 27, vol. 494, strike 112.
 20. Minutes of District Executive meetings, 30 September 1952, 29-30 January 1953, IWA Records, roll 10, file - 1952, J.S. Alsbury, President, Minutes.
 21. Proceedings of the Sixteenth Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, pp. 99-110.
 22. Billings interview; Lembcke and Tattum, One Union in Wood, pp. 141-43.
 23. Billings interview.
 24. Billings interview; Carl Winn, International Secretary-Treasurer, to J. Square, IWA District One Trustee, n.d., IWA Records, roll 8, file - 1952, Investigation Committee.
 25. Minutes of quarterly District Council meeting, 16-17 August 1952, IWA Records, roll 7, file - Executive Board Meeting Minutes.
 26. IWA Records, roll 8, file - 1952, Investigation Committee.
 27. Ibid., Ballard to Alsbury, 30 July 1952, IWA Records, roll 10, file - 1952, J.S. Alsbury, President, International Correspondence; minutes of quarterly District Council meeting, 16-17 August 1952.
 28. Minutes of District Executive special meeting, 6 March 1953, to deal with Investigation Committee reports, IWA Records, roll 8, file - 1952, Investigation Committee.
 29. IWA Records, roll 8, file - 1952, G.H. Mitchell, General Correspondence.

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30. Timber-r-r, vol. lv, no. 2, March 1953, in IWA Records, roll 8, file - 1952, Investigation Committee.
31. Vancouver Sun, 16 April 1953.
32. Minutes of District Policy Committee meeting, 17 March 1953, and District Policy Committee recommendations to Wages and Contract Conference, 19 March 1953, IWA Records, roll 21, file - 1953, Policy Committee Minutes, Correspondence.
33. Press Release #5, IWA Records, roll 21, file - 1953, Press Releases, Speakers Notes, Coast Negotiations.
34. B.C. Lumber Worker, 2 July 1953.
35. Transcript of 9 July 1953 "Green Gold" broadcast as reproduced in B.C. Lumber Worker, 16 July 1953.
36. Vancouver Sun, 11 July 1953.
37. Vancouver Sun, 14 July 1953.
38. Vancouver Sun, 24 October 1953.
39. Vancouver Province, 21 December 1953.
40. B.C. Lumber Worker, 1st Issue November 1953. (The union paper stopped dating its issues by day, instead referring to them as the first and second issues of each month). Efforts were made as well by the union to keep strike breakers out of the interior by picketing the bus depot and train stations in Vancouver. These actions led to at least one arrest. Vancouver Sun, 30 November and 1 December 1953; Trail Daily Times, 1 December 1953.
41. Photostatic copy of Interior Lumber Manufacturers Association, Bulletin No. 111, to Members with IWA Certifications, 17 October 1953, reproduced in B.C. Lumber Worker, 1st Issue. November 1953.
42. Vancouver Province, 21 December 1953.
43. Vancouver Province, 21 December 1953. The account of these strikes is based largely on documents and clippings in Federal Department of Labour files, RG 27, vol. 503, strike 150, and RG 27, vol. 503, strike 127.
44. Vancouver Sun, 2 January 1953.
45. Vancouver Sun, 7 November 1951.
46. B.C., Statutes, 1954, 3 Eliz. 2, c. 17, s. 29.
47. Ibid., s. 40.
48. Ibid., s. 50 (2) (a) and (b).

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49. B.C., Statutes, 1948, 12 Geo. 6, c. 155, s. 62.
50. B.C., Statutes, 1954, 3 Eliz. 2, c. 17, s. 55.
51. For a general review of the 1954 Act see "An Analysis of Bill 28," Angus MacInnis Collection, box 34, file 13, UBC-SC.
52. Vancouver Sun, 18 June 1954.
53. Press Release #5, IWA Records, roll 21, file - 1953, Press Releases, Speakers' Notes, Coast Negotiations; B.C. Lumber Worker, 1st Issue March 1954.
54. B.C. Lumber Worker, 1st Issue March 1954.
55. Ibid.
56. Speakers' Notes, IWA Records, roll 28, file - 1954, Negotiations, Coast; Strictly Confidential Memorandum to Members of Local Union Executive, 28 May 1954, IWA Records, roll 63, file - 1954, Coast Negotiations.
57. It appears likely from the text of much of Morris' official communication with his union and the media that he relied heavily on the International Research Department in drafting it.
58. Strictly Confidential Memorandum to Members of Local Union Executive, 28 May 1954.
59. Speakers' Notes, IWA Records, roll 28, file - 1954, Negotiations, Coast.
60. B.C. Lumber Worker, 2nd Issue June 1954.
61. Speakers' Notes, IWA Records, roll 28, file - 1954, Negotiations, Coast.
62. Vancouver Sun, 18 June 1954.
63. B.C. Lumber Worker, 1st and 2nd Issues June 1955; Speakers' Notes for 1955-57 proposed contract prepared by District Policy Committee, IWA Records, roll 63, file - 1955, Coast Negotiations.
64. Proceedings of Eighteenth Annual Convention of IWA District Council No. 1, Vancouver, 14-17 February 1955; President's Report, pp. 7-9.
65. Data on Lumber Industry prepared for Local 1-85, Tables I-V, Pritchett Papers, box 8, file 18.
66. J.J. Deutsch, et al., "Economics of Primary Production in British Columbia, Volume IV, Industrial Relations in the Basic Industries of British Columbia" (Unpublished Manuscript, University of British Columbia, 1959).
67. Ibid., pp. 28, 33, 34-36.

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68. Ibid., pp. 35 and 38; Vancouver Sun, 4 July, 5 July, 8 July 1957, and 28 June, 30 June, 18 August 1958; Master Agreement - 1957, Article III, Section 2. In 1958, 69 of 173 operations voted against a strike.
69. Vancouver Sun, 17 September and 30 September 1958.
70. Vancouver Sun, 30 September and 2 October 1958. Thompson, as he admitted publicly, had been a party member and organizer during the 1930s, and as a member of the Relief Camp Workers' Union had participated in the On-to-Ottawa Trek. After the war he had worked as an LPP organizer in Alberta until 1948, when he left the party. Vancouver Sun, 24 November 1958, interview with Thompson by Doug Collins; Lionel Edwards interview.
71. Vancouver Sun, 24 December and 27 December 1958.
72. Billings interview.

Notes: Conclusion

1. White, A Hard Man to Beat, p. 171.
2. Abella, Nationalism, Communism, and Canadian Labour, p. 138.
3. Stanton, Never Say Die!, p. 201.
4. Lembcke and Tattum, One Union in Wood, p. 180.
5. Caron interview.
6. Edwards interview.
7. Nelson Wiseman, Social Democracy in Manitoba: A History of the CCF-NDP (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1983), p. 54; Tim Buck's report on CCF Convention, Pacific Tribune, 10 September 1948.
8. Draft Resolution of the National Executive of the LPP, Pacific Tribune, 5 November 1948.
9. Ibid.
10. Penner, The Canadian Left, p. 104.
11. Minutes of quarterly District Council meeting, 3 October 1948.
12. Stanton, Never Say Die!, p. 207.
13. Ibid., p. 201; White, A Hard Man to Beat, p. 171.
14. Vancouver Sun, 26 October 1948.
15. Proceedings of Constituent Convention of the Woodworkers' Union of Canada, Vancouver, 23-24 October 1948, Officers' Report, supplement 14, Pritchett Papers, box 11, file 1.
16. Vancouver Sun, 20 and 21 October 1948.
17. Sekora to Secretary of LRB, 10 January and 9 February 1949, IWA Records, roll 3, file - 1948-49, Labour Relations Board.
18. Minutes of Vancouver Committee of LRB meetings, 22 November and 8 December 1948, GR 1038.
19. Minutes of Vancouver Committee of LRB meetings, 19 November, 30 November, 2 December, 19 December 1948, GR 1038; Vancouver Sun, 3, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13 December 1948.
20. IWA Records, roll 3, file - 1949, Organizers' Reports.

Conclusion Continued

21. William Beeching and Dr. Phyllis Clarke, eds., Yours in the Struggle: Reminiscences of Tim Buck (Toronto: NC Press Ltd., 1977), p. 366.

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